

The London Nautical School

61 Stamford Street, Blackfriars, London, SE1 9NA

Inspection dates 2–3 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students do not make consistently good progress from their starting points in any subject or key stage.
- Teaching is not consistently good enough.
- The teaching of literacy is insufficiently developed with too few opportunities for students to read in lessons and to write at length.
- The quality of teachers' marking and feedback varies too much. For some students, feedback is too infrequent to help them to improve their work effectively.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Sixth form courses are not well matched to the students' range of prior attainment. A-level students do not make sufficient progress to achieve the grades they should.
- The school's leaders have an overgenerous view of how well the school is doing because they do not accurately compare the progress of groups of students in the school with similar groups nationally.

The school has the following strengths

- The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C has risen for the last two years.
- Students are polite and respectful. They enjoy school and want to do well.
- Students benefit from the highly impressive extra-curricular programme.
- The sixth form is growing in popularity with sixth formers actively taking on leadership roles across all aspects of the school.
- The headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body have shown the drive and commitment to move the school forward from a very low base and staff morale is very high.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 37 lessons, taught by 35 different teachers and a higher-level teaching assistant. Four lessons were observed jointly with members of the school’s senior leadership team. Inspectors made brief visits to other lessons, tutor groups and a school assembly.
- Meetings were held with five groups of students, the headteacher and senior leaders, members of the governing body, groups of staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 51 responses to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, two written communications and telephone calls received from parents and carers.
- Thirty-nine staff questionnaires were returned and considered by the inspection team.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including examples of students’ work, the school’s own information on students’ attainment and progress, records of attendance and behaviour, and information about safeguarding, school planning and performance management.

Inspection team

Sarah Hill, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Daniel Moynihan	Additional Inspector
David Gutmann	Additional Inspector
Rukhsana Sheikh	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The London Nautical School is smaller than the average secondary school. It serves the whole of the London area and as a nautical school is unique in the country. Girls join the sixth form. It holds the British Council Gold Award for international work.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special education needs supported at school action is low compared to the national average. Those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than the national average. Students of White British heritage constitute the largest ethnic group. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, children in the care of the local authority and those from service families) is higher than the national average. There are no students on roll from service families.
- For a small number of students, the school uses alternative provision in partnership with Lambeth, Plumpton and Capel Manor Colleges and Watford Football Club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to be consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - all teachers plan and teach lessons which are well matched to students' different learning needs
 - students know what they are trying to achieve and how their outcomes will be assessed
 - teachers have high expectations of students and make effective use of targeted questioning to check and deepen students' understanding
 - the outstanding teaching across the school is used to help all teachers to improve their practice.
- Allow all groups of students to fulfil their potential by ensuring that:
 - they have the chance to improve their literacy alongside their subject knowledge with opportunities for extended writing, speaking, listening and reading in all lessons
 - they are given frequent written feedback which is detailed enough for them to know precisely how to improve their work, and have time in lessons to respond to teachers' written comments.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management at all levels by ensuring that:
 - students' current achievement is analysed rigorously by groups and subjects
 - the school's leaders systematically measure the school's performance against national figures
 - governors hold senior leaders to account for the quality of teaching and the achievement of students
 - students make better progress in the sixth form with a curriculum that is suitably matched to their needs.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2012, students' progress from joining the school to the end of Year 11 was in the lowest 5% nationally. Students join the school in Year 7 with attainment that is significantly above average, but their attainment at GCSE is no more than average.
- There is too much variation in performance between subjects, with students' attainment in English, mathematics, design and technology and geography being too low. Those students with higher-than-average levels at the end of Key Stage 2 did not attain the expected GCSE A* and A grades in 2011, nor in 2012.
- Students with a minority ethnic heritage and those who speak English as an additional language make progress at a slower rate than similar students nationally.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement. Students do not make enough progress to gain the grades necessary for the next stage of their education. A-level standards and students' progress are at levels below those found nationally.
- There is a rising trend in students' attainment from a low base. Students' attainment at GCSE rose in 2012, bringing the proportion attaining five A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, in line with the national average. In 2012, the proportion of students who gained A* to C grades in English was above the average for boys' nationally. The school's own data indicate that current Year 11 students are doing better than in previous years. The school predicts a further increase in the number of students gaining five A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, in 2013. Most students take their GCSE in mathematics before the end of Year 11. A quarter of students have already attained an A* or A grade. This is higher than last year's national figure and a significant increase on students' attainment in mathematics last year.
- Pupil premium funding provides additional tuition and resources for eligible students. In both English and mathematics, there is little difference between the average point scores of these students and those of other students in the school. The impact of the Year 7 catch-up premium is not evaluated by the school.
- The achievement of most disabled students and those with special educational needs has been in line with similar students nationally, except for those who have a statement of special educational needs whose progress is slow compared to similar students.
- The very small number of students who attend alternative provision away from the school for part of their studies make progress in line with their classmates.
- Most parents and carers who responded to the on-line questionnaire believe that their children are making good progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across, or within, subjects, and is not improving fast enough for students' attainment by the end of Years 11 and 13 to match their capabilities.
- Too often, teachers' planning takes too little account of students' prior learning. Students' understanding goes unchecked because teachers do not target questions and the questions they ask do not probe students' comprehension deeply enough. Because teachers do not always know how much students have understood, they cannot adjust their explanations, and the pace of students' learning slows, particularly that of more-able students. Although most teachers routinely share their objectives for lessons with students, they do not always explain them or the criteria they will use for assessing students' work.
- In some classes, the marking of students' work is infrequent and teachers give little feedback so that students do not know what they have to do to improve their work. Teachers do not build

time into lessons for students to respond to the marking.

