

Langdon Park Community School

Byron Street, London, E14 0RZ

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2014

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		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement in English and in mathematics has dipped and the proportion of students gaining grades A* to C is significantly below the national average.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school and this means that students learn better in some subjects than in others.
- Teachers do not always give students enough time to respond to the comments they have made when marking their work.
- Subject leaders have not had enough time to develop their leadership skills sufficiently. They are not involved enough in monitoring the quality of teaching in their areas.
- Senior leaders have not ensured that teaching and achievement remained good. Governors are well informed and supportive of the new headteacher's systems to monitor and check progress and raise achievement. The changes are beginning to have an effect, but they have not yet had time to impact fully on GCSE results.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has quickly gained the support of the staff. He has introduced changes to raise achievement and improve the way that teaching and its impact on learning are improving across the school.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding very well. It provides very good additional support and those receiving it achieve ahead of others in school.
- Students feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is high and they are positive and keen to succeed. Many have set themselves ambitious goals for their next steps in life. Students are respectful of staff and each other and this adds to the friendly atmosphere of the school.
- The new sixth form is good. It has been a welcome addition to the school and has raised the aspirations of the younger students.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 lessons or parts of lessons, including additional support sessions for students. There were 12 joint observations with school leaders.
- Meetings were held with various senior and middle leaders, and with the Chair of the Governing body and a local authority governor. An inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors held meetings with three groups of students and sought their views throughout the inspection.
- Staff views were noted during the inspection and 56 staff questionnaires were reviewed.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents. These included the school's own data on students' progress, as well as policies, planning and monitoring information.
- Inspectors examined school information on attendance and behaviour and all aspects of safeguarding.
- Parents' and carers' views were taken into account through the 10 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and the school's own parent surveys.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Tusha Chakraborti	Additional inspector
Avtar Sherri	Additional inspector
Janice Williams	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized secondary school and has recently opened a sixth form as part of the sixth form east consortium of four local schools. There are currently 22 students in Year 12.
- The new headteacher took up his post at the start of the school year.
- The majority of the students are from minority ethnic groups, with about two thirds coming from the Bangladeshi community. The next largest group is students of White British heritage. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is slightly above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of students 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 those with a parent in the armed forces, is well above average.
- The school does not use any alternative placements for its students and all are educated on the school site.
- A few students are eligible for Year 7 and 8 catch-up funding. This is additional government funding for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2.
- 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?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that there is more good teaching which helps students to learn, and understand well, by making sure that all teachers:
 - set work which is hard enough and especially challenges the most able students
 - regularly allow students to check their own and others' work to show what they know and understand
 - allow time in lessons for students to read through marking comments, make their corrections and write their own responses, so that they are more involved in helping themselves improve.
- Raise achievement in English and mathematics so that standards are closer to national averages and all students make at least good progress in lessons.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that subject leaders are more involved in checking the quality of teaching in their areas, and that this is always linked to how well the students are learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Despite improvements in recent years, and success in some subjects such as modern foreign languages, achievement in several subjects is not consistently good within the school. The proportion of students gaining A* to C grades in English has dropped in the last year to significantly below the national average. The most able students do not always secure the highest grades. Too few students make good progress in mathematics.
- When students join the school in Year 7, their standards are generally well below those reached by their peers nationally. The school is becoming more effective in identifying students' needs early on. It uses additional funding to provide suitable support before the students join the school. This is so that they can develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics, and learn well in other subjects. This is beginning to have an impact on rates of progress across subjects and years.
- Variability in the quality of teaching and the checking of students' progress throughout the school has meant that their achievement in English and mathematics has dipped. Achievement in mathematics is lagging behind that in English. Progress is similar for the majority of groups of students, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, as well as for boys and girls.
- There is a strong commitment to developing students' literacy skills. Individual students receive additional support in reading and phonics (teaching of the links between letters and sounds). However, the full impact of the school's new programme is not yet showing in students' rates of progress in their reading and writing skills.
- The school does not enter students early for examinations in mathematics and English.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium achieve ahead of their peers in school. The gaps show that they are edging ahead in English by almost a quarter of a GCSE grade and in line with others in mathematics. Their progress in mathematics is much better than that of those who do not receive the funding. This is because of the wide range of support, including one-to-one tuition, regular checks and after-school clubs and enterprise activities, which are enjoyed and valued by the students.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve in line with other students in the school. Some make good progress because the school provides support packages for individual students, tailored to their particular needs.
- Recent changes and improved systems to check progress and provide additional support for students are beginning to show signs that the dip in English and mathematics results is likely to be reversed. School mock exam results and teacher assessments indicate that 2014 results should be closer to national averages.
- Although in its early stages, achievement in the sixth form is good. Students' early AS-level assessment results, coupled with the good and better progress seen in lessons, show that they are getting off to a good start and are on track to achieve their target grades.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The overall quality of teaching requires improvement because, although there is an increasing proportion of good and better teaching, there are still too many inconsistencies. This is limiting the rates of students' progress.
- Teachers use different ways to explain and help students to learn, understand and broaden their knowledge and skills. However, in some lessons, work is too easy or students do not always know what to do when they get stuck. This stops them from learning as well as they could. In these lessons, students become frustrated, stop trying and become distracted.
- Marking varies across the school, and often teachers' comments do not explain how students

can improve their work. On occasions, mistakes are not corrected, so students continue to repeat them, without knowing that they are wrong. Too little time is given to allow students to read through marking comments, make corrections or write their own responses. As a result, students do not make enough progress in some subjects.

