

Langdon Academy

Sussex Road, East Ham, London E6 2PS

Inspection dates

6–7 December 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- This is a clearly improving school but it has not yet improved enough to be good.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Pupils are not always inspired or challenged enough to give of their very best.
- Lower-attaining pupils do not learn well enough throughout the school. At GCSE, they do not get the grades and qualifications they should.
- Pupils do not make good enough progress in key stages 1 and 2.
- Leaders do not check the impact of pupil premium spending closely enough. Disadvantaged pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they should.
- Leaders in the primary phase do not have the specific challenge and support they need.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not well enough managed, particularly in the secondary phase. The pupils concerned do not make good progress.
- Year 1 pupils do not have good enough knowledge of phonics as the teaching of this is not sharp enough.
- The school's curriculum, while improving, is not yet broad enough in the primary phase. In key stage 4, there are not enough subject options for some lower-attaining pupils.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is not incisive. Trustees and governors do not question this shortcoming sufficiently; they interpret reports from senior leaders as meaning that the school has made more improvement than it has.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the school which is beginning to be realised.
- They have put in place a new, much more secure, leadership and staffing structure which is beginning to bring noticeable improvements across the school.
- Staff feel well supported and are keen to be successful. Morale is high.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and helpful. Their behaviour is good.
- Children make a good start in the Reception classes.
- The school provides well for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Provision in the autism resourced provision is good; the pupils who attend do well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and the outcomes for pupils, especially those with lower prior attainment, by:
 - enhancing teachers' subject knowledge, so that their expectations of pupils are consistently high, they can inspire pupils to give of their best, and check more carefully that pupils are learning well
 - broadening and developing the curriculum further, especially in the primary phase and for key stage 4 pupils with low prior attainment
 - honing and sharpening the teaching of phonics with more urgency, especially for Year 1 pupils.
- Improve leadership, management and governance, by:
 - ensuring that governors and trustees know the school thoroughly and can challenge the school's performance robustly
 - making senior leaders' evaluations and reporting to governors and trustees more sharp and incisive
 - analysing patterns in aspects of the performance of the school more tightly, including pupils' academic outcomes, attendance and exclusions
 - arranging sufficient phase-specific support and challenge for leaders in the primary phase
 - managing provision more effectively for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially in the secondary phase, so that these pupils make faster progress
 - evaluating more widely and accurately the performance of disadvantaged pupils and the effectiveness of pupil premium expenditure, so that its impact is clear and further improvements needed are identified
 - continuing the existing successful work in building the staff team and developing the roles of many senior and middle leaders.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Senior leaders and staff are ambitious for the pupils. The school is improving, but it has not yet reached the point of being good.
- Senior leaders know the school's main strengths and weaknesses. This helps them to plan many improvements effectively. However, their evaluation is not sharp. They do not analyse some key aspects of school life, such as the impact of pupil premium expenditure and the patterns in pupils' academic outcomes and attendance rates, precisely. This means that the drive for improvement in these and some other areas is not focused clearly enough.
- The school has limited external support and challenge. Its work with Brampton Manor Academy is useful. The new school improvement partner provides valuable advice, but the lack of independent scrutiny of its performance hinders the school in identifying more sharply where it most needs to improve.
- School leaders do not account well enough for how they spend close to one million pounds of pupil premium funding. They cannot show readily which pupil premium funded provision is effective and which is not. This is a key reason why disadvantaged pupils' attainment and progress are not good enough. However, school leaders show understanding of how to evaluate this expenditure; consequently, the inspection team does not recommend an independent review of this aspect.
- The head and deputy head of the primary phase work hard with their team to bring improvement. However, the school's most senior leaders, who are experienced in secondary education, and the governors and trustees, have not ensured that the primary leaders have the phase specialist support and challenge that they need. Consequently, provision and outcomes for pupils in the primary phase are not as strong as they might be.
- The primary curriculum is broad. It does not, however, provide sufficient opportunities for all pupils to develop good learning across each subject. The provision for phonics and early reading skills in key stage 1 is weak. English and mathematics teaching tend to over-dominate class timetables without enough benefit to pupils' learning and results.
- In a primary science lesson, for example, the science content was very limited. Pupils were asked to read passages about the uses of wood and had to extract meaning from them. It was a comprehension, not a scientific, task. The pupils, who had already spent significant time on literacy that day, became restless due to this 'sameness' in their learning.
- The primary curriculum is rightly being redeveloped. A new leader has made a valuable start on this. Secondary subject teachers from within the school are starting to contribute in the primary phase, with the aim of supporting this work.
- The range of subjects and options at key stage 4 is not broad enough to allow all lower-attaining pupils to achieve well enough. The expectations of these pupils are at times too low and their lessons are sometimes undemanding.

