



Inspection report

Hendon School

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 101357
LEA Barnet

Inspection number 274737
Inspection dates 20 and 21 April 2005
Reporting inspector Mr P Brooker HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Type of School	Secondary	School address	Golders Rise
School category	Foundation		Hendon
Age range of pupils	11 to 18 years		London
			NW4 2HP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8202 9004
Number on roll	1222	Fax number	020 8202 3341
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Dr A Isaacs
Date of previous inspection	March 2004	Executive headteacher	Mr N Christou
		Associate headteacher	Mrs J Pick

Age group	Published	Reference no.
11 to 18 years	3 June 2005	274737

Introduction

When Hendon School was inspected in March 2004, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) subsequently visited the school on two occasions to monitor its progress, and reinspected the school in April 2005.

Description of the school

Hendon School is a large, mixed comprehensive school with 1,222 pupils on roll, including 197 sixth form students. It serves an area that is generally more affluent than average but has some pockets of deprivation. The pupil population is culturally diverse, multi-faith and multi-lingual; more than half the pupils have a mother tongue other than English, a proportion that is very high. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is broadly average although the number who have a formal Statement of Special Educational Need is above average. The school is designated as a languages college and has a special facility for pupils whose hearing is impaired. The school is heavily over-subscribed.

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Overall effectiveness of the school

In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils.

Hendon School is an effective school with notable strengths and several distinctive features, including an impressive range of local and international links. It is a harmonious community that provides a calm and orderly learning environment for its pupils. Provision is sound overall and much is good, very good or excellent. Most of the pupils achieve well although the unevenness of their progress reflects variations in the quality of learning across the school and the legacy of some weaker teaching.

Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of March 2004 required the school to address key issues concerned with leadership and management, the quality of teaching and the pupils' attendance. The school's interim leadership has been strong and effective in bringing about rapid and sustainable changes. By establishing a positive team ethic amongst staff at all levels, the executive headteacher and associate headteacher have galvanised the school to address quickly the weaknesses identified. Under the clear guidance and decisive leadership of the executive headteacher and with the good support of the local education authority (LEA), the school has worked hard to monitor, evaluate and strengthen its provision. There has been good progress in addressing the specific weaknesses identified in the last inspection.

Capacity to improve

Procedures for monitoring and self-evaluation are systematic and rigorous. The school is honest and accurate in its self-review. These systems give the senior leadership team a clear overview of the school's strengths and the priorities for further development. The staff work well as a team, morale is good and the school has appropriate systems for supporting staff and sharing best practice. The governing body has developed suitable procedures for monitoring the school's work and is better able to hold the school to account. The well established systems for monitoring and evaluation ensure that the school is well placed to sustain its recent improvement. However, the very effective interim leadership arrangements are temporary and the school's substantive leadership needs to be resolved.

What the school should do to improve further

The key priorities for the school's development plan are to:

- consolidate and continue to strengthen leadership at all levels;
- continue to improve the quality of teaching;

- make more effective and consistent use of assessment to challenge the pupils and guide their improvement;
- improve the learning environment.

Achievement and standards

The school has a comprehensive intake. Taken over time, the ability profile of pupils when they enter the school is broadly average, although the profiles of the current Year 7 and Year 8 cohorts are above average. In general, when compared with their prior attainment at Key Stage 2, the pupils make expected or accelerated progress in Key Stage 3 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. Standards of attainment in the end-of-Key Stage 3 tests and in GNVQ/GCSE examinations have been consistently above national average figures in recent years and well above those of schools in similar socio-economic circumstances. Achievement is satisfactory overall and often good.

Nonetheless, there is a mixed pattern of attainment in Key Stage 4. The school is aware that certain groups of pupils achieve better than others and makes effective use of its analysis of data to target support and address underachievement. Good short-term strategies have been established in order to raise attainment, with revision courses, mentoring and booster sessions. In addition, improved teaching and the school's more systematic approach to curriculum planning ensure that the pupils make at least sound and often good progress over time. In general, the pupils who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The school's analysis indicates that pupils whose hearing is impaired make good progress.

The students' average points score in A level/AVCE examinations has showed a steady increase in recent years, but remains below the national median.

Personal development

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall. Relationships between adults and pupils, and between the pupils themselves, are very good, and the school is a racially harmonious community. Many pupils demonstrate the mature and responsible qualities promoted in the 'ideal Hendon student' and are genuinely courteous, helpful and polite, not only to visitors, but also to staff and with each other. In assembly, the pupils' behaviour was impeccable.

In lessons, the pupils are well behaved and have good attitudes to learning. There was a settled climate in all lessons: the pupils arrived promptly, followed routines and were willing participants in the learning process. Attitudes and behaviour were satisfactory or better in all lessons, including two thirds in which they were good or very good. In general, the pupils were compliant and many were keen to express their views. When teaching was good the pupils were responsive and worked collaboratively. They made enthusiastic contributions and, when given the opportunity, thrived on responsibility, showing a high

level of maturity and self-confidence. Most pupils sustained their concentration well although a few individuals were disruptive when the pace of the learning wavered.

The school's compact site causes congestion problems at certain points during lesson changeover times. However, good levels of staff supervision on corridors and stairwells ensure that the pupils are well monitored and that movement between lessons is orderly and purposeful.

Provision for the pupils' personal development is good. The pupils are able to express their views through an energetic School Council. They are motivated by the serious consideration the school gives to their opinions and take pride in the outcomes. The school has a well established personal, social and health education programme, which includes elements of citizenship, but registration time is often used ineffectively. The pupils are aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and there is a good take up of sporting activities. The pupils are enthusiastic when given opportunities to reflect on and debate spiritual and moral issues. They have a mature understanding of the need to listen to and consider opposing points of view. There are no overt instances of bullying.

