

Plumstead Manor School

Old Mill Road, London SE18 1QF

Inspection dates

9–10 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, school leaders and governors have secured improvements in all aspects of the school's work. The school now provides its pupils with a good education.
- Leaders have robust systems for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They implement well-planned actions to address weaknesses. They provide members of staff with quality training and support and hold them to account for their performance. As a result, leaders at all levels ensure that the quality of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' outcomes are good.
- Teaching is good and improving. Leaders have trained teachers to use pupils' progress information to prepare activities that are engaging, challenging and that meet pupils' needs. As a result, pupils make good progress.
- Current pupils are making overall good progress across a range of subjects. This includes those with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities in the special resource provision or in the main school, as well as all other groups. This is because leaders give effective, well-tailored and timely support to pupils who need extra help.
- The curriculum and enrichment opportunities make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils cultivate a sense of communal responsibility and an understanding of life in modern Britain. They leave the school well prepared for the next stages of their lives.
- Leaders pay much attention to ensuring pupils' safety and welfare. Pupils feel safe and learn how to stay safe in different situations. They behave well and most have positive attitudes to learning.
- The new post-16 leadership team is making a raft of improvements to the sixth form. As a result, teaching and pastoral support have markedly improved and the curriculum offer is increasing from next September. Students work diligently and are making good progress in their academic and vocational studies. Students are able to make informed choices about their future careers as they benefit from good impartial guidance.
- Attendance, although showing signs of improvement, remains below the national average.
- In a few cases, teachers do not consistently comply with leaders' high expectations of how they should teach. In these instances, pupils do not learn or make the same progress as they do in other lessons.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve pupils' learning and outcomes by ensuring that all teachers consistently adhere to leaders' expectations of how to teach effective lessons.
- Continue to improve rates of attendance so that all pupils access the good education that the school offers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, who was appointed shortly before the previous inspection, and the governors agreed a vision for the school: success, harmony, excellence and justice. These ideals have shaped their actions to improve the school. With determination, leaders have focused sharply on improving the quality of teaching, pupils' behaviour and outcomes. Leaders have continued to pay close attention to pupils' well-being, raising pupils' ambitions for a successful future and developing their sense of social responsibility. As a result, the school now provides pupils with a good education. Pupils leave the school well equipped for the next stages of their education or career, and for their future lives as responsible citizens.
- Leaders have introduced robust systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use external consultants effectively to review aspects of the school's work and to make recommendations for improvement. Leaders use this feedback well to plan credible actions to secure improvements. They support staff well in implementing the desired changes. Members of staff work closely with colleagues in other schools to share best practice and to moderate each other's work. These actions have led to improvements across the school.
- The headteacher identified key teaching strategies that are most effective in making sure that pupils learn well and make strong progress. His expectations are clear for all staff. All leaders take responsibility for training their teams and for holding them to account for pupils' progress. Leaders ensure that staff have opportunities for professional development, including any particular interests that they have. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and this has led to good and improving outcomes. Leaders are aware that there remain a few inconsistencies in teaching, where teachers have not fully taken on board leaders' expectations. Leaders are taking effective action.
- Leaders have implemented the recommendations made by an external review of how they spend additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have raised the profile of disadvantaged pupils and carefully check on their progress and well-being. As a result, disadvantaged pupils now make good progress, and differences in their outcomes and those of other pupils are diminishing. Leaders have introduced a programme of support for Year 7 pupils who join the school with lower than expected standards in literacy or mathematics. Eligible pupils are now making stronger progress and catching up with their peers.
- The new leadership of inclusion, including for the special resource provision, is effective. Leaders provide well-planned support and an individualised programme of learning for pupils who need help to catch up. As a result, pupils with SEN and/or disabilities, those with low standards of English, and those who join the school mid-phase, make good academic and personal progress.
- Leaders plan the curriculum so that pupils make good year-on-year progression and deepen their learning. The most able pupils have opportunities to gain extra qualifications. Top set mathematicians, for example, study for an additional GCSE in statistics. Leaders enhance the curriculum by offering pupils many enrichment activities, visits and visitors. Leaders require all key stage 4 pupils to study for religious

