

# Hampstead School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100052
<b>Local Authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	276245
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 December 2005
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gill Close HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr G R Berridge Mr A Knowles
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Westbere Road Hampstead London NW2 3RT
<b>Telephone number</b>	02077948133
<b>Fax number</b>	02074358260

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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Hampstead School is a larger than average school with a large sixth form. It has held technology college status since 1997 and has been an extended school since September 2005. These involve it in working closely with local primary schools and providing community classes and support, much of which is based on information and communication technology (ICT). The school population is very diverse, with about two thirds of students from minority ethnic heritages. Nearly half of the students speak a first language that is not English of whom a few are at early stages of learning English. Students come from a broad range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is twice the national average and almost 200 students are refugees or asylum seekers. One fifth of the students have special educational needs.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

### What the school should do to improve further

\* systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching\* improving students' progress through coherent and consistent operation of the system for target setting, tracking and intervention\* the match of learning activities to individual students' needs\* meeting statutory requirements to deliver in full the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education (RE) in Key Stage 3.

## Achievement and standards

Grade:

### Personal development and well-being

Grade:

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

Grade:

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and good in the sixth form. Lessons are monitored through observations by middle managers, the senior management team and by external consultants. These observations are not sufficiently systematic or rigorous, or focused on learning, to provide a clear picture of the overall quality of students' learning or the effectiveness of teaching. They are not used methodically to improve teaching. There is good teaching in which teachers use their enthusiasm and subject knowledge successfully to challenge students to do their best and ensure that they learn at a good pace. They use questioning techniques effectively to assess students' learning and are successful in managing students' behaviour, even when it is challenging. Teachers generally plan their lessons carefully and include learning objectives for the class. However, there are too many lessons in which the activities resulting from these plans are not well enough matched to the needs of individual students to develop their learning. Other features of the less effective teaching are that teachers do not set homework regularly, students are not involved actively enough in the lesson and teachers' assessments include too few comments about how students could improve their performance. The teaching and learning for students who access special provision is good because teachers know the students well and learning activities are well matched to their needs. In the sixth form, teaching is good. It develops students' independent learning skills successfully, and uses assessment effectively to meet their individual needs and help them to improve.

## Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that the curriculum is satisfactory overall and good in the sixth form. In Key Stage 4, students are able to choose from a wide range of GCSE courses, including three sciences. The curriculum does not include sufficient vocational options although an alternative curriculum of entry level vocational courses, most of which are delivered off site, goes some way towards meeting students' needs. In addition, all students benefit from

work experience placements in Year 10. In the sixth form there is a good variety of advanced level courses, with some vocational options at this level and below. In order to ensure that provision is both cost effective and broad, the school wisely offers some sixth form courses through distance learning. The school correctly recognises the need to broaden its curriculum, and its building plans include a new skills centre to facilitate this. Students benefit from a very strong curriculum in art and drama which is supported by work with professional artists and playwrights. It includes a wide range of students in activities and enables them to achieve success. Students enjoy the opportunities for music, but provision for physical education (PE) is restricted by the school site. Information and communication technology is taught through other subjects. In religious education, students follow a short GCSE course, but the school does not fully deliver the Locally Agreed Syllabus in Key Stage 3 and does not have a subject specialist in the staff team. The curriculum and students' personal development are well enriched by visits, for example to museums and theatres, and trips abroad. Students participate in a range of clubs and competitions, and have won national acclaim in debating. Gifted and talented students have good opportunities for extension through extra-curricular activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade:**

The pastoral aspects of provision are good. However, academic support is not as strong, and this is reflected in the progress that students make. Consequently, the overall care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school provides a very caring environment in which its rich diversity is celebrated and students are encouraged to be proud of and develop their individual strengths. The strong pastoral system supports students' personal development very well, and students' support for each other is good, such as through sixth-form peer mentors who help Year 7 students to settle in. The school places a strong emphasis on safety, and child protection procedures are in place. Its links with partners to ensure students' well-being are outstanding. For example, they enable vulnerable students to attend, overcome difficulties and improve their behaviour. The student support centre makes a substantial impact on enabling students to access the curriculum, for example through helping them gain confidence that they can succeed and supporting them to achieve certification in alternative practical and vocational courses. The specialist team for students with special educational needs knows them very well and provides very good flexible care for their personal and academic needs. This enables students to make good progress overall, with some continuing to advanced level studies in the sixth form. The specialist team for students at early stages of learning English also supports them well so they make good progress in language acquisition. Students receive effective guidance which enables them to choose courses in school and pathways after school that match their capabilities and strengths. In the sixth form, their attainment is checked regularly from the outset and they are supported well academically and personally to meet the requirements of their chosen pathway. This support enables them to make good progress on their courses. In the sixth form, care guidance and support are good. The school rightly recognised that its assessment systems did not enable all students in the main school to do as well as they should. The information was not produced or used consistently enough to identify and support all students who were making insufficient progress, so some students made well below average progress in 2004 and 2005. As a result, the school has introduced this year a system capable of tracking students' attainment each term and informing support for those who make too little progress. The school has correctly identified in its development plan the need to integrate and strengthen the role of pastoral teams in supporting academic achievement and improve the monitoring of individual students across the curriculum. It is working to increase the

consistency of the assessment information about students' learning to enable rigorous monitoring of students' progress towards all of their targets, review of these targets and support for all who need it.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade:**

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## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for telling us about your school when we visited recently.

We found that you get on well with each other and with the staff in a very diverse and caring community. Teachers look after you well. The staff in the specialist support teams provide good help and the excellent links with partners outside school ensure your safety and well-being. You enjoy school but some of you do not attend regularly enough and quite a few of you arrive late in the morning. Generally you behave well, but a few of you sometimes disrupt lessons. You make a strong contribution to the community and sixth-formers support younger students well in activities and through peer mentoring.

In the main school you make satisfactory progress. We have asked teachers to match teaching closely to your needs and check your performance regularly so they can help you all to make better progress. We have also asked senior teachers to watch teaching carefully to help it improve. You study a satisfactory range of subjects but do not spend enough time on religious education between Years 7 and 9. In the sixth form you make good progress because teaching is good and teachers keep a close eye on your progress. They support and advise you well. We wish you success in working with the staff to help the school improve. We hope that you enjoy the rest of your time in school and do well.