

# Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form

Clissold Road, Hackney, London, N16 9EX

**Inspection dates** 23–24 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Achievement is good and rising. The vast majority of students make at least the nationally expected rate of progress. Students' progress in mathematics is particularly good.
- Students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium do well. Their achievement reflects the excellent support and guidance they receive.
- Students who speak English as an additional language and disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress and achieve well over time.
- The sixth form is good and improving. Sixth form students achieve well. Achievement in History, Economics and Photography is consistently strong.
- Teaching is usually good, and some is outstanding.
- Staff are exceptionally successful in creating harmonious relationships with all students.
- Students have positive attitudes to learning. They say they feel very safe in school, are proud of their school and are very well cared for. Parents overwhelmingly support this view.
- The curriculum is well planned to meet students' individual needs for their futures. All go on at age 16 to sixth form, further education, training or employment.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well, and underpinned by the school's strong respect for each student as a valued individual.
- The quality of leadership and management by senior leaders and governors is good. They are clearly focused on driving continued improvement of teaching and students' achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There needs to be more teaching that is outstanding for all students to make outstanding progress.
- The staff training programme should be developed further to enhance the skills of every member of staff.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 53 lessons, of which 13 were observations shared with senior leaders. In addition, they made a number of shorter visits to lessons and tutorial sessions.
- Inspectors held meetings with the members of the governing body, the headteacher, other leaders and managers, and groups of staff.
- Inspectors held meetings with four groups of students, representing all age groups and backgrounds. Discussions also took place with students informally.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and reviewed a range of documents, including: the school's own evaluation of how well it is doing, its improvement plan and statistical information about students' achievement, attendance and exclusions.
- Inspectors considered the 256 responses to the online Parent View survey. The 77 responses to the staff questionnaires were also considered. Additional comments were received from parents, and consideration was given to the views expressed by families in response to the school's own surveys completed by almost 200 parents and over half of all students.

