

Elthorne Park High School

Westlea Road, Hanwell, London, W7 2AH

Inspection dates 16–17 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Standards declined in 2012 and, although attainment in English has improved, the standards reached in science are not improving rapidly enough.
- The progress made by some groups of students, such as those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, is not consistent across the school and is not rapid enough.
- Those students for whom the school receives pupil premium funding are making slower progress than their peers in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- Although teaching is improving, teachers do not always set work that is at the right level of difficulty to help students to learn well.
- Some teachers' marking of students' work is not effective enough at helping students understand how to improve. This means that they do not always learn from their mistakes.
- Some subject leaders do not make sufficient checks to ensure that school policies are applied in the same way across the school.

The school has the following strengths

- Students' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good.
- Teachers use questions very well to probe and deepen students' understanding of their learning.
- The sixth form is good, offering a good range of courses which are well matched to students' aptitudes and abilities.
- The subjects and enrichment opportunities made available to students provide a balanced curriculum that contributes very well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Senior leaders and the governing body have a clear view of how successful the school can be and what needs to be done to improve it further. They have already demonstrated a clear commitment to improve the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 lessons, of which eight were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons as part of themed observations.
- Meetings were held with four groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and school staff, including middle and senior leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 46 responses to Parent View.
- Inspectors considered the responses to 61 staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including minutes of governors' meetings, the managing of staff performance, records relating to attendance, behaviour and checks on the quality of teaching and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Simon Blackburn, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
John Laver	Additional Inspector
Noureddin Khassal	Additional Inspector
Omar Ganie	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is broadly in line with the national average, but the proportion supported through school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school accesses additional vocational education for some of its Year 10 and Year 11 students through external providers such as MIT, a motor vehicle skills organisation.
- Just over half of the students are from minority ethnic groups. This is high compared to secondary schools nationally, and the proportion of students identified as speaking English as an additional language is also high.
- The school meets current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of all students, but particularly those who are disabled or who have special educational needs or who are supported by the pupil premium, by ensuring that all teachers plan lessons that take account of students' needs and abilities.
- Increase the proportion of students making good or better progress in science in Key Stage 4 and in English in Year 7 by ensuring that assessment information is used to provide demanding activities for all students.
- Improve teaching by ensuring that teachers:
 - mark students' work thoroughly so that all students know how to improve
 - allow time for students to act upon their feedback
 - check that new work and ideas are fully understood by all students
 - develop students' ability to work independently, especially in the sixth form.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels use the wide range of information about pupil progress to check that groups of pupils are not falling behind
 - ensuring that all subject leaders make careful checks on how whole-school policies are applied in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards at the end of Year 11 fell in 2012 to be in line with the national average. Attainment in mathematics remained high, but results in English and science were below the national average.
- Students enter the school with knowledge and skills that are in line with the national average, and in 2011 they made average progress. In 2012, students made good progress in mathematics but less than expected progress in English and science and their progress overall was below the national average.
- The school has a robust system to check on the progress of students. This shows that the proportion of current Year 11 students making expected progress in mathematics has been sustained and that English progress has improved. However, the progress made by students in science is not rapid enough.
- The progress made by students across the school is variable. Progress in English in Year 7 is too slow, while students in Years 8 and 9 make expected progress in English. Progress in science is good in Years 7 and 8 but less rapid in Year 9. Progress in mathematics is good in all year groups.
- The progress made by some groups of students, especially those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, is not consistent and is not rapid enough in most year groups.
- School leaders recognise that the progress of different groups of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is not consistent, and in some cases not rapid enough. They are working hard to ensure that any underachievement is recognised early and steps are taken to help students to improve rapidly. Students who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other students.
- The achievement of students supported by the pupil premium is also variable. The school's progress tracking information shows that gaps in attainment are closing in Years 10 and 11 in mathematics and English but that eligible students in Key Stage 3 are making less progress than their peers. The additional funding is used to support one-to-one and small group teaching and the majority of the interventions take place in Key Stage 4. The Year 7 catch-up premium supports summer schools to boost achievement as students join Year 7, but the school's own progress information shows that this is having only limited success.
- Students who attend off-site alternative provision make good progress in their studies and appreciate the opportunity to gain valuable workplace skills. Their attendance and behaviour are well managed and their achievement is carefully checked.
- The standards reached by students in the sixth form are good. They make good progress from their starting points and achieve well because of generally good teaching. As a result of feedback from students and parents, the school has made changes to the sixth form curriculum to introduce A-level teaching instead of the International Baccalaureate. This has led to an improvement in success rates and the proportion of students completing courses at the school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are examples of good teaching in all subjects in the school, but there is too much inconsistency in practice. In some lessons, teachers are not paying enough attention to the needs and abilities of those students who have barriers to their learning. This results in students who are disabled or who have special educational needs making less progress than other students and falling behind in their learning.
- In the least effective lessons, teachers often expect all students to complete the same work which results in the more able students finding the work too easy and in other students having gaps in their learning.
- There is a wide range of practice in the marking of students' work. Some marking gives students

very clear information about what they have done well and tells them precisely what they need to do to improve. However, some teachers do not give feedback that is clear enough to help students to move forward in their learning or to provide them with more demanding work. Students rarely respond to the feedback that teachers give so that its impact is limited.

