

Garratt Park School

Waldron Road, Wandsworth, SW18 3TB

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school because:

- Teaching is outstanding and ensures a high proportion of students make outstanding progress, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, achievement is outstanding.
- From low starting points when they enter the school, most students achieve success in a range of qualifications. This includes GCSEs and other nationally recognised accreditations.
- Teachers expect their students to do well. They set challenging learning targets to ensure the students make the best possible progress.
- Students who are eligible for additional government funding and those for whom English is an additional language make outstanding progress.
- The students' behaviour is outstanding. Their positive attitudes have a significant impact on their learning. They feel safe and enjoy school, and their attendance is above average.
- The sixth form is outstanding. It provides a very good range of appropriate activities to reinforce the students' basic skills and their personal development. This enables students to make excellent progress and prepare themselves for the next stage in their lives.
- Students find their activities interesting because they are well planned and set at the right level.
- The headteacher leads a team of outstanding senior and middle managers. Together with the governing body, they continually check on all aspects of the school's performance. They have driven significant improvements in teaching and achievement since the previous inspection.
- Governors have a secure understanding of the school's performance. They support the school very well and consistently challenge the school's leaders to maintain the pace of improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, all of which were joint observations with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with students, teachers, senior managers, the chair and other members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took into account the school's parent surveys. There were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire, (Parent View) to be included. Inspectors also took into account the 70 completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including self review and development planning, and records of pupils' progress and behaviour since the previous inspection. It also looked at monitoring reports on teaching and the range of subjects offered. All procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were scrutinised as well as attendance records.

Inspection team

Melvyn Blackband	Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Kanwaljit Singh		Additional inspector
Barbara Firth		Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school provides for students with moderate learning difficulties, those with a diagnosis of autism and students with speech, language and communication needs. All the students have a statement of special educational needs.
- Just under half of the students are from a White British background. The remainder of the students are from a range of other ethnic groups, reflecting the make-up of the borough. A minority of these students speak English as an alternative language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is higher than that found in most schools. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after. All Year 7 students are eligible for government Year 7 'catch-up' funding.
- There are many more boys than girls currently attending the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the marking of students' work is always accompanied by clear written comments so that students know how to make their work better.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The attainment of students on entry to the school is almost always low, although these levels can vary considerably. Since the previous inspection, the severity of the students' learning needs has increased. A higher proportion of students now enter the school at other times than the beginning of the school year.
- From their starting points, almost every student makes at least good progress. A majority of students make outstanding progress, above that expected of students with similar needs. Achievement is outstanding irrespective of students' particular special educational needs or disabilities.
- Different groups of students make similarly rapid progress, in all year groups. Girls, boys, those for whom English is an additional language and those who join the school during the academic year make rapid progress. The fact that different groups now make similar progress is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- By Year 11, students who are more able successfully gain five GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, albeit at lower levels than those expected of students in mainstream schools. There is no early entry policy for GCSE. Almost all students gain a mixture of GCSE and Entry Level qualifications. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. With very few exceptions, the leavers go into appropriate courses at local colleges.
- Students in the sixth form make equally excellent progress, due to outstanding teaching. They make very good gains in their basic literacy and numeracy skills, their maturity and personal development.
- Those students with complex needs, such as autism, who are taught in specialist classes, also make excellent progress. Staff have been well trained, through effective support from speech and language therapists, in helping students develop their language skills.
- Students make particularly strong progress in reading and writing. The development of these skills enables the students to make excellent progress across the range of subjects. Where a student is not making the progress expected, the school quickly intervenes. Students receive personalised, intensive support in reading and writing. This is led by a team of dedicated staff who are supported by occupational therapists and speech and language therapists. The school has used additional government funding to enhance this provision. The students' progress in mathematics is equally strong.
- The attainment of Year 11 students eligible for additional funding varies considerably, along with their peers, in both English and mathematics. This is due to the wide variations in pupils' starting points on entry to the school. These students, including those entitled to receive free school meals, make excellent progress from their individual starting points, in line with their peers.
- Year 7 students benefit from catch-up funding which is used to enhance the provision to develop literacy and numeracy skills. This further assists their rapid progress.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding across the school, including in the sixth form. The quality of teaching has consistently improved since the previous inspection and particularly in the last two years. This is because of regular checks by senior staff and by local authority officers. As a result, all groups of students achieve very well.
- Teachers are well trained and receive effective support where appropriate. Many staff are subject specialists and bring added expertise in advising colleagues and improving provision.
- Teachers have high expectations of the students' progress. They set challenging targets for all students, including the most able. Teachers check very regularly how well the students are doing. Work is marked carefully and teachers are consistent in telling students when they have

done well and how to make their work better. However, occasionally teachers do not add sufficient written comment when they mark students' work to make this even clearer.

