

Eastbrook Comprehensive School

Dagenham Road, Dagenham, Essex, RM10 7UR

Inspection dates 8–9 October 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| 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 | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| 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

- From their starting points, students' progress is not consistently good across the school, particularly in mathematics.
- The progress of White British students and those students supported at school action plus is not as fast as other groups of students.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Students' progress across subjects and courses is inconsistent and outcomes are too variable.
- The quality of teaching is not good enough to ensure that all groups of students achieve as well as they should.
- Students' attitudes to learning are not consistently positive across year groups and subjects.
- In some lessons, teachers have not made effective use of the information they have about students' abilities to plan work which enables all students to make the best possible progress.
- Students are not given enough opportunities to practise and apply their literacy and numeracy skills across subjects.
- Leaders' actions to improve the quality of teaching and students' achievement have not had sufficient impact.
- Members of the governing body do not have a clear enough understanding of how to hold leaders to account for the impact of teaching over time on students' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Students' attendance has improved considerably over time. The school has taken effective action to reduce persistent absence.
- Students feel safe in school. Behaviour is improving and exclusions have fallen.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make good progress.
- The headteacher and senior leaders are committed to raising standards. Actions have already been taken to improve mathematics teaching and students are beginning to make better progress.
- Students are making better progress in English than in the past.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 35 lessons, including joint observations carried out with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made short visits to other lessons and tutor periods.
- Meetings were held with groups of students, the headteacher and other members of the senior team, heads of subject departments, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documents, including the school’s self-evaluation, school development plans, behaviour logs, safeguarding records, governing body records and documents relating to the management of teachers’ performance.
- Inspectors considered the views in 49 questionnaires returned by school staff and 47 responses from parents to the online survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

Russell Bennett, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Pamela Fearnley

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Colin Lower

Additional Inspector

Ann Sydney

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Eastbrook Comprehensive is an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is above average. Most of these students speak English as an additional language. The largest group is of Black African heritage. Around 40% of the students on roll are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. This additional funding is allocated by the government for groups of pupils including those looked after by the local authority, the children of service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is well above average, while the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- The number of students who join and leave the school at other than the usual times is well above average.
- A small number of students study vocational courses at other locations. These are Barking and Dagenham College, Havering Business Education Partnership and a local community farm.
- Eastbrook is one of four schools in the North East Consortium. The four schools cooperate to provide sixth form education in the local area.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. Twenty-four students attend the additional resource provision (ARP). These students have speech, language and communication needs.
- The school meets the 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 quality of teaching, so that it is consistently good or better, in order that all students make at least good progress, by:
 - eradicating any inadequate teaching
 - making sure that all teachers make effective use of information about students' progress to plan lessons which provide enough challenge for students of all abilities, including the most able
 - ensuring that all teachers' marking is consistent across all subjects, clearly showing students how to improve their work and checking that students act upon the comments made
 - using a greater variety of learning strategies so that all students can succeed in lessons
 - checking that all teachers have the same high expectations of what students can achieve and that they plan activities which enable students to take responsibility and develop more consistently positive attitudes to learning.
- Raise attainment, and accelerate progress across all key stages, particularly in mathematics, narrowing gaps in achievement between different groups of students, including White British and school action plus students.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by ensuring that:
 - the accuracy of evaluating the quality of teaching is improved by more closely checking the impact it has on students' achievement, including in the sixth form
 - the roles and skills of middle managers and are further developed through training and high-quality line management