- Where teaching is at its best, teachers plan exciting tasks that move along at a brisk pace. In an outstanding history lesson, students made very rapid progress in their understanding of political campaigning because they were highly motivated by tasks that were carefully designed to challenge them at their individual ability levels. The teacher made constant checks on their understanding to ensure that the work they were doing was still helping them to learn quickly. This on-going assessment was missing from some lessons, so that teachers could not always be sure about the effectiveness of the techniques they were using to help students learn.
- Almost all teachers use questions very well to probe and deepen students' understanding of their learning. This area of teaching has been a focus for development in the school recently, but it is not always used to judge progress of the whole group and to reshape tasks.
- Teaching in the sixth form is characterised by a positive working atmosphere and strong relationships. Students report that teachers are constantly available to provide extra help should they need it. However, learners are sometimes too passive in lessons and rely too much on their teachers to provide the next steps in their learning. Students are not always set work which encourages them to think for themselves or ask challenging questions.
- The small team of teaching assistants is used effectively to support students' learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students have good attitudes to learning and show respect for each other and their teachers. They enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. This is shown in their punctuality to lessons and improving attendance, which is consistently above the national average and improving.
- Students work well together in lessons. They enjoy the opportunity to debate political and moral issues in groups and listen to one another's views with courtesy and interest.
- Almost all parents consider the school to be safe and students' behaviour to be good. These views are confirmed by the students themselves. Students think that school rules are applied consistently and fairly and inspectors agreed, judging that behaviour is well managed in classrooms and around the school.
- The school keeps accurate and detailed records of all poor behaviour. There are very few incidents and these are dealt with appropriately. Students understand the different forms of bullying, including homophobic and racist bullying and know what to do if they witness it or experience it.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school campus is consistently good. Students are polite and considerate to one another and to visitors. Breaks and lunchtimes are calm and orderly. The number of fixed term exclusions has reduced steadily over time and is now below average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the well-structured improvement plans put in place by the headteacher and governing body have not yet resulted in consistently good progress and attainment for all groups of students in enough subjects across the school.
- The school's headteacher, senior leaders and governing body have accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have implemented strategies to improve the quality of teaching which are already resulting in accelerated rates of progress by students in some areas. They have a passion and commitment to improve all aspects of students' experience at school and particularly have a clear focus on raising attainment for all students.
- The school has rigorous systems to monitor the achievement of students accurately. Senior leaders use this information to gain an overview of the performance of subjects and year groups.

Some subject leaders use the data less effectively to target interventions to support groups of students in their areas of responsibility, with the result that some underachievement goes unchallenged.

- There is a lack of consistency in the application of some whole-school policies. The variability in the quality of teachers' marking and the way teachers plan to ensure all groups of students succeed is the result of insufficiently rigorous checks by leaders on the quality of practice in the classroom.
- Robust action has been taken by senior leaders to improve teaching by tackling underperformance. Decisions on whether teachers should be paid more are carefully considered in the light of whether their performance warrants it. Teachers self-assess their skills against the Teachers' Standards and this informs the school's training programme.
- The curriculum is well planned and meets the needs of students well. It provides a range of alternative pathways at both Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. These include vocational options that enable all students to pursue their interests. In Key Stage 3, students expressed great enjoyment of their enrichment lessons in which they choose an interest to study, for example Japanese, computers or graphics, for which they obtain stamps in a learning 'passport'. Year 7 complete the '8 x 8' challenge in which they complete eight challenges, such as charity fundraising or writing a review of a cultural event. As a result, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- The pathways in the sixth form are well planned to offer students of different aptitudes the support and challenge they require to succeed. For example, gifted and talented students receive support early in Year 12 to help them consider applications to the top universities. The sixth form is well led and managed, and the enrichment programme offers a wide range of opportunities for community contribution and volunteering.
- The local authority provides effective and valuable support to the school which has helped to improve governance and is currently focused on developing the effectiveness of the science department.
- Procedures for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body makes a very effective contribution to the school's strategic vision for the future. It holds the headteacher and senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school's performance. Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher and other senior leaders, but are increasingly seeking out first-hand evidence to ensure that planned actions are being carried out appropriately. Governors know how well the school is doing because they understand and challenge the student progress data that the school presents. Governors are clear on where teaching is good and they support the headteacher in ensuring that weaker teaching is eliminated through the performance management process. The governing body has a useful range of skills that it employs to the benefit of students and the governors maintain their governance skills through regular training. They manage the school's budget very well and keep a close eye on the impact of pupil premium funding.

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	131310
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	424614

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1002
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Beatrice Movaghar
Headteacher	Eliot Wong
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2008
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