- In some lessons observed, subject teachers did not give students opportunities to read aloud or support students' speaking and listening skills through structured discussion. Overuse of work sheets and writing frames prevented students from writing at length.
- A small amount of teaching is outstanding. In a Year 9 mathematics lesson, students made very rapid progress in finding equations of straight lines because the teacher's detailed planning centred on developing students' understanding. The teacher had high expectations which were evident in his judicious use of independent work, paired discussion and whole-class activities. All students were encompassed by the teacher's questions which probed explanations further. Students' work was marked with detailed comments showing what students needed to do next, with further written questions for them to consider.
- Students with poor reading benefit from a reading intervention programme.
- Teachers use opportunities to promote social, moral, spiritual and cultural developments well. For example, in a Year 11 English lesson, students were encouraged to respond emotionally to a musical piece while reading W H Auden's poem *O what is that sound?*.
- All students appreciate the help they receive from teachers, both in and out of lessons. They generally know their targets, and value the additional support of the Key Stage 4 intervention programme.
- Almost all parents and carers feel that their children are well taught.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students during the inspection was of a high standard. They are polite and supportive of one another with positive attitudes to the school and they eagerly participate in the many opportunities offered.
- Students' attitudes to learning are typically good. However, in lessons where work is not matched well to their needs, or where teaching proceeds at too slow a pace, a few students can become disengaged which adversely affects their learning and that of others.
- Students say they enjoy school, feel very safe and are confident of the support of staff if any issues arise. They state that bullying and harassment are very rare. Students expressed a good knowledge of how to keep safe, including aspects of e-safety.
- Behaviour records show a pattern of declining exclusions, with improvements in behaviour over time. Older students commented on the improvements in students' behaviour since they had started at the school.
- School staff monitor the attendance, behaviour and safety of students studying on college courses or at Watford Football Club.
- Students have represented the school in many high-profile events, including the Queen's Diamond Jubilee river pageant. They are excellent ambassadors for the school and their contribution to the life of London is exceptional. Those in the sixth form take on a range of very effective leadership roles, including supporting younger students in lessons.
- Because many students travel considerable distances to attend, coming usually as the only student from their primary school, the school's ethos and supportive environment are especially highly valued. Attendance is in line with the national average and students are punctual to school and to lessons.
- Almost all parents and carers are highly positive about the school and consider the behaviour of students to be good and their safety supported.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school's leaders view of how well the school is doing is too generous because leaders do not

have a completely accurate picture of students' achievement compared to national profiles.

- The school's plans do not prioritise those aspects which will make the biggest impact on teaching and students' progress, and do not indicate precise, measureable outcomes. Opportunities for sharing the good and outstanding practice in the school are unstructured.
 - The promotion of equal opportunities needs improvement because some groups of students, including those with statements of special educational needs, are underachieving. Systems to measure and compare the progress of student groups routinely, including students eligible for pupil premium funding and those with special educational needs, are not in place.
 - The sixth form curriculum has a limited choice of courses and does not take sufficient account of students' learning needs.
 - The headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body are resolutely pursuing improved standards and wider opportunities for all students. They understand what constitutes good teaching and lesson observations are regular. Weaknesses in teaching are identified and support provided and effective systems are in place to track the progress of individual students.
 - The school's leaders have created a harmonious community which has a welcoming atmosphere. Members of staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Parents and carers show strong support and attendance at parents' evenings is high.
 - The local authority has effectively focused its support on improving students' attainment in mathematics and English.
 - The management of teachers' performance is suitably organised with a rigour applied to teachers' salary progression.
 - Students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is strongly promoted. Students participate in the extensive additional opportunities, including those directly linked to nautical studies.
 - For students in Years 7 to 11, the curriculum is good. It meets students' needs, with effective partnerships for some Key Stage 4 students. The school is currently addressing its statutory obligation to include religious education to the end of Year 11.
 - Statutory requirements for safeguarding arrangements are met. Not all the required information, such as details of pupil premium funding, is published on the school's website.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - An external audit of the governing body is not recommended because governors commission appropriate training and are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are beginning to challenge the school's senior leaders appropriately. However, because they do not receive information about the performance of students compared with similar groups nationally, the extent to which governors can hold senior leaders to account throughout the year is limited. Governors are aware of pupil premium funding allocations but are not informed about its impact. Likewise, they receive the outcomes of teachers' performance management without the information required to make comparisons between the quality of teaching and standards in different subjects. Governors have a compelling vision for the school's nautical ethos. They are robustly pursuing the inclusion of adventure challenges and prestigious musical and artistic links.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils’ needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils’ needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school’s leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	100642
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	400418

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	694
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rodney Lenthall
Headteacher	Hyder Dastagir
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 November 2009
Telephone number	020 792 86801
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