- The school offers a range of educational visits and activities out of school hours. However, leaders know that learning outside the classroom could be used more effectively.
- Senior leaders have arranged suitable systems for improving teaching. The school's performance management of staff is carried out correctly. Staff value this process and feel it helps to guide their work usefully. However, there is much more to do to ensure that teaching is consistently good across the school.
- The senior leaders have put in place a very well-considered leadership structure. They have recruited a strong team of subject, teaching and pastoral leaders across the school. The whole staff team is cohesive and has high commitment and high morale. Many of these staff are new to the school and to these roles, and are growing and learning in them. They are beginning to make a positive contribution to the development of the school.
- Senior leaders have effectively promoted improvements in some secondary subjects within the English Baccalaureate, including science and geography. Teaching and outcomes in these subjects are strong. Results in other secondary subjects, which have had less attention, are generally less good. However, GCSE results in arts subjects are mostly positive, albeit for smaller numbers of pupils.
- The new assistant headteacher for inclusion in the primary phase has made a good start. She is ensuring that the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving. In the secondary phase, the provision for such pupils is less strong and not as well organised. The director for inclusion for the academy chain knows this and is seeking to make improvements.
- Senior leaders are effective role models. Many are widely respected by staff as strong teachers as well as effective leaders. Staff feel they can state their views and have a voice in the school, which shows an important development in the last two years.
- Through lessons and assemblies, the school makes good provision to help pupils understand the diversity of life in Britain and fundamental British values, such as tolerance and democracy. It provides appropriately for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school spends its primary sports funding appropriately. Younger pupils take part in a suitable range of worthwhile physical activity. Year 7 catch-up premium is also spent usefully to help pupils needing extra support at the start of their secondary education.
- The school has improved its relationships with parents. There are far fewer complaints than previously. Those parents who contacted inspectors find school leaders approachable and helpful. They are generally pleased. One said, 'The school has really improved, though its reputation has to catch up – it's getting there!'

Governance of the school

- The formal governance of the school is provided by the trust board, or directors, supported by a small local governing body. The chair of the trust board is also acting chair of the local governing body. Governors and directors do not support and challenge the school as robustly as they should. They are rather remote from the everyday work of the school and depend very heavily on the reports of senior leaders.

Although they ask the senior leaders suitable questions about the school's performance and the pupils' achievement, they tend to accept the answers that leaders give too readily without enquiring further and deeper where needed. This approach does not provide the school with sufficient challenge to make more rapid improvement.

- Governors and directors are not sure how well the school spends pupil premium funding, because senior leaders' reports contain too little detail. They are also insufficiently aware of the problem concerning outcomes for lower-attaining pupils.
- The executive headteacher, who holds the school's senior staff to account, recognises that more primary expertise is needed to support and challenge the primary phase.
- Governors and trustees provide appropriately for the school's financial and administrative needs. They ensure, for instance, that staff performance management, and procedures to safeguard pupils, are properly arranged. The acting chair of governors is the safeguarding lead and is influential in this role.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's policy is exemplary. Inspection evidence indicates that this policy is upheld correctly.
- Staff receive appropriate, regular training and briefing in child protection and other safeguarding matters. They know what to do, who to report to if needed and how. The school deals with child protection matters appropriately.
- School leaders and staff are fully aware of the dangers of radicalisation, extremism and grooming. They are alert to possible signs and know the local dangers. At the same time, the school shows pupils the positive influence of faith and the civic realm; it has useful relationships with local faith and community leaders, within a valuable programme of personal, social and health education.
- The large school site is kept secure, with sensible use of locks, key fobs and fencing to allow access only to those who are checked and authorised. Risks are minimised.
- Pupils are well looked after. They are aware, at their different ages, of the dangers they may face, including when using the internet.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is mixed. Its effectiveness varies between subjects, classes and year groups.
- Teaching is too often mundane. It does not move forward with sufficient challenge to meet pupils' needs well. Staff do not demonstrate consistently the subject knowledge needed to ensure that pupils will learn well. They are satisfied that pupils have just completed work rather than checking closely enough that they have really learned as much about the subject matter that they should.
- Teaching does not meet well enough the needs of pupils with lower attainment, including many who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Too often, these pupils are given work which does not provide enough challenge. The pupils themselves then sometimes expect too little of themselves: one secondary pupil said,

when about to take an assessment task in French, 'Miss, we are Set 5, not Set 1!'

