

Southfields Academy

333 Merton Road, London, SW18 5JU

Inspection dates 27–28 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Rigorous monitoring of students' progress in Key Stage 4 suggests that a large majority of students in Years 10 and 11 make exceptional progress in most subjects.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress.
- Most teachers plan engaging lessons with imaginative resources and check students' understanding regularly by using probing questions.
- Most lessons are planned with challenging tasks and students often make good or better progress because of the many opportunities they have to work collaboratively.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the school. They are respectful of their peers and adults. They are punctual to school.
- Students enjoy coming to school and taking on responsibilities. A wide range of subjects and many enrichment activities cater appropriately to their individual needs.
- The principal, headteacher and governors have high expectations of the students and provide many good resources and opportunities to help them achieve their potential.
- There is an inclusive environment where all students are treated equally. Some past students are employed at the school and have become role models for the current students.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure that eligible students do at least as well as their peers.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students are not making the progress they should in Key Stage 3, where the school's monitoring is not so thorough.
- Teachers' marking and feedback do not always show students how they can improve their work. Students are not given enough time to respond to teachers' comments.
- Some teachers do not use assessment information accurately to plan tasks that stretch the high-ability students.
- The monitoring of teaching does not focus sufficiently on the impact of teaching on students' progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 40 lessons, of which most were joint observations with the senior leadership team. The inspection team also spent time in the sixth form observing the quality of teaching and the support that is given to students.
- Meetings were held with the principal and the headteacher, various senior leaders, staff and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers as expressed in the school’s internal questionnaire. There were very few responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors formally interviewed small groups of students from every year group. They also listened to some students read.
- Inspectors examined a number of documents, including the school’s information on students’ current progress, the minutes of governors’ meetings, and planning and monitoring documentation. They looked at attendance figures and students’ work.
- At the time of the inspection, the students from Years 11 and 13 were away on study leave preparing for examinations.

