

# Wanstead High School

Redbridge Lane West, West Wanstead, London, E11 2JZ

**Inspection dates** 25–26 April 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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:

- Achievement is not yet good. Students are not making good enough progress in a number of subjects including modern foreign languages, business studies and geography.
- The sixth form requires improvement because even though students are achieving better results at A level and AS level, overall attainment is below the national average in some subjects.
- Although the quality of teaching is strongly improving, there are still a small number of teachers who do not deliver sufficiently challenging and engaging lessons.
- In some lessons teachers do not create enough opportunities for students to discuss their own ideas or find things out for themselves by learning on their own.
- Too many books are not marked regularly or in enough detail. Not all marking gives students enough guidance on how they can make their work better.
- The way in which leaders manage teachers' performance and observe lessons is not rigorous enough.
- Governors are very clear about how the pupil premium funding (extra government funding provided for particular groups of students) is spent but they are less clear about the impact it is having.

### The school has the following strengths:

- Students make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Standards in the performing arts are high.
- Students behave well. Students contribute well to the friendly and respectful atmosphere of the school where they feel well supported by staff. They feel safe and say that bullying is rare and any that occurs is sorted out quickly. All students have are positive towards their learning, and to one another.
- Leaders are now clearly focused on improving the learning for all students and have developed good systems to track students' progress through the school.
- The governing body makes close checks on many areas of the school's work and asks challenging questions of school leaders.
- An extensive range of sporting, musical and cultural activities promotes students' personal development well.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 41 lessons, of which 22 were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, they made a number of shorter visits to year assemblies and tutorial sessions.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and groups of staff.
- Members of the inspection team held meetings with four groups of students representing all age groups in the school. Discussions also took place with students informally.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and other members.
- The inspection team observed the school’s work and scrutinised documents, including the school’s own evaluation of how well it is doing, the school improvement plan and statistical information about students’ achievement, attendance and exclusions.
- There were 91 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 50 responses to the staff questionnaires. Additional comments were received from parents and carers.

## Inspection team

Robert Ridout, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janice Williams	Additional Inspector
Kevin Morris	Additional Inspector
Patricia Barford	Additional Inspector
Glen Goddard	Additional Inspector
Noureddin Khassai	Additional Inspector
Moazam Parvez	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Wanstead High School is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school has a specialism in the performing arts and has achieved the Artsmark Gold Award. The school has been awarded International School Status by the British Council for the range and quality of its international links.
- Almost one third of the students are from White British, Irish or Any other White or Mixed White backgrounds. The proportion from minority ethnic groups is well above the national average as is the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided for looked after children, those from service families and those eligible for free school meals) is above the national average. In this school it applies to looked after children and students eligible for free school meals.
- Approximately one in 10 Year 7 students are eligible for the catch-up programme for students who did not achieve the expected level in English at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs is below average at 5%. The proportion of students supported by school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below the national average.
- All provision for a small number of students in alternative provision is arranged by the school. Students attend off-site programmes at Waltham Forest College.
- The school exceeds current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to be consistently good and outstanding so as to raise achievement for all groups of students by:
  - ensuring all lessons are engaging, challenging and motivating for students
  - ensuring teachers talk less in lessons and use questioning effectively to extend learning and check on students' understanding
  - improving the quality of marking and oral and written feedback so students know how well they are doing, what they have to do to improve their work and are given time to make the improvements
  - setting work at the right level of difficulty for each student with enough challenge for the most able students
  - building on and fully embedding the developments that are already bringing improvements to teaching and achievement in the sixth form.
- Further accelerate improvements through improving the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
  - improving the rigour of checks that school policies and new initiatives are put into practice, particularly those relating to teaching and marking, so that teaching improves at a faster rate
  - ensuring leaders take greater account of the impact of teaching on students' progress when evaluating the quality of teaching
  - ensuring that all subject leaders have the skills needed to take an active and effective role in developing classroom practice within their specialist areas.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- On entry to the school, students' skills in reading, writing and mathematics are at least average and often better. Their progress varies across different subjects and in year groups, this being the reason why achievement requires improvement. By the end of Year 11 their overall attainment remains above average. The 2012 results are close to national figures for attainment with most students making the progress expected of them.
- In 2012, almost two thirds of all Year 11 students attained at least five C grades or above at GCSE, including in English and mathematics. Information provided by the school on the progress of current Year 11 students shows that achievement is rising.
- Students, including the more able, achieve well in mathematics and science. Based on their starting points this represents good progress. Most students sit mathematics in the spring of Year 11 and some then and resit them in the summer exams of Year 11. This practice will be discontinued as of examination of 2014 for Year 11 GCSE students.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. They make similar progress to their peers nationally.
- Most students from minority and other ethnic backgrounds and those learning English as an additional language are making the progress expected of them. However, those from Black Caribbean backgrounds are doing less well. The school is aware of this issue and is providing additional support but it is too early to see the full impact of this work. It is working towards achieving better equality of opportunity for all students.
- The school used its additional funding through pupil premium in a range of ways to support students, for example, revision groups, visits to places of interest and careers advice. Students eligible for free school meals do not perform as well as other students, mirroring the national situation. However, the school has looked at further ways to support these students and the gaps in achievement between this group and their peers have closed. Based on the average point scores at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2012, the gap between the students entitled to pupil premium support and others in the school is a grade below in both English and mathematics. This is a narrower gap than in 2011.
- Evidence provided during the inspection suggests that the school is starting to close the gap between the attainment of these students and their peers within the school.
- The small number of students who attend sessions within the local learning community benefit from the opportunity to follow courses that appeal to their interests. Their needs are met well through tailored support.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Students achieve well in most subjects at A Level, but there remains too much variation and standards are below the national average in some subjects. AS-level results have been rising over the last three years and students now attain grades in line with the national averages.
- Additional staffing and support are helping less able students in Year 7 to catch up in English and mathematics and settle into life at the school. Standards in literacy are rising because students are encouraged to read more often, by themselves and to each other. There are few opportunities for them to read aloud to adults.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Some teaching seen did not engage students' interests or fully meet their needs. Some good and outstanding teaching, particularly in English, science, history, drama and art, was also observed. Teaching has improved as a result of the sharing of best practice within the school.
- Positive relationships between students and staff mean that in most lessons students feel that

teachers give them the help they need to succeed.