## Inspection team

Rob Ridout, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Davies	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector
Gill Walley	Additional Inspector
Nasim Butt	Additional Inspector
Colin Lower	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school's specialisms are: creativity, art, mathematics, science, and inclusion.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium is above average. This is additional government funding to support particular groups of students, such as those known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above the national average.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is also well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The school does not use any additional external services for students off-site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Make all teaching at least good and increase the proportion that is consistently outstanding to raise achievement further by ensuring that:
  - what teachers ask students to do is always challenging enough based on what students already know and are capable of doing
  - students are more actively involved in finding things out for themselves rather than relying too heavily on their teachers
  - the questions teachers ask always make students think deeply and encourage them to explain their answers at length
  - marking within and across subject departments always informs students of what they need to do to improve and thus to reach their minimum target grades.
- Further develop the leadership and management of teaching by ensuring that the whole school and specific subject team training programme are closely matched to the individual needs of every member of staff to enable them to teach even better and help students to achieve at an outstanding level.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students join the school with attainment that is generally slightly below the national average. In recent years, the proportion of students achieving five or more GCSE passes at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics has risen from 49% in 2010 to 68% in 2013 and is above the national average.
- In 2013, the proportion of students gaining A\* to C GCSE grades in English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and science was well above the national average of 2012. The proportion of students achieving the higher A\* to A grades in English and mathematics was also well above national averages. Results in art, photography and physical education were significantly better than those nationally. These results reflect that all groups, including the most able, make good progress.
- Over the last three years, the proportions of students making good progress in English has been at least in line with that of other students in the country. Students' excellent progress in mathematics is reflected in GCSE results that have remained well above the national average. Reliable school data on students' current performance indicate that this upward trend is set to continue.
- There is no significant difference in achievement between students from all ethnic backgrounds, with all achieving equally well. This shows the school's success in tackling discrimination.
- Students who are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up funding for literacy are developing their reading and writing skills well, but it is too early to evaluate the full impact of the school's actions involving greater use of the library and booster classes. The 'Big Write' project across Year 7, the library refurbishment and a range of reading initiatives promote literacy across the whole school and are received well by students. Targeted support is provided for students who have weak numeracy skills, accelerating their progress.
- The progress of students receiving additional funding through the pupil premium has varied year on year. Their attainment is significantly above that of similar students nationally in both mathematics and English and is rising. However, these students attain, on average, approximately one grade lower in English and mathematics than most other students in the school. Despite the effective action taken by the school in recent years to improve their achievement, the gap has sometimes widened because of the school's success in so successfully raising the achievement of other students. During the inspection, inspectors observed eligible students making good progress in lessons and achieving well from the exceptionally helpful support provided.
- Progress made by disabled students and those who have special educational needs is good and they achieve well.
- The school enters a number of students at the end of Year 10 for GCSE examinations in one of the aspects of triple Science. In addition the school offers a second qualification in Additional Mathematics in Year 11 for the most able mathematicians. Data showing these students' performance together with evidence of the work seen during the inspection show that the school's early entry and extension strategy is successful and contributes to students' good overall achievement.
- Attainment in the sixth form has been rising over recent years. Data provided by the school confirm that 2013 AS and A-level results are strong with AS showing a particularly notable improvement on 2012. Students in the sixth form have high value added in the very large majority of subjects and have been achieving better, year on year. Improvements to teaching and better guidance have led to the vast majority of students now staying on to complete courses successfully. There is consistently outstanding attainment and achievement in History, Economics and Photography.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- The quality of teaching is good because leaders have continued to rigorously check and tackle inadequate teaching effectively. Leaders' action is leading to better achievement at both GCSE and A level, including for the most able. Teaching is good and a proportion of that seen during the inspection was outstanding.
- A little of the teaching still requires improvement, particularly when teachers do not use assessment of students' progress and attainment closely enough to set work at the right level of difficulty for all abilities. In these situations, the work set is not challenging enough for some students and unhelpful to them making more rapid progress.
- In most lessons, students are keen to learn and make good progress. Teaching is well planned and teachers make clear to students what is to be learned. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and their enthusiastic delivery engages students fully in their learning. They use effective questioning to encourage students to think for themselves and develop their own understanding further. However, some teachers use questioning less effectively, leading to students' over-reliance on the teacher for direction. In these situations, students are passive and make slower progress.
- Students say they are taught well and enjoy their lessons. The good relationships between students and teachers, and between students themselves, promote a positive climate for learning. Where teaching is outstanding, students invariably work well together or get on sensibly with their work by themselves.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good, with some that is outstanding. As a result, students make rapid progress in developing their reading, speaking, writing and number skills. This equips them well for future education, training or employment.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to supporting the learning of disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- Some marking of students' work is good and provides them with clear and specific written comments that tell them what they need to do to improve their work further. However, this good practice is not always applied within or across every subject. In addition, teachers do not always ensure that students follow up the comments written on the work. This means opportunities to take learning even further are missed and, as a result, students do not always make the rapid progress they might.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good and sometimes outstanding. Work that is set challenges students of all abilities and provides the chance for students to work effectively both in groups and independently. Teachers' assessment of students' work enables them to understand what they need to improve and how to do it. Students' revised work is regularly checked by their peers and by teachers to confirm a better understanding. Written comments and feedbacks in lessons strongly support learning.

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

- The inspection team found students to be most welcoming. All are very polite, well mannered and courteous towards each other and to adults. Students from all backgrounds get on well with each other.
- Attitudes to learning are best seen in the sixth form, where students show mature attitudes to their work in all subjects. The school is working hard to foster and encourage Key Stage 4 students to adopt a similarly excellent approach to their work in all their examination subjects.
- An overwhelming proportion of parents responding to the online Parent View survey indicate they believe their children to be happy, safe and very well looked after at Stoke Newington. Students confirm this view and report that instances of bullying are extremely rare and dealt with effectively by the school.
- Students say they feel very safe in school because teachers and the other adults look after them

very well. They learn about keeping themselves safe, including how to use the internet without risk and about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