- Where teaching is good or better, students learn well. Teachers used helpful resources and prompts – such as lists of key words and meanings – and colourful worksheets which grabbed students' attention. In a Year 12 mathematics class, the teacher used several tables pushed together as a 'whiteboard' and handed over to the students to draw and write on it, showing the positions of different forces. They talked while they drew and helped each other to improve their understanding of the mechanics topic.
- Teachers' understanding of assessment information has improved. In an increasing number of lessons teachers refer to levels and targets and involve students in checking their own and each other's work. Homework is used well to extend thinking beyond the lesson. Students make good use of homework clubs to help themselves improve. Progress is enhanced further by the use of online learning packages.
- Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to students' learning and progress. In the best examples seen, they sensitively provide the right balance of support at the right time. As a result, they help to ensure that many disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- Good and better teaching was observed in the sixth form lessons during the inspection.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. This is because students are ambitious and most have high aspirations and are determined to succeed in their chosen careers. Many have clear ideas about what they want to achieve and this lies at the heart of their very positive attitudes to learning.
- Students are smartly dressed in the school uniform. In spite of considerable building work across the school site they show their pride in the environment by keeping it relatively litter-free and presentable.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. It works hard to raise their awareness of safety outside the school and this is also good. Students say that they appreciate this and feel very safe and cared for in school, as well as outside. They have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and how to report it so that it is dealt with effectively. The great majority are polite and well behaved around the school. They respond positively when teaching is good and show their keenness to learn. Students cooperate well with staff and each other and work cohesively as a team and in groups.
- In the lessons where teaching is less engaging, a few 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 the methods they use. Students appreciate this and say that behaviour has always been good over the years.
- The parents and carers who responded to Parent View and staff who completed the staff 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 the school has successfully created and maintained a harmonious, safe community. The school is effective in promoting positive relationships and tackling discrimination.
- The great majority of students express a strong sense of pride in their school and are positive and make positive comments about the changes made since the new headteacher came to the school. School councillors have a strong presence and voice, and Year 10 mentors regularly help Year 7 students and listen to them reading at tutor time. Students treat each other with mutual respect and are accepting of each other's differences. There are few racist incidents and discrimination is not tolerated. Sixth form students act as positive role models for others in the school and the younger students look up to them.

- Students understand risk and know how to keep themselves safe, especially on the internet. This is because the school raises their awareness through assemblies and teaching in different subjects. It works effectively in partnerships with outside agencies to promote this. Those experiencing difficulties can easily access a wide range of support within the school.
- Attendance has continued to rise and remains high; exclusions have reduced. The school has been active in promoting attendance. Good use is made of the attendance and welfare advisor, to work with specific families. Punctuality to lessons is good and in between, many are seen rushing to get to their classes on time.
- Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because the behaviour of a small minority of students must still be managed by staff. The school recognises the need to continue to promote more sociable behaviour and plans to develop the roles of students as leaders across the school.

The leadership and management require improvement

- In the recent past, school leaders have not checked the impact of teaching on students' learning closely enough and, as a result, in 2013 GCSE results in English and mathematics subjects fell.
- New systems to monitor and check students' progress and raise achievement, have not yet had time to fully impact on raising standards across the school.
- Parents and carers are supportive of the changes across the school and of the new headteacher. Although students say that there have been improvements, senior leaders acknowledge that the school is still on a journey of improvement.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have become more proactive in addressing important areas for improvement in the school. Current action plans accurately identify the things which the school needs to do to improve, but have not yet had time to take full effect. Leaders have successfully set up several support clubs and groups, such as the mathematics breakfast club and the explorer club for after-school help. These are beginning to make a difference to students' enjoyment and achievement. Improvements in students' literacy levels are also well under way.
- School leaders have rightly focused on improving the quality of teaching across the school and regularly check this by observing lessons, scrutinising students' work and looking at progress data. Middle leaders are in the early stages of being more actively involved in this and also in using the new systems to track students' progress. Teachers' pay and performance link directly to whole-school priorities and students' achievement. This has helped to increase the proportion of good teaching across the school.
- Equal opportunities are at the heart of the school's work 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. The school is now using the pupil premium very effectively to provide support through, for example, homework and after-school clubs, one-to-one tuition and small-group teaching sessions.
- The range of subjects and extra-curricular activities meets the needs of students well and has contributed to the rise in students' aspirations for their own futures. Careers advice and guidance are strong. Sixth formers echo their appreciation for this, selecting a range of subjects which will help them towards their goals of accessing university places and jobs in the financial sector. Through the partner schools in the consortium, the range of subjects on offer for sixth formers will develop further each year. Year 10 students benefit from their week of work experience and say that this has helped them to make decisions about their future careers.
- In addition, the school delivers a varied programme of assemblies and promotes common values through tutor times and the citizenship programme. Few opportunities are missed to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is a strength of the school.
- The local authority has worked in close partnership with the school, providing effective support

where issues and concerns have been raised.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance of the school is strong. The restructured governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and aspects for further development and has become more challenging of school leaders. Governors are committed to supporting the new headteacher. They ask specific questions about the performance of different subjects and how additional funding is helping Year 7 students to improve their literacy skills. Governors understand information on students' progress, and use the latest available to make comparisons with other schools. They are committed to making sure that teaching has a positive impact on raising standards in the school and have focused on understanding why there was a drop in results in 2013. They make regular visits to check directly on key areas of the school's work and make sure that financial resources are efficiently managed. Governors know how pupil premium funding is being spent and that this is successfully boosting the learning for the students receiving it. Governors see that targets to improve the performance of staff are reviewed carefully and that teachers' pay is linked to how well students are achieving. They have ensured that procedures for safeguarding students are adequate and that the school meets all current statutory requirements.
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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

Unique reference number	100966
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	440370

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	909
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	22
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Cruse
Headteacher	Richard Fitzgerald
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2011
Telephone number	020 7987 4811
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