- In lessons that require improvement, students are less engaged as a result of teachers talking to the class for long periods and not taking sufficient account of their different abilities when setting them work. In these lessons, students do not have enough chances to practise thinking, to interact with each other or work by themselves.
- The school policy on marking students' work is not always put into practice consistently by all teachers. On occasions, students do not receive enough guidance on how well they are doing in relation to their targets or what they must do next to improve. Students are not always expected to make improvements to their work in response to the guidance given by their teachers.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and convey their enthusiasm for their subjects to their students which helps motivate them.
- In the good and outstanding lessons, teachers prepare activities that are suitable for all students whatever their abilities. Information on how well they are doing, both orally and in books, provides students with the next steps they need to take in order to move their learning on. Relationships between staff and students are positive everywhere in the school and teachers manage behaviour well.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- This is a calm and purposeful school. It is a friendly and welcoming place for staff, students and visitors. Students get on well together and are courteous, considerate and caring.
- Students' behaviour is typically good in lessons and around the school. Disruption to learning is rare. They enjoy coming to school, show enthusiasm for their learning and rightly say that they would like more relevant and practical opportunities that require them to contribute more to lessons through discussion and debate.
- Exclusion rates are lower than the national average and continuing to fall.
- The good standard of behaviour is based on the school's high expectations and continuing drive to maintain high standards for conduct, attitudes to work and progress to be made. Students are aware of them, share these expectations and believe that the staff will do their best to enable students to succeed and achieve.
- Students say they feel very safe and secure. They have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe in many different circumstances including when using modern technology. They say they learn how to keep themselves safe because they are well taught in personal, social and health education lessons.
- Students know what constitutes bullying and the different kinds that may occur, such as homophobic and cyber bullying. Students are clear that the school deals effectively and promptly with any bullying incidents on the rare occasions when bullying happens.
- The school engages well with all parents, carers and families. Parents and carers are very positive about the school and a large majority of those who filled in the online questionnaire, Parent View, felt the school was safe and dealt effectively with unacceptable behaviour and bullying. They value the strong ethos of care for individual students and the good links the school has forged with parents, carers and families.
- Attendance is good because there are strong systems in place for ensuring students' attendance and for dealing with persistent absence.
- Students take on many responsibilities including those of the school council. Students say that they feel comfortable and confident when expressing their own differences and opinions and believe that their views are listened to and heard by the leadership of the school. They feel part of a 'family community' and this is reflected in some of the fund-raising activities undertaken by groups of students to improve their local amenities.

**The leadership and management** require improvement

- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have a clear agenda for improving the quality of teaching further and raising achievement which is supported by most leaders and staff. The school improvement plan sets out clear priorities and is used to drive through improvements. Recently developed systems for learning and teaching and measuring the levels that students are working at are starting to improve teaching and raise achievement, including in the sixth form. This work has not yet resulted in good achievement for all students over a sustained period of time.
- Although senior and subject leaders carry out checks on the quality of teaching and students' work, they are not frequent or rigorous enough to bring about rapid improvements. Evaluations do not fully take into account the impact of teaching on students' progress, nor are checks always rigorous enough to ensure that school policies, such as that for marking, are put into practice consistently.
- The school has systems for managing staff performance. Teachers have targets and review their progress against them. However, the link between teaching and student progress through performance management requires to be strengthened if standards are to rise further.
- Training is well focused on the school's priorities and recognises individual needs. Newly qualified staff and teachers in training are well supported. Increasingly staff share good practice with each other and these actions are leading to better teaching.
- The accuracy of assessments and checks on students' progress have improved. Students who are not making enough progress are identified and additional support is provided but it is too soon to see the impact on students' overall progress.
- There are many strengths in the range of subjects and courses offered which match the needs and aspirations of students of different abilities, especially for courses in Key Stage 4 and for post-16 learners. Personal, social and health education lessons support students' good personal development. A broad range of extra-curricular activities in sport, music, drama and many others are well attended by students. Good sporting and cultural links exist with the community.
- Provision for students' spiritual, social and cultural development is good with some examples of outstanding practice. Assemblies provide good opportunities for students to reflect on a range of issues and some lessons, particularly in the arts, focus effectively on promoting cultural development.
- Safeguarding arrangements are secure and the school operates effective safer recruitment practices.
- The local authority has provided support for the school including training to develop the skills of leaders and advice on establishing systems for tracking students' progress.
- The school is inclusive and ensures that all students have equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are ambitious for the school and have a realistic view of the school's effectiveness, based on their understanding of its current performance. They monitor many areas of the school's work closely and ask many of the right questions to hold school leaders to account. They are clear about the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and have supported the headteacher in challenging underperformance. They are developing their understanding of the link between pay progression, performance management and the effectiveness of teaching as measured by rates of student progress. Governors manage the budget well, but are not yet in a position to have a clear idea of the impact of pupil premium funding on achievement.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102851
<b>Local authority</b>	Redbridge
<b>Inspection number</b>	413434

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,587
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	369
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Thorogood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Christiaan Van Bussel
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11–12 September 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 89892791
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