

# Lister Community School

St Mary's Road, Plaistow, London, E13 9AE

**Inspection dates** 27–28 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Students make good progress in English and mathematics from their starting points, which are often well below average. Since the previous inspection, standards by the end of Year 11 have been moving closer towards the national average.
- Teaching over time is good and, in a growing number of lessons, is outstanding. Teachers know the students well and plan activities which interest and challenge them.
- Students from different groups, including disabled students, those with special educational needs and those who receive additional funding, make good progress. Their needs are quickly understood and high quality support is put in place.
- The school provides excellent opportunities to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It uses its expertise in performing arts well to help students develop as reflective, caring, thoughtful individuals.
- Students are keen learners. Most have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. They embrace responsibilities and willingly become mediators to help other students.
- The school's leaders have kept an insightful and determined focus on raising standards by improving the quality of teaching across the school. They make regular checks on information about students' progress so they know what is needed to improve further.
- The governors know the school extremely well and are highly effective in challenging the staff to raise standards even further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small proportion of teaching requires improvement because tasks are not always matched to the abilities of all students.
- Teachers do not always encourage students to respond to their written comments.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 50 lessons or parts of lessons, including additional support provided through intervention work. There were 18 joint observations with school leaders. Inspectors also visited a school assembly.
- Meetings were held with various senior and middle leaders, and also with the Chair of the Governing Body plus two other governors and the school’s improvement partner from the local authority.
- Students’ views were sought informally throughout the inspection, during lessons and break times. In addition, an inspector met with a group of Year 9 and Year 11 students to discuss their future careers and options.
- Staff views were noted during the inspection and 68 staff questionnaires were also analysed.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school’s own data on students’ progress, policies, planning and monitoring information.
- Inspectors paid close attention to school information on attendance, behaviour and all aspects of safeguarding.
- Parents’ and carers’ views were taken into account through the school’s own parent surveys. There were not enough responses to the online Parent View survey to enable inspectors to gain information from this source.

## Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector
Steve Nelson	Additional Inspector
Samuel Ofori Kyereh	Additional Inspector
Evelyn Riley	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school and it has a specialist unit for deaf students, which currently has 14 on its roll.
- The majority of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the proportion speaking English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided for looked after children, those known to be entitled to free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed forces, is well above average.
- Thirteen students currently attend alternative provision at Newham College where they follow work-related courses, including mechanics, hair and beauty, and construction.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a specialism in the performing arts and has recently been selected to become a partner in the Music in Secondary Schools Trust.

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

- Improve teaching so that all is consistently good or better by:
  - making sure that the work provided is always well matched to the ability levels of students, particularly the least able.
- Encourage students, during lessons, to make written responses to teachers' marking comments, so that they fully engage in a learning dialogue which helps them to know clearly how to improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- When students join the school in Year 7, their standards are generally well below those of their peers nationally. The school quickly develops their skills in reading, writing and mathematics to enable them to learn well in other subjects. Students are placed in small groups for extra help, which secures their good progress across a range of subjects and years groups.
- The proportion of students achieving five or more GCSE passes at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, has risen since the previous inspection. In 2012, this figure was 52% and in 2013 it rose to 55%, moving closer to the national average of 60%. In mathematics, the proportions of students attaining A\* to C grades at GCSE has risen considerably and is in line with the national average. English literature has been highly successful as an improving subject and the proportion of students gaining A\* and A grades is above the national average. This is also true for English language. Humanities is a real strength of the school.
- Good teaching throughout the school has meant that students' achievement in English and mathematics has improved at all levels across the school. All groups of students make good progress, including those from minority ethnic groups.
- The school has entered students early for mathematics and English GCSE examinations and this has had a positive impact on results in these subjects, with more students achieving higher grades as a result. Students go on to study further mathematics and have additional time for English literature.
- The school makes good use of pupil premium funding, establishing tracking systems to monitor progress closely, funding clubs and trips, such as to the Eden Project, to boost aspirations and by providing specialised staff in school for additional support. The student counsellor and school/home support worker are well known and valued by students. As a result, students supported by pupil premium funding achieve ahead of those nationally and are closing gaps in achievement within the school. At the end of last year, these students were a third of a grade behind their peers in English and a grade behind in mathematics. Current school information shows that progress is in line with that of others in the school and gaps in attainment are even narrower.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs, including those who are deaf, achieve in line with other students and make good progress because the school creates a package of support for each individual student tailored to their particular needs.
- Students who speak English as an additional language receive good support. Specialist staff help students to catch up quickly and make good progress, achieving standards ahead of their peers nationally.
- Most of the students who attend courses outside school also achieve their English and mathematics qualifications and progress onto further education or apprenticeships or into the workplace.
- Additional funding to boost the learning for students coming into Year 7 who need extra literacy and numeracy support is very well used. A well developed and innovative induction fortnight during the summer term, a literacy focussed summer school for two weeks before the start of term and continued support in small groups, taught by specialists, helps to boost their learning. This has contributed to their rapid progress when joining the school.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- The overall quality of teaching is good and there are some examples of outstanding practice.
- In an outstanding music lesson, Year 11 students made rapid progress in developing their skills, while practising chord progressions on the piano in preparation for their GCSE exams. They confidently performed in front of the class, encouraged by the teacher's outstanding subject knowledge and expertise in the exceptionally well-resourced music room. The use of computers, keyboards and other technologies enables students of all abilities to achieve exceptionally well

with maximum levels of enjoyment.

