



Enfield County School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102048
LEA Enfield LEA
Inspection number 276644
Inspection dates 1 March 2006 to 1 March 2006
Reporting inspector Vincent Ashworth

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Holly Walk
School category	Community		Enfield
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		EN2 6QG
Gender of pupils	Girls	Telephone number	02083633030
Number on roll	1130	Fax number	02083676569
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Miss Phyllis Oborn
Date of previous inspection	12 December 2000	Headteacher	Miss Pamela Anne Rutherford

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior managers, staff and pupils. They also scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school as well as questionnaires completed by parents. Inspectors visited lessons in the upper and lower school to establish the validity of the school's own judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. Morning assembly and students' conduct during break and lunchtime were also observed.

Description of the school

Enfield County School is a large secondary school for 1130 girls aged between 11 and 18, including 194 in the sixth form. The school is on two sites about one mile apart: one is for students in Years 7 - 9 and the other for students in Years 10 -13. The school receives pupils from a large and diverse catchment area. About two thirds of the pupils are classified as white, including many of Greek and Turkish origin: a third of pupils come from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is less than in other schools, but the numbers who need extra help with their learning are typical. There is a very high proportion of pupils for whom English is not their first language. When pupils start at the school their attainment is above average. Attendance is above the national average and instances of unauthorised absence are very low. The school has recently been designated a specialist school for languages.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school, where students from diverse backgrounds are able to come together and study in an atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding and support. The high standards and achievements of students are a reflection of the well-established ethos of care and creativity that pervades the school. High quality and, in many instances, innovative teaching ensures that students achieve impressive results in their examinations and make better progress than expected. Teachers inspire students to give of their best; however, the school has rightly identified that more needs to be done to ensure that the more able students and students from Black Caribbean heritage attain higher standards. The school's arrangements for support and guidance are outstanding. Lower attaining students and those who experience difficulty with their learning make very good progress as a result of the school's excellent range of strategies to support them. Senior managers are highly effective and work as a team. They have a strong track record of improvement and are very clear on what and how the school can do better. The judgements in this report match very closely the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation. The school has appropriately challenging plans for its specialist language status and the impetus to drive this forward is strong. Much of the school's accommodation is poor. Nonetheless, the school provides outstanding value for money and has excellent capacity to improve.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

Students benefit from very good resources which enable them to develop as independent learners. For example, students make good use of the internet to undertake wider research for their coursework. They also make very good use of technology to produce presentations and displays. The proportion of students who successfully complete their studies is high because students enjoy their lessons and highly effective support stops them from falling behind. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and results in students making much better progress than expected by the time they take their GCE A level examinations. Students speak highly of the excellent guidance they receive from their teachers which helps them enormously in improving the standard of their work. Leadership and management of the sixth form are strong.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Standards are high and most students make good progress. Students who need extra help or support make excellent progress. Very few pupils leave school with no qualifications. Standards achieved in national tests at the end of Year 9 have been consistently above average since the last inspection. Results in English are much higher than in most schools. In 2005, students' overall progress during Key Stage 3 was satisfactory. Standards at Key Stage 4 are very high.

In 2005, the proportion of students who achieved pass grades in at least five GCSE examinations fell slightly from previous years, but remained well above average. The overall progress made by most students by the end of Year 11 is good. However a small, but significant group of students from Black Caribbean heritage do not achieve as well as they could. Students' progress in mathematics is particularly impressive because they leave school with exceptionally strong skills in numeracy. Overall standards in the sixth form are broadly average. Some students who study for GCE AS and A level qualifications have low levels of prior attainment and find it difficult to cope with a full programme. The school allows these students to study only one or two subjects. Pass rates in GCE AS level examinations are low, but those students who go on to take GCE A-level examinations achieve good results. Most students make excellent progress in the sixth form and the majority go on to study at university.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school provides a harmonious, purposeful and generally safe working environment. Students behave very well in class and elsewhere around the school. They are keen to succeed and take pride in their work. Instances of bullying or harassment are extremely rare. Students report that the school has a zero tolerance to bullying and if it does occur then it is dealt with quickly and effectively. The school's personal, social and health education programme at Key Stage 3 is well established and has a strong emphasis on citizenship. Students attend regularly and derive enormous benefit from the very wide range of extracurricular activities the school provides. Sporting activities are particularly popular and provide a strong focus on healthy lifestyles. The school has taken an innovative approach to supporting students' emotional well-being. For example, a qualified art therapist helps students come to terms with their feelings or personal difficulties by expressing themselves through an artistic medium. The frequent celebrations of students' successes through graduation ceremonies, school assemblies and displays around the school inspire students to aim high.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's view that teaching and learning in lessons are good overall. The school promotes the very best practice in teaching and learning and supports teachers well in developing their classroom practice. Teachers have a good understanding of how they can organise their lessons so that every student can play a full and active role, regardless of their level of confidence or ability. Teachers have a high level of subject knowledge and good class management skills. As result, students gain a sense of pride in their learning and are motivated to do their very best. One parent, writing on a questionnaire, indicated that teaching here is 'fantastic'. Another parent said that 'it's the good visual aids, sense of humour and useful and interesting tasks that make the difference'. All of these aspects were echoed in one English lesson

observed for a Year 9 group. Through games, comparing different video clips, discussion, paired and group work, students were able to get to grips with complex characters and their motivations in a Shakespeare play. The teacher's boundless energy and enthusiasm was equally matched by the students' enjoyment and involvement. Students are also very clear about their targets and what they need to do to move to a higher grade. The school requires students to work in different pairs or groups rather than just sitting with their friends. In this way, students are able to benefit from learning from each other, just as much as from their teacher. Lesson objectives are clearly explained to students so that both teacher and students can evaluate progress and the quality of learning. The school has already begun to identify how teaching and learning can be improved so that more students achieve the higher levels in Key Stage 3 tests and the top grades in GCSE examinations.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 3