- the use of intervention strategies, including the use of early entry in mathematics, enables students to gain the highest grades of which they are capable
- plans to develop strategies in literacy and numeracy across all subjects are quickly implemented and closely monitored to assess their impact on improving students' skills.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' achievement requires improvement because standards across subjects are not high enough, particularly in mathematics. Although students start school with attainment well below national averages, they do not make good enough gains in their learning by the time they take their GCSE examinations.
- Although there were some improvements in performance in 2012, the percentage of students who gained five or more A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, was well below the national average. Provisional data for 2013 show that the percentage of students attaining five A* to C grades has risen slightly.
- The percentage of students making expected progress in English has increased over time. Progress in Key Stage 3 mathematics is improving, with an increasing number of students on track to meet predicted grades.
- Most students who join the school in Year 7 and who take examinations make at least expected progress.
- Students from White British backgrounds and those supported at school action plus are not yet making expected progress. Analysis of 2013 GCSE results carried out by the school shows a marginal rise in the progress made by White British boys in English, but their progress in mathematics remains below expectations. Some of these students join the school at times other than the usual start time in Year 7.
- Students studying vocational courses make good progress because the qualifications they take are suited to their needs.
- Disabled students and the majority of students with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers. Students in the additional resource provision make good progress from their individual starting points as a result of the high-quality support they receive.
- Students who speak English as an additional language, many of whom join the school late, achieve well. Students who are eligible for pupil premium funding benefit from the additional support they receive and the gap is narrowing with other students. Black African students make at least expected progress.
- In 2012, the gap between students eligible for pupil premium funding and other students was nearly a grade below in English and mathematics. Data available for 2013 show that the gap has narrowed to half a grade below in both subjects.
- The school enters some students early for GCSE examinations. The use of early entry in mathematics has not enabled all students, including the most able, to achieve the highest grades of which they are capable.
- Year 7 students who are eligible for additional funding receive extra help with reading and literacy skills. This help includes support from additional adults. As a result, their progress in English is improving.
- Although most students move onto Year 13 from Year 12, outcomes in the sixth form are variable across subjects and courses. Attainment at AS level is improving over time, although remains below the national average. The smaller numbers who continue to A level make expected gains in their learning. Students on BTEC courses make at least expected progress.
- Students who attend alternative educational providers make expected progress from their individual starting points.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time requires improvement because it is too variable across subjects. There is a small amount of teaching that is inadequate. As a result, students' achievement is not good.

- In some lessons, teachers do not plan activities which are closely matched to students' different abilities. This means that the most able are not fully challenged and those students who struggle do not receive enough support to complete their work. When this is the case, students become disinterested and do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Although teachers mark regularly and provide helpful feedback to students about the quality of their work, the next steps students are expected to take are not always made clear. As a result, students do not always make the most rapid and secure gains in their understanding of how to improve their work and make better progress.
- In lessons where the teaching is good, work is well matched to different abilities and provides challenge, which engages students and enables them to make better progress. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations of what all students can achieve; they skilfully adjust their teaching to deepen students' thinking. In a Year 12 psychology lesson, the teacher's effective use of probing questioning enabled students to quickly grasp complex ideas and make good gains in their understanding.
- When teachers carefully plan opportunities for students to work together, students respond very well. In an English lesson, students were analysing how writers use language to create different effects. The use of a model text and challenging questions enabled students to make decisive gains in their understanding. The teacher provided effective opportunities for the students to learn from one another and they made good progress as a result.
- Support provided by additional adults sometimes makes a good contribution to students' learning, particularly when students who need extra help are prompted and challenged to think independently. However, this approach is not consistent in all lessons.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium receive effective additional support. This includes tuition and help at Saturday School. While this extra help has contributed to a slight increase in their achievement at GCSE, in lessons, teachers do not always focus closely enough on the individual needs of these students. .

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- In lessons where teachers' expectations are high and activities are well matched to their needs, students show positive attitudes and are keen to learn. Occasionally, when teachers have not planned lessons which are as challenging and engaging for all students, some students become very passive and display less interest in what they are learning. A small minority of students show less positive attitudes to learning and can disrupt the learning of others.
- Most students behave well around school. They are friendly and get along well with each other. Occasionally, a small number display boisterous behaviour in corridors. The great majority of sixth form students demonstrate responsible attitudes and commitment to their learning.
- The school promotes the importance of a responsible community and students from different backgrounds mix well. They show interest in different cultures and teachers provide opportunities to promote social, moral and cultural understanding. For example, Year 8 students showed interest and engagement in a teacher's explanation of the significance of dowries in African culture.
- Attendance is improving over time and is broadly average. The school carefully tracks the attendance of different groups of students, including those who attend off-site centres. Swift action is taken if a student does not attend regularly. The school has taken effective action to reduce persistent absence.
- The school is a caring community, where individuals are known and valued. High priority is given to ensuring students are well supported, particularly where circumstances may make them vulnerable.
- Students say that they feel safe. Some bullying occurs, but students feel confident that teachers will respond quickly when it does and take effective action to prevent it from continuing. They demonstrate a good understanding of the different types of bullying and understand the risks associated with the internet.