- The teaching of the most able pupils is generally better. The school has given greater, often successful, emphasis to meeting these pupils' needs.
- In a Year 7 lesson, pupils were enthusiastic in discussing a Wilfred Owen poem. The teacher provided higher-attaining pupils with challenging texts to think about. However, lower attainers were asked to do work which was too easy for them. They were not given the opportunity to progress more quickly and learn enough about the poem itself.
- There are some exceptions to this pattern. In one key stage 2 writing lesson, for example, the teacher challenged lower-attaining pupils well and work in these pupils' books indicated that they had made strong progress over time.
- Teaching in the well organised resourced provision for pupils with autism is expertly structured, and demonstrates high expectations of the pupils. It meets their individual and specific needs very well. Staff and parents work together closely.
- The school has recently improved marking and feedback to pupils. Some staff are implementing the school policy productively and this helps pupils to think about their learning. However, lower-attaining pupils find it harder than others to respond to the teachers' comments and do not always have enough support to do so effectively.
- Teachers and other adults generally have good relationships with their pupils. Pupils often enjoy the lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils of all ages show resilience, appropriate self-confidence and good humour. They feel safe and well looked after. A Year 7 pupil said, 'It already feels like home!'
- Staff check carefully on the welfare and academic progress of pupils who attend off-site provision. When pupils are excluded for five days or more they are routinely sent to a nearby pupil referral unit during the period of exclusion. These pupils are kept safe and their needs are well met.
- The school cares for its pupils well, especially for those who may become particularly vulnerable or who misbehave. Staff involve external agencies and parents as appropriate in valuable partnerships for pupils' benefit.
- The school, however, focuses this work mainly on individual, specific pupils. It does not sufficiently analyse overall patterns, which could help identify future needs and prevent negative incidents more efficiently.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average in both the primary and secondary phases, including the early years. The school has well-organised systems for encouraging better attendance for individual pupils. Staff can show improved attendance for some pupils in tough situations. There is evidence that attendance is reduced when some pupils are absent during religious festivals. However, staff do not analyse well enough attendance patterns by different pupil groups, including year

groups, to know clearly and proactively enough where improvement strategies could be best targeted.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils and parents who contributed their opinions note that pupils' behaviour is good and improving. This indicates the success of the work carried out by senior leaders and staff in changing the culture of the school. Staff work hard to manage behaviour positively.
- Pupils are generally attentive, keen to learn and helpful in lessons, often willingly tidying up, for example. Many show clear ambition for their futures.
- Around the school, pupils of all different ages usually behave well and respectfully to each other. They are generally polite and thoughtful towards others. Pupils wear their uniforms smartly. They are punctual to lessons.
- Staff look after and guide pupils in the resourced provision for autism effectively. The pupils enjoy their learning, cooperating and behaving very well.
- The rate of fixed-term exclusion is low and has reduced. However, as with other information, this is not analysed closely to identify either any particular patterns among pupil groups or types of misbehaviour.
- Occurrences of bullying, including racist and homophobic incidents, are rare and declining in number. Some pupils nevertheless express some nervousness about bullying. Inspection evidence supports the view of pupils and parents that bullying is dealt with effectively by staff.
- Occasionally, pupils become distracted and restless when the teaching does not motivate or challenge them sufficiently. They do not become disruptive but, when this occurs, it is wasteful of lesson time.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The results of the 2016 national assessments in writing, reading and mathematics were at about national average. However, given the strong start they make in the Reception classes pupils could make more progress in Years 1 and 2, especially in mathematics.
- In the 2016 Year 1 phonics screening, pupils reached a below-average standard. Too few pupils could answer the more difficult questions. This is disappointing given how well the pupils had done in the assessments at the end of their Reception Year. Current Year 1 pupils also show gaps in their phonic knowledge.
- The pupils who read to inspectors in Year 1 did not do so fluently enough. They have not made fast enough progress from their time in Reception. Year 4 pupils read with reasonable fluency but they could not understand the texts well enough. Year 7 pupils read aloud accurately, with confidence.
- Pupils in key stage 2, also, are not making enough progress in English and mathematics. Pupils' skills in these key subjects are not where they should be.
- The school does not have reliable information about standards in the other curriculum subjects in the primary phase. Inspection evidence indicates these are not as high as

they should be.