- Students make rapid gains in developing their oral and written communication skills. This is due to teachers consistently encouraging their students to use these skills wherever possible.
- The teaching of reading and writing is particularly successful. In almost every lesson, students practise reading and writing. In many lessons, students have activities relating to the sounds of letters and words and in reading increasingly difficult texts.
- For example in a Year 9 guided reading lesson, some students were reading a play while others worked in a small group to read excerpts from the play. They discussed the sounds and meanings of words and sentences with an adult. All the students made excellent progress because of the high level of challenge to their reading skills.
- Students also make rapid gains in developing their numeracy skills through continual emphasis on skills such as addition and subtraction. This leads to appropriate qualifications such as GCSE and Entry Level in their final years at school.
- The students receive a significant amount of individual support in lessons. Adults are skilled in systematically checking the students' understanding through well-chosen questions. They also use appropriate vocabulary to enhance the students' communication skills. Teachers regularly and successfully adapt lessons if necessary to ensure individual students learn as well as they can. This has a strong positive impact on the students' progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. They enjoy lessons and display unfailingly positive attitudes towards their teachers and the activities they are given to do. This has a significant impact on their progress. Disruption to learning is extremely rare.
- Behaviour outside lessons is excellent. Students socialise happily together in the dining room and playground. The students are respectful and supportive to other students and adults. Students and their parents are overwhelmingly positive about behaviour at the school.
- Students, staff and parents are confident that bullying is almost unknown. There are very few recorded incidents. The school places great emphasis on supporting and caring for each other. Adults provide excellent role models and there are very good relationships between students and with staff.
- The students are very aware of how to combat bullying, including dealing with cyber-bullying. The school provides specific experiences, such as 'Anti-Bullying' week to promote the students' understanding. Students feel secure that staff would deal decisively with any discrimination or unpleasantness.
- Adults manage the students' behaviour very professionally and consistently. Policies and procedures are excellent in their detail and clarity. The school's behaviour records are outstanding in analysing why incidents occurred and how things could be improved for individual students. Where on occasion a student becomes challenging through frustration or difficulties in communication, staff manage the situation calmly and appropriately. There have been significant improvements in behaviour over time and incidents are now rare.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Safeguarding procedures are excellent and there are exemplary standards of care. Students say they feel very safe in school and when off-site. The school makes determined efforts to maintain and improve on levels of student absence. As a result, attendance is high for the type of school. Students are effectively taught how to avoid unsafe situations when out of school. This is taught through well-organised personal, social and health education lessons. These are supported by visiting drama groups which perform work on bullying and other dangers such as drug and alcohol misuse.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The senior managers and middle managers in charge of subjects are outstandingly effective. They have been very ably led by the experienced headteacher. There is a culture of high expectations of both staff and students. Staff respond well to these expectations and, with few exceptions, are very positive about the school and their place in it. Students also respond well, as shown by their excellent behaviour and enthusiasm for learning.
- Senior staff maintain a very good overview of their students' progress through the efficient tracking of their achievements. This ensures that intervention is quickly made should students not do as well as they can. As a result, many students make rapid progress, including the most able, those with complex needs, those who receive additional funding and those for whom English is an additional language. There is no discrimination. Every child has an equal opportunity to do the best they can.
- The checks on teachers' performance are rigorous and robust. Stringent criteria and challenging targets for teachers and other adults underpin the procedures. Good performance is suitably rewarded by salary progression and weaker performance tackled quickly. Staff take advantage of well-organised training and support. This has led to increasingly rapid improvements in standards of teaching.
- The school's leaders thoroughly and accurately evaluate the school's performance. They perceptively reflect and analyse all aspects deemed to need improvement. Leaders are aware, for instance, of occasional variation in standards of marking and have developed action plans to remedy this. Development planning is detailed and focused on aspects of the students' progress and well-being. There has been a consistently improving level of students' achievement and teaching standards since the previous inspection. The school is well supported by governors and by the local authority. There is an outstanding capacity to maintain the pace of improvement.
- The range of subjects is well matched to students' needs and challenges them to achieve nationally recognised qualifications. There is a suitable emphasis on all aspects of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. This is supported where appropriate by intensive and successful work with individual students. As a result, students are keen to learn because of the range of interesting activities.
- Older students, including those in the sixth form, have opportunities for work-related courses and independence training. Students can also take part in outdoor physical activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. Last year, almost every student in Year 11 and in the sixth form achieved bronze or silver accreditation in the scheme. The curriculum contributes very well to the students' academic progress, their physical well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Parents report that they are overwhelmingly very satisfied with the school's work. They feel confident that their children are safe and well looked after, and that they are making good progress and behave well.
- Safeguarding arrangements are secure and meet current statutory requirements.

- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching. They have a clear understanding of students' progress, including school performance data, and the management of the performance of teachers. They effectively oversee financial control, including the salary arrangements for teaching. They are fully involved in how good teaching is rewarded and any underperformance tackled. They maintain close supervision of additional government funding and regularly check the impact on the students' progress and well-being. They often visit the school, observing teaching and speaking with staff. Consequently, they are able to challenge school leaders very effectively. They take part in regular training, such as in child protection and the use of performance data. Members are well informed about health and safety matters and the safeguarding of the children since nominated governors monitor provision scrupulously.

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	101103
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	439447

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
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	180
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	35
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Corbally
Headteacher	Irene Parks
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 June 2011
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