- A small proportion of parents who expressed their views via the online questionnaire, Parent View, have some concerns that bullying is not always effectively dealt with. Inspectors found arrangements for dealing with bullying to be appropriate.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, while leaders have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, the actions they have taken to improve the quality of teaching have not had sufficient impact. As a result, the achievement of students has not improved rapidly enough.
- Focus weeks carried out by leaders provide a close scrutiny on the performance of different subject areas and this information is reported to governors. However, the findings from these have not always been used effectively to drive sustained improvement and students' progress across different subjects is variable. There has not been a close enough scrutiny of the impact of teaching through assessing the rates of progress made by students in lessons and over time.
- Some subject leaders rigorously check the quality of teaching, marking, assessment and feedback. The school recognises that there are continued training and support needs, particularly for less experienced middle managers, to enable them to become more effective in diagnosing how teaching in their departments needs to improve.
- Recent changes of staffing in mathematics have strengthened leadership. Although the school recognises there is much further to go to improve the quality of teaching in this subject, there are strategic plans in place to bring about more rapid improvement. As a result of targeted interventions and improved tracking, students are making better progress in Key Stage 3.
- The headteacher and senior leaders are committed to raising standards. They are realistic and clear about what needs to improve further. Leaders have managed a difficult period of staff reductions as a result of a fall in student admissions.
- The headteacher has taken some decisive action to eliminate weak teaching, but there is still more to do. Systems to manage the performance of teachers are used to make decisions about pay. A more comprehensive appraisal policy has recently been put into place, but there has not previously been a close enough link made between the impact of teaching on achievement and performance management.
- New systems for checking the progress that students are making have been introduced recently, including an electronic tracking tool. Senior leaders have recognised the need for more regular scrutiny of data showing the progress that students are making and have increased the number of assessment checkpoints. This is enabling a more strategic analysis of the achievement of different groups of students.
- The school's strategy to improve students' literacy skills has brought about some improvements. For example, students are more regularly required to respond to marking and improve the quality of their written work. However, this is not consistently applied across subjects and year groups. While there are plans in place to develop numeracy across the curriculum through the appointment of an additional member of staff, opportunities for students to develop these skills across the curriculum are currently limited. As a result, students' progress is less rapid than it should be.
- The curriculum offers sufficient breadth and balance across Key Stages 3 and 4. Recent changes to courses on offer have raised achievement in some subject areas, including physical education. In the sixth form, students benefit from being able to select from a wide range of academic and vocational courses across the consortium schools. The school makes suitable arrangements to provide advice and guidance. Students are supported to make informed decisions about the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- Although there is a strategic plan for the development of the sixth form, the school's sixth form leaders have not ensured that there is a fully effective focus on improving the quality of teaching to raise students' achievement.
- School leaders clearly communicate an ethos which promotes equality and fosters good relations

between members of the school community. Any form of discrimination is not tolerated. Where incidences of racist or homophobic behaviour are reported, these are tackled robustly.

- The school has links with schools in other European countries. This, together with contact with other local schools, makes an effective contribution to students' awareness of different cultures and their social development.
- The local authority has provided some good advice for senior leaders and governors in identifying areas for improvement via the school's link adviser, but has had less success in delivering the specific support needed to drive more rapid improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have worked effectively with the headteacher to identify priorities for improvement and make sure that finances are carefully managed during a period which has seen a fall in student admissions. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are committed to its continued improvement. They ensure that pupil premium funding is used to benefit the students, although do not fully evaluate the impact of interventions for Year 7 students who are eligible for catch-up funding. They receive regular reports from the headteacher and presentations from leaders in the school, providing them with information about how the school is performing. They receive training and support from the local authority's link adviser. They ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements, including those relating to safeguarding. However, governors do not use the data they receive to fully analyse the impact of teaching on students' achievement or to ask challenging enough questions of leaders about the school's performance.

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

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| Unique reference number | 101243 |
| Local authority | Barking and Dagenham |
| Inspection number | 424676 |

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

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|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Type of school | Secondary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 11–18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 944 |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 160 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Alan Stevens |
| Headteacher | Valerie Dennis |
| Date of previous school inspection | 10–11 January 2013 |
| Telephone number | 020 8270 4567 |
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