



Langley Park School for Girls

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101678
LEA Bromley LEA
Inspection number 276571
Inspection dates 3 May 2006 to 4 May 2006
Reporting inspector Sheila Nolan AI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Hawksbrook Lane
School category	Foundation		South Eden Park Road
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		Beckenham BR3 3BE
Gender of pupils	Girls	Telephone number	020 8663 4199
Number on roll	1640	Fax number	020 8663 6578
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Nick Moore
Date of previous inspection	20 November 2000	Headteacher	Miss Jan Sage

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	3 May 2006 - 4 May 2006	276571

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Langley Park School for Girls, a specialist technology college and leading edge school, is heavily oversubscribed. Increasing numbers of boys are admitted to the expanding sixth form. Whilst few pupils are at the early stages of learning English, numbers are increasing. There is little incidence of deprivation and the number of pupils eligible for a free school meal is low. Very few pupils join or leave the school other than at standard times. Attainment on entry is above average and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is lower than average. The school has been chosen recently to adopt a second specialism in modern foreign languages because of its high performance as a technology college.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Langley Park School for Girls is an outstandingly effective technology college that provides students with high quality education, a judgement shared by the school. Value for money is very good. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher, very well supported by the leadership team, ensures the school evaluates its work incisively and accurately. Governors support and challenge the school well although they have not ensured that the statutory requirement for religious education for all students in the sixth form is met fully.

Students in the main school achieve well above average standards and make very good progress from a broadly above average base on joining the school. The school intends to drive up still further these high results by increasing the proportion of students gaining Grade C or better in both English and mathematics. Post-16 students achieve above average standards with year-on-year improved results in advanced (A level) examinations. Good teaching, a relentless focus on examination requirements and the high priority given to students' personal development are major contributory factors to the school's success. It caters increasingly effectively for students at the early stages of learning English. A small number of students, some with learning difficulties and disabilities and some from minority ethnic groups, make marginally slower progress than their peers. Gifted students achieve very well. The school rightly recognises that the guidance students receive on how to improve their day-to-day work could be sharper.

The school has demonstrated its strong capacity to improve continuously. Between successive inspections it has sustained high standards in the main school and improved provision and results in the expanding sixth form. Its high performance as a technology college has enabled it to undertake a second specialism. The last inspection identified a single issue for improvement. The school has addressed well provision for the students' spiritual development in the main school.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The sixth form is good and improving, reflecting the school's significant investment in its development. Standards are above average and students achieve well. A strong focus on furthering students' independent learning skills and a 'can do' ethos is adding to their enjoyment of study and high course completion rates. On entering the sixth form, students, particularly those new to the school, including boys, receive very helpful guidance on the good range of advanced and other courses offered. Students appreciate the good teaching, the high level of support and welcome the 'calm learning environment'. Students' personal development is excellent; all students play an active part in school life, many as senior prefects and mentors. They feel well prepared for higher education and working life. Good leadership and management of the sixth form enable students, including those for whom English is an additional language, to achieve of their best. The capacity to improve is strong and value for money good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure greater consistence in the quality of the guidance students receive on how to improve their performance
- continue the drive to raise even further the proportion of students gaining 5 A* to C grades, including both English and mathematics
- ensure that provision for religious education in the sixth form meets statutory requirements fully for all students.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

Students consistently meet standards that are much higher than those expected nationally, meeting the challenging targets set by the school. The overwhelming majority achieve very well, particularly in the main school 'because teachers push us very hard'. Post-16 students make good progress across a range of accreditation. Standards in the sixth form are above average and continue to rise despite steadily increasing numbers joining in Year 12. Over half of students taking advanced courses in Year 13 gained the sought-after highest grades in 2005. Students achieve exceptionally well in a range of subjects, including, physics, chemistry, business, drama and psychology.

The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE grades is consistently well above average. There has been a year-on-year improvement in the proportion of A* and A grades, with over a third of examination results last year in this top range. The school rightly recognises that the already well above average proportion of students gaining Grade C or better in both English and mathematics can be improved even further. All groups achieve well with gifted students making excellent progress. Students do particularly well in English literature and science as well as in the specialist technology areas.

Year 9 students make very good progress from their starting points and achieve well above average results in national tests. The few students with learning difficulties and a small number from minority ethnic groups make marginally slower progress than others. Those for whom English is an additional language make particularly good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school justifiably evaluates personal development as outstanding. Students are proud of their school, enjoy coming, attend well and work hard. They particularly appreciate the high levels of independence afforded them, responding with generally excellent behaviour. They especially enjoy valuable attendance awards sponsored by the school's caterers. The well organised school council, thoroughly representative of all groups within the school, provides a vehicle through which students know their

'opinions count'. Students feel safe around the extensive site and within the buildings. The recently-appointed school security guard has done much to reassure them further whilst retaining pleasant and open access. Relationships with teachers and friends are very positive and they report that there is little if any bullying. Where it occurs it 'gets sorted' rapidly. The spiritual, moral and cultural development of the learners is outstanding. Assemblies and tutorials provide regular opportunities for reflection. Students show a sensitive awareness of customs and cultures other than their own.

Many shoulder responsibilities well and make a difference to others' lives by service to the wider community: local hospices, hospitals, care homes and primary schools benefit as do international projects. Highly committed peer mentors help resolve difficulties for and between others. Most are keen participants in the many initiatives undertaken by the school.