- Almost all of the teachers set high expectations and the pace of lessons is typically swift, with a good variety of challenging activities and opportunities for students to be involved throughout.
- A small minority of teaching is not yet consistently good. Although most teachers plan lessons which ensure that all groups and abilities are provided for, this is not always the case when planning for the less able students. They are sometimes given the same tasks as the majority of the class and this limits what they can access and accomplish in a lesson.
- Teachers regularly check students' understanding during lessons and provide support where needed. They refer to prior learning and use homework to extend students' thinking beyond the lesson.
- Teaching assistants and support staff for the deaf students make a strong contribution to students' good learning and progress. They know their students well and are sensitive to their needs, providing the right balance of support at the right time. As a result, they help to ensure that all students make the best progress that they can.
- Teachers are adept in linking activities to students' targets so that they understand what is expected of them and providing verbal feedback on how they can achieve greater success. There are some good examples of written marking, for example in English. However, students are not always reminded or encouraged to make their own written response to comments, showing that they truly understand how to make further improvements.

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

- Students are generally polite and well behaved around the school. They respond well to the good quality teaching they receive and show their positive attitudes to learning. Students cooperate well with staff and each other and greatly benefit from their mixed age tutor groups.
- In the very small proportion of lessons where teaching is less engaging, students occasionally lose their focus and become restless, but generally respond to teachers' reminders about their behaviour. The school manages behaviour well and staff are consistent in their use of the school behaviour policy. Students appreciate this and older students say that behaviour has improved enormously over recent years.
- The staff who responded to the questionnaire agree that behaviour in lessons and around school has improved. The school's own parent surveys show the high level of praise which parents and carers express for the way in which the school has successfully created a harmonious, safe community. Students say that they feel very safe.
- Students express great pride in their school community and many become student leaders and mediators. The head boy and head girl have established themselves as positive role models and former students who have been to university have returned to support and mentor others. There is a culture of high aspiration and students are motivated to achieve their goals in life. Students treat each other with mutual respect and are tolerant of each other's differences. There are few racist incidents and discrimination is not tolerated.
- Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively when it occurs. Students understand risk and know about different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe, especially on the internet. This is because the school raises their awareness through assemblies and teaching in different subjects. There is also a community police officer on site whom students value and hold in high regard.
- Attendance is rising to slightly above average levels and has improved since the last inspection. The number of exclusions has reduced. The school has been active in promoting good attendance and continues to tackle persistent absence through its close working partnerships with families who struggle in this area.
- Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because the behaviour of a very small minority of

students must still be managed by staff. The school is continuing to involve students in checking the behaviour of others and helping individual students to develop their own strategies to manage themselves. The student support centre and established partnerships outside school are proving to be productive in working with individual students.

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

- The Headteacher's clear vision and determined leadership have brought about significant changes since the last inspection, with a consistent focus on raising the quality of teaching and developing a culture of learning and high aspirations across the school.
  - School leaders' strong focus on teaching and learning is one of the main reasons why the quality of teaching has improved and more is now consistently good and outstanding. Best practice in teaching is shared amongst staff, who are reflective and readily engage in constructive feedback and training focused around teaching. Mutual respect is at the heart of the positive relationships which pervade the school.
  - School leaders have worked closely with their improvement partner from the local authority who has supported the school well and assisted the school in bringing in a raft of external specialists to develop accurate quality assurance systems and regularly check that improvement is taking place across the school.
  - The school reviews all aspects of its work thoroughly and acts quickly to address any gaps so that the pace of improvements is not slowed. School development plans are realistic and sharply focused. Plans to raise standards are linked to close checks on the quality of teaching, learning and progress, and these are shared by all leaders at all levels in the school. Discerning recruitment and development of talented teaching staff and subject leaders in recent years have led to marked improvements across the school. Strong leadership of the unit for deaf students ensures they make progress in line with their peers.
  - Leaders make sure that teachers' pay and performance link directly to whole-school priorities and students' progress. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching so that more is now good and outstanding.
  - Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted and the school makes sure that every student has an equal chance of success. No student is denied access to anything the school has to offer. Pupil premium funding has been especially well used to promote literacy across the school, particularly through the appointment of the new school librarian, as well as through reading challenges and quizzes. Every student carries a book and reads for at least 20 minutes every day.
  - The range of subjects, courses and extra-curricular activities is extensive and meets the needs of students very well. From Year 7, pottery, art and Mandarin are taught and every student has their own musical instrument. In addition, the varied assemblies promoting common values, added to the musical performances, complement the strong, inclusive dimension of the school. Few opportunities are missed to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is a key strength of the school.
  - Leaders liaise closely with other providers to make sure that the students are attending and performing well in their studies away from the main school site
- **The governance of the school:**
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and aspects for further development. Governors are skilled and their work with school leaders has been essential in securing improvements in the school. They have an insightful understanding of information on students' progress, and use the latest information available to make comparisons with other schools. Governors are committed to raising the quality of teaching and maintaining high standards of behaviour. They know where the very best teaching and learning exist in the school and the structures in place for improving teaching. They make
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regular visits to check directly on key areas of the school's work and meet with staff, who present up-to-the-minute progress reports. 'Governor warning' meetings with students allow them to keep a close eye on behaviour and also to pass on a strong and consistent message to parents regarding behaviour. Financial resources are efficiently managed, including pupil premium funding, and governors know how this impacts on students' achievement. Governors check that targets to improve staff performance are reviewed and that teachers' pay is linked to how well students are achieving. They check that the provision for deaf students is well run and that safeguarding consistently meets requirements.

## 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>	102778
<b>Local authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	425566

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>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1286
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Wood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anthony Wilson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1–2 February 2012
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