Inspection team

Janice Williams, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Samuel Ofori-Kyereh	Additional Inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Additional Inspector
Gill Walley	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of girls on roll is well below the national average.
- Over a half of the students are eligible for support through the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of service families. This figure is well above the national average. There are very few students in the care of the local authority and none from service families.
- A tiny number of students are from White British backgrounds and most are of African, Pakistani, Caribbean and Mixed heritage.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well above the national average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school has a dedicated hearing impaired unit which caters for 15 students with a range of ability and hearing loss from Wandsworth and neighbouring boroughs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Southfields Academy converted to become an academy school in September 2012. When its predecessor school, Southfields Community College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is a part of the Building Schools for the Future programme and, at the time of the inspection, there was a lot of building work on site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that teachers:
 - give appropriate guidance to students so that they can improve the quality of their work and make sure that students have the chance to respond to feedback
 - use assessment information more accurately to plan tasks and activities that are appropriate for all students, especially the more-able students.
- Strengthen leadership and management at all levels by:
 - using assessment information more precisely to help accelerate students' progress in Key Stage 3
 - ensuring that the monitoring of teaching focuses its impact clearly on students' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter Year 7 with attainment that is well below the national average. Subsequently, the school's data for 2012/13 and inspectors' observations of lessons show that students' overall achievement at Southfields is good. Most make exceptional progress in Key Stage 4, but their progress in Key Stage 3 is slower. Students' progress in mathematics, science, history, religious studies and geography, although not quite as strong as in other subjects, is fast improving.
- In Key Stage 4, students known to be eligible for free school meals, those from minority ethnic backgrounds, hearing-impaired students and those with other special educational needs make exceptional progress in most subjects, including English and mathematics, because they receive excellent care, support and good teaching.
- Higher-attaining students usually do well, but sometimes do not make the same rapid progress as their peers when work does not challenge them enough.
- Overall, students in Key Stage 3 make slower progress, partly because many join at different points during the school year with levels of skills and knowledge that are below those of their peers.
- Most students read with confidence and expression; but a few, some of whom are new to learning English, still struggle with the blending and decoding of sounds (phonics). As a result, some are still not fluent readers.
- Students enter the sixth form with grades that are often below the national average. Nevertheless, they make good progress and achieve well in most subjects.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium support do at least as well as their peers as measured by average point scores, and some are doing even better than this.
- The school does not operate a policy of entering students early for GCSE exams.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good. Lessons are engaging and there are many opportunities for students to assess their own learning. Most teachers have high expectations of the students and they often review students' prior learning before proceeding to ensure that there are no misconceptions.
- In most lessons, teachers provide interesting and imaginative resources. Inspectors saw meaningful topics about mental health and the community being discussed in depth and a variety of texts give students many opportunities to explore their feelings.
- In a Year 7 mathematics class, students made good progress because the teacher had set challenging tasks and created many opportunities for them to collaborate and work out percentages and decreases in numbers. They worked well together, giving each other support that helped to boost everyone's confidence.
- In a Year 13 psychology class, where the quality of teaching was outstanding, students made exceptional progress because the teacher planned the activities well, systematically checked their knowledge and understanding and asked probing questions that encouraged them to be reflective. The teacher then provided detailed feedback that students were able to use to extend their understanding.
- Although most teachers set challenging tasks and activities that extend students' learning, a few teachers do not often use assessment information well enough to plan tasks and activities that challenge all students at a suitable level, especially the more-able students.
- Although students' books are marked regularly, the comments from teachers do not always provide sufficient guidance for students to improve their work. Students are given too few opportunities to respond to feedback on their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students behave well around the school and in most lessons. In Year 7, teachers and school leaders have invested great time and energy into a variety of effective strategies to reduce lesson disruptions and instil in students a clear understanding of appropriate behaviour.
- Students said that they enjoy coming to school because teachers push them to learn and do as well as they can. They like to please their teachers because of the good relationships that exist between them and staff. As a result, in a few lessons, some students are submissive and reluctant to take charge of their learning.
- School leaders ensure that students are taught to assess risks and respond appropriately. Students know how to keep themselves safe whilst in or away from school. Many walk to school and said that they often do so in groups to ensure their safety. Students described the school as safe because 'there are security personnel everywhere, staff monitoring the grounds and cameras all around the school'. Students also said that the teachers look after them well and that they are not allowed in unauthorised places.
- There are assemblies on using the internet safely and students know that they should report any unsafe messages or comments to their teachers.
- Students said that there is very little bullying but that it is dealt with appropriately. Students are proud that they are all treated equally without fear of discrimination and that there is no homophobic bullying in the school.
- Students enjoy the school's rewards system. They like the English and mathematics 'star of the week', the attendance raffle which takes place every half term, and being rewarded for doing good deeds inside or outside of school.
- There are many opportunities for students to take on responsibilities, and an abundance of enrichment activities; students can attend at least two clubs each day if they like. They are encouraged by teachers to participate in clubs such as homework club and to enrol in booster classes. Guidance for GCSE options is good and parents and carers have access to on-line information on their children's progress. Students are helped with their careers choices by a number of inputs from outside speakers, such as a university professor talking about a career in cryptology.
- Students are punctual. The school has successfully tackled lateness by introducing a 'punctuality plus' system where students are given a detention which matches the number of minutes they are late to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The principal and the headteacher want all students to achieve their potential. To this end, they have created personalised programmes for the different groups of students in the school. The international group, those from minority ethnic backgrounds, hearing impaired students and others with special educational needs have been provided with a range of subjects and specialised teaching that are appropriate to their needs.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding effectively to provide booster classes, create smaller classes in English and mathematics and subsidise trips for students.
- The school's leaders have taken appropriate actions, through the performance management system, to eradicate inadequate teaching and ensure appropriate salary progression. Teachers know that leaders have high expectations; there is regular monitoring and teachers are held to account for students making at least better than expected progress. The school has accurately identified that the quality of teaching, for example in mathematics and science, needs to be improved, and measures taken are already showing signs of having had an impact on achievement in Year 11.
- Throughout the school there is a strong sense of community, with everyone working together to support the students as best as they can. Many past students are now employed at the school and they have become role models for the current students.

- Although there is detailed information on students' progress across the school, assessment information is not used as rigorously to challenge students in Key Stage 3 as it is in Key Stage 4.
- The school's self-evaluation has been somewhat over generous and, although the monitoring of teaching is frequent, school leaders' feedback to staff is not as evaluative as it should be, often focusing on the actions of the teacher rather than the impact of the teaching on students' progress. Improvements are in hand with already positive signs of success.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The wide range of subjects on offer to students provides topics that encourage reflection and students are continuously challenged to achieve their best.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is dedicated to the school and fulfils its roles and responsibilities well. Governors know that the school provides great care to vulnerable students and that their progress is at least as good as their peers. They are aware of how well the academy is doing compared to schools nationally. They know that students' attainment is high overall and that most groups, in particular low- and middle-attaining students, make excellent progress, especially in English. Governors have been on many training courses to help them ensure that students are safe and effectively monitor the work of the school. They use performance management effectively to monitor the work of the principal and headteacher and they are familiar with the school's internal systems for monitoring the quality of teaching. Governors effectively monitor the use of the pupil premium funding. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met and effective. For example, all the building workers on site have been appropriately checked.

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	101063
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	413360

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1399
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	389
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anita Neale
Principal	Jacqueline Valin
Headteacher	Wanda Golinska
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2007
Telephone number	02088752600
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