education GCSE, which deepens their understanding of the range of religious traditions. Further, all pupils benefit from specialist teachers who deliver a comprehensive personal development course. Topics are wide and varied, including, for instance, human rights, law and democracy, sexual orientation and many aspects of personal safety. These opportunities make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- Governance has markedly improved since the previous inspection. Governors commissioned a review of their effectiveness and have acted on the reviewer's findings.
- Governors bring a good range of expertise to their work, including in the fields of education and welfare. They thoroughly check on the school's work in a number of ways. Governors invite, on rotation, a different leader to report at each of its committee and full governing body meetings. They hold all leaders to account for their work.
- Governors devise their own lines of enquiry and pursue these through regular visits to the school. They speak with staff, observe lessons and scrutinise work. They also seek views of parents through a parent forum and report back to their fellow governors.
- Governors have played a key strategic leadership role in improving the school. They appointed a highly competent headteacher and other effective new leaders. They are taking boys into Year 7 from next September and, in response to local needs, will be creating an additional class in that year group.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has a safeguarding team, all members of which are trained as designated safeguarding leaders. Leaders make sure that all members of staff have regular update training. During the week of the inspection, for instance, members of staff had training on how to support and ensure the safety of LGBTQ pupils.
- Leaders and members of staff are fully aware of the range of safeguarding issues that pupils may face. They are alert to any signs of changes in pupils' behaviour, which they report immediately.
- Leaders work closely with a range of external agencies and parents to make sure that pupils are safe. They also run safeguarding workshops for parents. In addition, there is a full-time police officer on site, who delivers workshops to pupils on how to stay safe. She helps leaders and parents deal with any issues that arise.
- Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to stay safe in different situations, including when using the internet. During the inspection, pupils in Years 7 and 8 delivered an informative assembly to older pupils on road safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Good and improving teaching is ensuring that pupils make good progress across key stages and subjects.
- Typically, teachers establish calm and purposeful learning routines in their classrooms. They have a good rapport with pupils and set high expectations for behaviour and collaboration. They use their strong subject knowledge to give pupils clear explanations and address any misconceptions. Teachers use questioning effectively to deepen pupils' understanding, probing pupils' thinking further when their answers are too superficial. They strongly promote subject-specific literacy and help pupils apply their learning to solving real-life problems. Teachers' feedback to pupils on their work is timely. As a result, pupils learn from their mistakes and improve their work. Pupils remain focused during lessons, take pride in their work and become confident learners.
- Teachers use information from regular testing and ongoing assessments of pupils' work to prepare activities that engage and motivate pupils to learn well. They give the most able pupils challenging work that enables them to reach higher standards. On the other hand, teachers and support staff provide well-tailored work to assist pupils who need help to catch up with their peers, including those in the special resource base. As a result, all groups of pupils make good progress.
- Teaching makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. In a geography lesson about China, for example, inspectors witnessed pupils debating the morality of the country's one-child policy.
- In a few cases, however, teaching is less effective. In these lessons, teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are not high enough and teachers' planning is not of a high enough quality. Consequently, some pupils become disengaged and this impedes their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. As they progress through the school, pupils gain in self-confidence and self-awareness. They become thoughtful and reflective. Inspectors observed a thought-provoking discussion in a tutorial about potential causes of youth crime. Pupils were given the opportunity to debate and discuss possible ways to reduce crime.
- As a result of the school's work, pupils develop a sense of responsibility and engagement with the school and wider community. For example, the head girl and prefects planned and organised for guest speakers and workshops for the school to mark international women's day. School councillors and other pupils initiate many fund-raising activities to support a range of local, national and international charities. Pupils run sporting and science activities for pupils in local primary schools. Pupils cast their vote to elect the school's representatives on the Greenwich Youth Parliament, in which pupils are actively involved, for example the current chair is a pupil of this school.
- Pupils have opportunities to take part in sporting activities, which help promote their

physical health. Leaders place a high emphasis on ensuring pupils' well-being, especially in terms of their mental and emotional health. They, therefore, employ counsellors, a nurse and a child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) worker to support pupils who need help.

- Leaders refer pupils who need specialist support to address their behavioural and other pastoral needs to off-site alternative provision. Leaders liaise closely with colleagues at the providers of alternative provision to ensure that pupils are safe, attend regularly and that they meet pupils' welfare and academic needs well. As a result, pupils learn to change their behaviours, gain in confidence and improve their standards of learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are welcoming and enjoy speaking with visitors. Pupils behave in an orderly manner during lunch and breaktimes. They move purposefully across the large campus at lesson change-over times.
- Pupils get on well with each other in this diverse community. They are respectful of each other's opinions, faiths and cultures.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They work well alone, in pairs and in groups and happily help each other. This makes a positive contribution to their successful learning. On the odd occasion when teaching is uninspiring, there are incidents of low-level disruption. As leaders continue to secure improvements in teaching and raise expectations for good behaviour, these occurrences are diminishing.
- Leaders have introduced a range of strategies, both rewards and sanctions, to reduce absence, which have resulted in some improvement. This year, pupils in Years 7 to 9 are attending more regularly, as are disadvantaged pupils across the year groups. Persistent absence is reducing across the school. However, overall, pupils' rates of absence and persistent absence remain above the national averages. Leaders have been less successful in improving overall attendance at key stage 4.
- Rates of fixed-term exclusions, internal exclusions, recorded incidents of poor behaviour and the number of detentions are all reducing. This is because of leaders' higher expectations and the successful implementation of the revised behaviour policy.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' outcomes across the year groups and subjects have improved. As a result, pupils make good progress overall.
- In 2017, Year 11 pupils made substantial progress in English in modern foreign languages and in a few other subjects. In almost all the remaining subjects, including mathematics, progress was broadly average. Progress of pupils in science, however, was below that of other pupils nationally. One in five pupils joined the school during key stage 4, many new to the country and with limited knowledge of English. As a result of effective support, they too made good progress. The most able pupils made good progress because teachers gave them more challenging work.