Students adopt healthy life styles through participation in physical activities and sensible eating choices. Most consider lunch menus have 'much improved'. Imaginative careers and enterprise education, work experience, and strong business links complement the already impressive focus on high standards so that students prepare exceptionally well for future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school rightly judges that it has sustained good quality teaching across the school. Some practice is outstanding. The school also agrees that learning is outstanding, the result of the school's drive to promote strong independent study skills and high aspirations. Underpinning all lessons is strong subject expertise, high expectations both of behaviour and performance, a relentless focus on examination preparation, and very warm working relationships. Humour and the efficient use of time support classroom practice well. Some inspirational teaching engages students whole-heartedly through immediate and robust feedback. As a result, students try hard and work well individually and in groups. 'I get masses of work done here' said a sixth-form student.

Occasionally, some lessons lack a sharp enough focus on the guidance, both immediate and through written work that students receive on how to improve their performance. The school recognises that ensuring the consistency of day-to-day assessment to accelerate further the progress of all students is an improvement priority.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school accurately judges its curriculum to be outstanding. Its range and high quality meet the needs of students of well and contribute to exceptional personal development. Technology status spurs innovation and fruitful partnerships with community and business. Students in Years 10 and 11 choose from one out of five technology options. Provision for science is noteworthy and take-up of separate

sciences impressive. A carefully planned personal, social, health and citizenship programme (PSHCE) provides excellent opportunities to prepare for life beyond school. 'It teaches you how to behave and get on in life' offered a student. Work is in hand to increase the time allocated to religious education in sixth form PSHCE and to expand the range of courses on offer in the sixth form to meet demands from increasing numbers and changing clientele.

Most striking is the excellent programme of additional options beyond the school day, making the school a hive of enjoyable activity - 'really good fun' said pupils, creating erupting volcanoes and slime in the science club. Large numbers of pupils are involved in sport, music, drama and other special interest clubs. The many visits at home and abroad such as a drama trip to South Africa, create enduring relationships, sometimes with less advantaged communities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding throughout the school. Child protection, health and safety, and risk assessment procedures are exceptionally clear. Students say they can talk freely about problems to adults and younger students speak enthusiastically about support from sixth formers in their roles as mentors within tutor groups. Support for vulnerable students is impressive. Internal and external agencies liaise very well, through the personal and learning support team, to ensure ready access to the help needed.

Personal and academic monitoring is very well managed. Students have a clear understanding of personal targets. Underachievement amongst all learners is readily identified and there is a wide range of formal and informal support provided. Very good academic guidance in Years 9 and 11 enables students to choose options and study routes. Regular formal and informal opportunities are available for parents and pupils to review progress although some parents would like this to be more extensive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Inspirational leadership and outstanding management by the headteacher, very well supported by the senior leadership team, are reflected in the school's dynamic development between successive inspections, both in the expanding sixth form and as a technology college. The headteacher has shouldered accountability for the on-going success of the specialism. Equality of opportunity is very well promoted not least through the excellent care and guidance offered to students. The business manager provides exceptional service. The leadership of the sixth form is good. There is a strong culture of self-evaluation. The school has analysed its strengths and weaknesses incisively and accurately. Remedial action and new developments are carefully integrated into the planning cycle, underpinned by progress as a technology college. Middle managers have much autonomy and expectations are high. Data is very carefully scrutinised to identify and remedy underperformance at all levels. Parents,

of whom 'much is expected', support the school very well. Their views and those of students are sought energetically. Perceived weaknesses are addressed rapidly. The capacity of the school to secure the further improvement it seeks is strong.

Governors give good leadership. They are well led and strike a happy balance between holding the school to account and not unnecessarily disturbing its smooth running. However, they have not sought to ensure that provision for religious education in the sixth form meets statutory requirements for all students. The school is very well staffed. Specialist teachers are strongly supported by a wide range of associate staff. They appreciate the school's positive professional ethos. The school has been resourceful in the management of its very well-kept, but constrained, accommodation. Regularly, adjacent space is rented for the public examination season. Money and other resources are managed in-house exceptionally well. The school gives very good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	1
The behaviour of learners	1	1
The attendance of learners	2	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	1
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	2
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Students

After our visit to inspect your school we would like to share our findings with you. We would also like to thank you for your contributions in sharing your work and opinions. It is pleasing to know that you enjoy the many exceptional opportunities provided for you, and that you attend regularly and work hard. Most of you are proud to belong to an outstanding school.

We agree with you that Langley is an excellent school with many strong features. You rightly told us that teachers know how to make it even better and that they also listen to your views. You have an exceptional headteacher, a very dedicated team of teachers and governors, and a wide range of enthusiastic associate staff who do their best to support you well. The vast majority of you are achieving very well, not only because teaching is good and carefully focused on examination requirements but also because you display a high motivation to learn and you behave very well. We found your growing sixth form to be increasingly successful. It is well led and gives you a good education that leads to above average results. Those of you joining the sixth form from other schools, particularly boys, are appreciative of the calm learning environment and feel welcomed. In addition, your school has developed very well as a technology college, giving you especially good access to related areas such as science and mathematics advanced level courses.

There are a few things that we would like your school to continue to work on: * sharpen the guidance you receive in the classroom on how to improve your work * continue to raise even further the numbers of Year 11 who gain 5 A* to C grades including English and mathematics* ensure that that religious education in the sixth form is established fully for all students. We wish you and your school very well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Nolan

Lead Inspector