- At GCSE in 2016, pupils of middle and high prior attainment made the progress they should. Many achieved a valuable set of qualifications. However, those who had lower attainment from primary school, did not make enough progress and did not achieve the number of GCSEs, or the grades, that they might have done.
- GCSE results in several subjects require improvement. For instance, pupils do not do well enough in computing, design technology and photography.
- Pupils entitled to the support of pupil premium funding do not do as well as they should in the primary or secondary phases. Too few achieve well enough at GCSE.
- Secondary pupils have made notable improvements in those subjects which are within the English Baccalaureate, particularly geography, some modern foreign languages and science. Most pupils' outcomes in these subjects are strong.
- Pupils who join the school with limited English generally achieve as well, or sometimes better, than other pupils. Adults model English words and phrases effectively, helping pupils to improve their understanding and use of the language rapidly.
- Pupils in the resourced provision for autism achieve well. They develop many valuable life skills.
- Pupils are appropriately prepared for the next stages of education. Almost all of those leaving the school at age 16 continue in relevant education, training or employment. They receive useful advice from staff about their future options. However, it is not clear that current primary pupils are developing the skills in English and mathematics they will need to give them the best start in the secondary phase.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make good progress from their starting points in all areas of learning in the Reception classes. This is true of the current cohort and has been consistently the case over time.
- In 2014, 2015 and 2016 more children than the national average reached a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year. They made good progress from their starting points and are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching is good. Children are effectively taught the basic skills of reading, writing and number using a wide range of motivating resources. Staff assess children's needs well to provide lessons and learning activities which move their learning forward swiftly.
- Children make sensible guided choices about what activities they will do. The indoor and outdoor areas are well organised and stimulating, with accessible resources, enhancing learning. Children really enjoy playing and working individually and together, developing skills in independence, concentration and organising themselves.
- The partnership between home and school works well. Parents are pleased with how their children settle and then grow and develop.
- Children entitled to the support of the pupil premium receive well targeted additional provision and make good progress.
- Staff take prompt action to help children who need extra support or who need to learn

English. They identify quickly any children who may have special educational needs.

- Early years provision is well led and managed. The leaders demonstrate a good level of expertise. They and all the staff are highly motivated to provide well for the children. They link effectively with feeder nursery providers.
- Children are well safeguarded and supervised in the Reception classes. They feel secure. Staff foster their physical and emotional safety effectively.
- Occasionally, staff miss opportunities to question children more deeply and by doing so to develop the children's thinking and learning more profoundly. Sometimes, pupils are given tasks which are too difficult for them, leaving them despondent. As in the rest of the school, attendance is below average. These are areas for further improvement in this strong provision.

School details

Unique reference number	140373
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	10019642

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	2,017
Appropriate authority	The academy trust
Chair	Marion Faust
Principal	Peter Whittle
Telephone number	020 8471 2411
Website	www.langdonacademy.org
Email address	info@langdon.newham.sch.uk (secondary) primaryinfo@langdon.newham.sch.uk (primary)
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- This is a very large all-through academy in east London, with pupils aged from four to 16.
- There are no pupils in Year 6; the oldest primary pupils are currently in Year 5. These pupils will next year become the first Year 6 cohort, and therefore the first in the school to take key stage 2 national assessments, in 2018.
- This school opened as an academy in January 2014. At the time of conversion, its predecessor school, Langdon School, required special measures. The principal joined

the school in April 2014, with the heads of secondary and primary joining in the following months.

- Langdon is one of two schools within the Brampton Manor Trust. The other is Brampton Manor Academy, a nearby secondary school. The principal of that school is a national leader of education. He is also executive principal, overseeing Langdon Academy.
- The school manages local authority resourced provision for primary and secondary pupils with severe autism.
- In 2015, the school met the secondary floor standards, which are the government's minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school serves a diverse population. The largest ethnic groups among the pupils are Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi.
- A much larger than average proportion of pupils do not speak English as their first language.
- Over half of pupils are entitled to the support of pupil premium funding. This is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all year groups across the school, some jointly with senior leaders. They observed around the school at breaks, playtimes and lunchtimes and during assemblies.
- They scrutinised samples of pupils' work in several subjects and year groups, from Reception to Year 11.
- They held discussions with the executive principal, principal, the heads of primary and secondary phases and other senior and middle leaders. They met with the chair of trustees, governors and many members of staff. They spoke with groups of pupils formally and informally, including those attending off-site provision. Inspectors heard pupils from Years 1, 4 and 7 read.
- Inspectors evaluated documents, including the school's assessments of pupils, its strategic plan and evaluations, records of attendance and behaviour and minutes of governors' meetings.
- They took close account of the views of parents from the 50 responses on Parent View, which is Ofsted's online survey, by meeting with a group of parents and by speaking with parents by telephone. Staff and pupils did not complete the confidential questionnaires but inspectors met with groups of staff and pupils and met many pupils informally.

Inspection team

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Kanwaljit Singh	Ofsted Inspector
Katerina Christodoulou	Ofsted Inspector

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