- Outcomes for current pupils, including in science, are good and improving. New leaders appointed last September at senior level, for the core subjects and for inclusion, are effective. They have raised expectations, enhanced the quality of teaching and refined the support for pupils who need extra support.
- The outcomes of disadvantaged pupils are improving. In most subjects across key stages 3 and 4, disadvantaged pupils are making stronger progress than their peers. This is because leaders have implemented more effective strategies to address disadvantaged pupils' barriers to learning.
- The inclusion team has tailored more effective support to meet the needs of all pupils who need extra help to catch up. As a result, pupils with SEN and/or disabilities in the special resource provision or in the main school are making good progress.
- Leaders have recently introduced a more effective programme of support for key stage 3 pupils who join the school with low levels of literacy and/or numeracy. As a result, these pupils are quickly catching up with their peers. Leaders ensure that the needs of pupils who join the school at other than the usual time are met. Occasionally, for example, overseas pupils with little of knowledge of English join the school in Year 11. Leaders provide them with an intensive programme to learn English. This enables those pupils to achieve an entry-level qualification so that they can continue with post-16 education.
- Pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stages of their education or employment. Last year, almost all Year 11 pupils continued into sixth-form education or to apprenticeships.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The new sixth form leadership team has had a very positive impact on the school's post-16 provision. Owing to rigorous systems of monitoring and evaluation, leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the sixth form. They have taken decisive action to improve students' outcomes by improving teaching and pastoral care, and through a review of the curriculum offer.
- Teaching has improved and is now good. Teachers use assessment information to plan activities that meet the needs of students of all abilities. As a result, students are consistently making good progress.
- In 2017, students made average progress in vocational subjects. In the academic AS and A-level courses, however, progress was weaker. This was particularly the case at A level in English literature, psychology, religious studies, history and media. As a result of decisive and effectual new leadership of the sixth form and subjects, teaching and support have markedly improved. Leaders' opinions that these improvements have resulted in current pupils making good progress across subjects are accurate.
- Students who need to retake GCSE qualifications in English or mathematics benefit from effective catch-up courses. The proportion who improved their grade last year in English was above average. In mathematics, it was significantly above the national average.
- The curriculum offers students a good range of academic and vocational courses. The curriculum also makes a strong contribution to their personal development and

preparation for life in modern Britain. Inspectors observed, for instance, a thoughtful debate on reconciling contemporary gender assignment issues with religious beliefs. Recently, students benefited from a workshop from the 'time to talk programme', which gave them guidance about what to say and what not to say to people with mental health issues.

- Leaders are increasing the curriculum offer next year to include courses in economics, and government and politics. Leaders have extended work experience opportunities to all Year 12 students in order to enhance all students' employability skills.
- As in the rest of the school, students in the sixth form make a strong contribution to the community. They act as 'reading buddies' and subject mentors to younger pupils. They are active in the school's drama productions and fundraising events.
- Students have positive attitudes to learning. Inspectors observed large numbers of students making good use of the private study areas. Students discuss their learning with their peers and readily help each other. Student retention rates on sixth-form courses are broadly average. Attendance in the sixth form, like the rest of the school, is improving but it is still remains too low.
- Leaders make sure that students receive effective impartial careers advice and guidance. Students have opportunities to discuss their ideas and aspirations with advisers. They visit places of employment, higher education and universities. They benefit from help in making applications for further study, apprenticeships or employment. As a result, almost every student who leaves the sixth form continues into education, employment or training.

School details

Unique reference number	100183
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10047222

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1437
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	297
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Le Bas
Headteacher	Douglas Greig
Telephone number	020 3260 3333
Website	www.plumsteadmanor.com
Email address	info@plumsteadmanor.com
Date of previous inspection	3–4 March 2016

Information about this school

- Plumstead Manor School is a much larger than average 11–19 comprehensive school for girls, with a mixed sixth form. From September 2018, the school will admit a mixed intake of boys and girls into Year 7.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- The school has an on-site resourced provision for pupils with SEN who have moderate learning difficulties. There are five places per year group. Admissions are made via the local authority admissions panel.
- The proportion of pupils who receive SEN and/or disabilities support is below average

and the proportion of those who have education, health and care plans is above average.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The school uses four alternative providers for a very small number of pupils who have complex needs. They are Wizeup, Pulse and Water and Full Circle in Greenwich, and Horizon Academy in Bexley.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been a restructure of staffing and the leadership team. New deputy headteachers, some subject leaders, inclusion leaders and the sixth form leadership team took up their posts between April and September 2017.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed learning in 55 classrooms, many of which were visited with senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised samples of pupils' work. They checked the school's information about pupils' progress.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other leaders, teachers and other members of staff. They also met with a group of governors, including the chair, as well as with a representative from the local authority. Inspectors had formal discussions with five groups of pupils and various informal discussions with pupils during social times and lessons.
- Inspectors took account of the 44 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents and parents' additional written comments. Inspectors considered the 135 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors checked a range of documentation with regard to all aspects of the school's work.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Murray-Hudson	Ofsted Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Williams	Ofsted Inspector
Amanda Carter-Fraser	Her Majesty's Inspector

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