Good opportunities are afforded to pupils in order to extend their cultural perspectives, many of which are linked with the school's specialist status. For example, productive links have been established with schools in Japan, Nepal, France and Germany. The school recently hosted students and staff from a High School in Japan. The Crown Prince of Japan has visited the school. In addition, many pupils have widened their horizons through history and design visits to the United States and a geography field trip to Iceland.

The pupils' interest in and care for others extend beyond the boundaries of the school surroundings. For example, considerable amounts of money have been raised for good causes and the Eco Task Force has won two awards, one of which was for recycling a waste area and creating the school memorial garden. However, more consideration needs to be given to reducing the amount of litter that is deposited around the school site and in classrooms.

Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is good. At over 93 per cent for the academic year to date, attendance rates are above the national median and above the LEA's target. The school has very good strategies to monitor and improve attendance, and overall rates have improved steadily over the last two years. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national average. The school has taken effective steps to improve punctuality; punctuality to lessons is good.

Although the school continues to exclude a small number of pupils, it makes good use of data on behaviour and exclusions to monitor and support individual pupils.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is satisfactory overall with notable strengths. The pupils make sound and often good progress in lessons.

Teaching is thoroughly planned and well structured; lessons start and end effectively and the pupils are organised in ways which encourage their full participation. Consistent routines ensure that the pupils have good work habits and are actively engaged in learning. A core of teaching is consistently good, very good or excellent. The best lessons are lively, engaging and skilfully managed to ensure that challenging activities develop the understanding, skills and knowledge of all of the pupils and present good opportunities for assessment. In these lessons clever questioning and constructive feedback develop the pupils' thinking and guide their improvement. By contrast, in a small number of lessons the pupils made only limited progress either because the teacher's expectations were too low or because learning was not effectively managed and directed.

The contribution of support staff is effective and recent developments have strengthened their impact. Pupils who have a hearing impairment are very well supported. Homework is set regularly and there is suitable provision to support pupils in completing it.

The school uses data effectively to set targets, track progress and analyse its performance. Teachers have good access to this assessment information for each class and the more successful subject departments already make good use of this data to guide and inform their planning. However, in general teachers do not use assessment data effectively to plan work for individual pupils, and in many lessons work did not present sufficient challenge to different groups of pupils. Routine marking is sound and much is good, but the pupils are often unclear what they need to do to improve or how to achieve their targets.

The curriculum meets and exceeds requirements. It is enhanced by the college's specialist status and a strong commitment to providing extracurricular activities. During the inspection, groups of pupils spent their lunch break enthusiastically rehearsing for a talent show. The implementation of a range of national strategies has improved provision. These include good intervention strategies for the pupils who have additional needs, booster and revision classes, and training in assessment. However, some initiatives are at any early stage of development and their impact is limited. Links with parents and the community are very good.

The amount and quality of resources are satisfactory overall and there are timely plans to update information and communication technology equipment. Although some areas of the school are attractive and well maintained, the condition of too many of the classrooms is unsatisfactory. Poor decoration, shoddy displays of work, defective furnishings and inadequate storage make many classrooms drab and uninviting places to learn. The school is aware of the scale of the problem and has embarked on a programme of refurbishment.

The school has a strongly inclusive ethos and pays due regard to the pupils' safety, health and general well-being.

Leadership and management

The school's leadership has strengthened considerably since the last inspection. The interim leadership arrangements have been very effective in bringing about rapid and sustainable improvements. The leadership of the executive headteacher is very good: he has given the school a clear vision and direction and a strategy for realising the improvements. The

associate headteacher provides very good day-to-day management of the school. Together they have successfully promoted a collegiate ethos amongst staff with clear lines of accountability and a sense of collective responsibility. The executive and associate headteachers have balanced skilfully the need for challenge and support whilst also tackling the most significant weaknesses with sensitivity and determination. There are good systems for supporting staff and delegating responsibility to teachers at all levels, although this is at an early stage of implementation.

The senior leadership team has undergone significant recent changes and is in transition. The restructured leadership team operates effectively. Senior managers have clearly defined roles; other staff understand these responsibilities and value the line-management arrangements. Rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating provision have developed, and the senior leadership roles continue to be consolidated and further developed.

Training for middle managers has strengthened their roles. Procedures for monitoring and evaluation by heads of department and heads of year have developed well and are good. The rigorous self-evaluation process has helped middle managers to understand how their work fits into whole-school improvement. Curriculum leadership is sound overall and often good or very good. Advanced skills teachers are effectively deployed and play an important role in improving provision.

Governance has improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory. The work of the governing body has been strengthened by clearer structures, better systems and by recent appointments. Effective procedures are being established in order to monitor the school's work. The governors are supportive; they have developed good links with the school in order to ensure that they are better informed about its provision.

Since the last inspection the LEA's advice and guidance for the school has been good. There has been appropriate and well-targeted support for leadership and management, and for teaching and learning. In addition, the LEA has usefully moderated the school's judgements in order to provide external validation of its progress and to build the school's capacity for self-evaluation.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

Hendon School was inspected by four HMI in March 2004 under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act, the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in October 2004 and in February 2005 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of March 2004.

In April 2005, two HMI and two Additional Inspectors returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, and was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Thirty eight lessons, six registration sessions and one assembly were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the school and on the playground at break and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the executive headteacher, associate headteacher, senior managers, other nominated staff, a group of pupils, the chair of governing body and a representative from the LEA, and informally with other staff. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of March 2004 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet 'Complaining about HMI-led Ofsted inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2005. This document may be freely reproduced in whole or in part, for non-commercial purposes, provided the source and the date are acknowledged.