- Students are very proud of their school and enjoy being there. The vast majority behave well around school and in lessons. They get on exceptionally well together. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are treated with respect and are encouraged to play a full part in all school activities.
- Students' behaviours in lessons are extremely good. However, in some instances, students were compliant and completed the tasks asked of them but they did not show the personal drive, motivation or thirst to acquire new knowledge, particularly when teaching does not fully challenge them.
- The school has very thorough procedures for checking on attendance and promoting its importance. Consequently, attendance has risen steadily for all groups of students, including those in more vulnerable circumstances. In the current academic year, attendance exceeds 95%, which is higher than the national average last year.
- Rates of exclusions have been high in the past, but instances of fixed-term and permanent exclusions are much lower, due to the actions of the school to give appropriate support, challenge and structure to all students. The Student Support Team and the school's Impact Learning Area very effectively support and moderate the behaviours of a few students requiring such interventions.
- Overall, the school operates a behaviour management policy which most teachers are enforcing rigorously. Many parents, students and staff believe that behaviour has improved significantly as a consequence and is now good. The leadership team successfully manages the delicate balance between maintaining consistently high expectations of behaviour and sustaining the strong and positive relationships that clearly exist within the school.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher's strong leadership provides the school with a very clear view of how successful it is and how it might become outstanding. Other leaders and managers at senior and middle level are ambitious for the students, able to evidence what the school does well, describe initiatives and developments and identify where the school should do things better. Teamwork is strong in the drive to secure improvements.
- Leaders and managers at all levels also monitor the quality of teaching regularly and rigorously. There is a comprehensive staff-development programme, including the sharing of good practice. Where necessary leaders tackle weak teaching most effectively. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and students' achievement has risen markedly. However, training opportunities are not always tailored closely enough to improving the practice of each individual member of staff, so students' achievement does not fully benefit.
- The checking on the work of subject leadership is rigorous. School leaders have supported and challenged less effective team leaders robustly and this too is contributing positively to the improvements secured to achievement, especially in English, mathematics and science.
- Performance management systems are effective and many teachers express their appreciation of the high quality of professional training provided by the school. The school works hard to develop leadership capacity of subject leaders, support school self-evaluation and train governors.
- The curriculum provides a good range of courses in response to the learning needs and interests of students. The needs of the most able and the most vulnerable are well met through carefully thought out programmes designed to support them. The school successfully meets all students' learning needs and so no students currently attend off-site provision.
- The leadership and management of the sixth form are good. The sixth form curriculum is planned effectively with demanding academic opportunities in response to what students and parents want. A very high proportion of students progress to higher education supported by the

strong pastoral system and excellent support for the applications process to universities.

- The leadership and management of the school's creativity and inclusion specialisms are strong. The school has a good and well-deserved reputation locally for meeting the needs of all its students and supporting the community outside its gates. The inspection team witnessed a production of a '*A Midsummer's Night Dream*' by Year 7 students for primary pupils. Inspectors were impressed by the positive impact on learning of the many activities organised through the 'creative day' which students thoroughly enjoyed. Students' personal development and well-being are particularly well provided for.
- Leaders and managers are extremely successful in including every student fully in the life of the school and in making sure that every student has an equal chance to succeed. This results in an exceptionally cohesive school community in which every student feels safe and valued. Discrimination in all its forms is rejected. A culture of tolerance and respect is promoted at every opportunity by the school. The school has taken a lead nationally in tackling homophobia.
- The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. A group of students who had been at significant risk of permanent exclusion speak positively about the lengths to which the school went to support them manage their own behaviours more positively and because of these actions, they model best behaviours to their peers and are all now looking forward to going on to higher education. Educational and vocational guidance for all students is very helpful to them and all progress successfully in taking their next steps in education or training.
- Very strong relationships have been developed with parents. The vast majority of parents strongly support the school and agree with its drive to further raise the quality of teaching to even higher levels.
- Safeguarding requirements are met.
- The local authority supports the school well and the School Improvement Partner is a regular visitor to the school and offers clear, appropriate advice on leadership and management and how the school can judge its performance accurately.
- **The governance of the school:**

Governors provide both good challenge and support for the school and its leadership. They interpret the data about the progress and attainment of students accurately and make good use of the training they have received to evaluate the quality of teaching in the school. The leaders of the governing body are well informed and use their experience of safeguarding and the pupil premium spending to ensure the school's compliance with best practice. The governing body manages the school's finances and resources effectively and has a good appreciation of its role in overseeing performance management of staff. It makes sure the link between students' achievement and staff salaries is active.

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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100279
<b>Local authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	429558

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>	11–18
<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>	1520
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	160
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Henry Stewart
<b>Headteacher</b>	Annie Gammon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7241 9600
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7241 9699
<b>Email address</b>	annie.gammon@sns.hackney.sch.uk

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