The school provides a good curriculum for all students in the main school. The specialist status of the school results in a strong emphasis on modern languages with all pupils studying two languages in Key Stage 3, one of which they continue with into Key Stage 4. Students also study a short course in information and communication technology (ICT). However pass rates in ICT are low and further improvement is needed if students are to gain the accreditation they deserve. In Year 11, all students are given the opportunity to explore work opportunities for the future. Some students attend a local college of further education to learn skills in animal care or horticulture. The school collaborates with other schools to extend the range of subjects students can study. However, the school has rightly recognised the need to review its provision so that courses are better-suited to the diverse needs and levels of ability of all students who wish to stay on at school. Opportunities for enrichment are excellent. Students enjoy the wide range of extracurricular activities provided and their achievements are enhanced by high levels of participation. The students spoke enthusiastically of the school's gospel choir and how they look forward to public performances. Students in Year 11 are particularly looking forward to their work placement because it will allow them to learn new skills, for example in the media, the beauty industry, the legal system or childcare.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

In this school every student matters; barriers to learning are removed before they become a problem. The school's policies and procedures for risk assessment and child protection are embedded and understood by staff. The good relations with external agencies ensure the different elements of support for young people in care are closely linked with each other. The pastoral system underpins all aspects of school life and is organised and managed very effectively. Learning support staff are highly committed and have been successful in gaining the trust and respect of the students they work

with. The school's team of learning mentors and Heads of Year has been particularly successful in remedying underachievement and helping students attend regularly. There are also strong support systems that nurture academic achievement. For example, the school offers a range of after school clubs, study workshops and revision classes that provide very good subject support. These workshops have now been designed so that they focus more specifically on students' individual needs. The school's arrangements for careers guidance and education provide very good support for students' economic well being. Links with parents and guardians are good and the school is looking at ways of making this even better. There are over 60 primary schools which send their pupils to the school. Each primary school is visited and school staff give presentations to potential pupils to support them in their transition to secondary school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The newly appointed headteacher and deputy headteacher have established a clear vision of where the school needs to be in the future. They have the energy, drive and enthusiasm to make sure this vision is realised. Managers at all levels are highly skilled in working out what the school does well and where things need to be done better. They make good use of data to produce improvement plans that are coherent, clearly focussed and realistic. However, a few departmental development plans do not identify sufficiently precise criteria by which senior managers can evaluate the impact of the various initiatives they have put in place. Communications are very effective. Line management structures are clear and roles and responsibilities are well understood. As a result, teachers are highly enthusiastic and identify strongly with the school and the teams in which they work. There is shared commitment across the staff to diversity and raising achievement. Senior managers are visible around the school; this instils a sense of order and discipline, particularly during break times. The school has well established and rigorous processes in place to review the performance of departments and to support their planning for improvement. A comprehensive quality assurance process focuses on achievement at subject, departmental and school level. The quality of teaching is effectively evaluated through the school's lesson observation system. The school's judgements on the quality of teaching are accurate. Structures and processes of governance are strong. Through the effective sub-committees, governors have a good understanding of what is going on. They have been relentless in holding the school to account, but have been insufficiently systematic in evaluating their own effectiveness. There are also opportunities for greater levels of governor involvement in school life, for example by developing more innovative links with the business community. The standard of accommodation is poor. The lower school building and much of the upper school are not accessible for staff or students with restricted mobility. Most of the science laboratories are outdated, shabby and dispiriting; many classrooms and corridors lack a sense of subject identity. The timescale for planned refurbishment of laboratories is too long. Management of issues arising from the school being on split-sites is effective. For example, teachers work across both sites

and Year 9 students attend subject taster sessions in the upper school in the summer term before they are due to start.

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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	1
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	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?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

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	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

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?	2	3
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	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	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

As you know, a colleague and I recently spent a day inspecting your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. We appreciated the fact that a number of you gave up your lunchtime to meet with us. Your views were most helpful. I would like to summarise for you what we thought about your school. We were very impressed by you, your teachers and your school. You behave well in lessons and around the school. You show a great deal of respect for your teachers and for each other. This makes the atmosphere in the school both friendly and happy. In fact, we think your school is outstanding in many ways.

Your school is extremely caring and supportive and offers you excellent opportunities both personally and academically to achieve good results in your tests and examinations. Teaching is good and often outstanding. This is because you really get involved in lessons and your teachers know how to capture your imagination and get the best out of you. Your teachers work very hard to support you so that you make very good progress in most subjects. Those of you who get extra help with your learning deserve a special pat on the back, because your progress is excellent. However, some of you are capable of getting even higher grades in your examinations. Your teachers know this is the case and will help you to achieve this. There are many opportunities for you to learn new skills and develop wider interests that will help you when you leave school.

Your school is very well led. The headteacher is helped and supported by an equally outstanding senior team and a supportive group of governors. We noticed that the quality of many classrooms, laboratories and parts of the school's buildings were out-of-date and shabby. Fortunately, students in the sixth form can enjoy and benefit from the excellent facilities provided by their new building. We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Vincent Ashworth

HMI