



Emerson Park School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102340
LEA Havering LEA
Inspection number 276699
Inspection dates 7 June 2006 to 8 June 2006
Reporting inspector Adrian Lyons

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Wych Elm Road
School category	Community		Hornchurch
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		RM11 3AD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01708 475285
Number on roll	959	Fax number	01708 620963
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Pat Brown
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr Adrian May

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	7 June 2006 - 8 June 2006	276699

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school's roll has increased significantly in recent years and is now around the average size for secondary schools. The school is located in a residential area and the majority of learners live in the local area which has a low level of deprivation. While parts of the location are very affluent, there is a low level of higher education experience amongst the adult population. There is low pupil mobility. There are more boys than girls. The school was awarded specialist status for sport in September 2004 and holds the Sportsmark and Artsmark Gold awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges itself as satisfactory with good features and inspectors agree. This is a much improved and improving school. It is calm and well ordered and pupils enjoy attending. With some exceptions, the consensus amongst parents is that communication between home and school is very good and much improved. The overwhelming majority of parents are very happy with the school but the experience of pupils is uneven and so a small minority of parents have concerns about behaviour and the quality of teaching in some subjects. This is particularly true of information and communication technology where the current Year 11 have had an unsatisfactory experience. However, the school has taken steps to improve the situation for the current Year 10.

Examination results at GCSE have improved significantly over the last three years. However, much of this improvement can be attributed to the increasing ability of the pupils entering the school in Year 7. Pupils are making the progress that may be expected of them and the school is seeking to raise progress further through even more effective approaches to teaching and learning. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is the curriculum provided. Many aspects of care, guidance and support are very good, but overall these are only satisfactory because marking is inconsistent and teachers are not yet confident in using data to plan work. This hinders the shared setting of challenging but realistic targets for pupils' achievement. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work and progress.

A new headteacher was appointed in September 2005 and he, with the senior leaders, has built on an already improving situation to set in place a number of initiatives to raise achievement. However, programmes to improve teaching and learning and particularly assessment, have not yet been implemented consistently across the school. There is a lack of rigorous systems to ensure that all staff implement policies and initiatives. The school offers satisfactory value for money. It fails to fulfil its legal duty to provide a daily corporate act of worship.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the process for monitoring pupils' academic progress so that they can be set challenging targets for improvement.
- Further develop systems for pupils' involvement in their assessment.
- Improve monitoring to ensure that policies and initiatives are implemented consistently.
- Meet statutory requirements by providing a daily act of collective worship.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall, achievement and standards are satisfactory. Students enter the school with results that are above the national average. They make broadly satisfactory progress in the first three years of school and in 2005 achieved results at the end of year 9 in

English, mathematics and science that were slightly above average. Students make satisfactory progress in years 10 and 11. The school is successful in enabling the vast majority of students to succeed. The proportion of students achieving five pass grades is above the national average as is the proportion achieving five passes at the highest grades. Students achieve well in some subjects including mathematics, English, art and communication studies.

Students with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve in line with expectations, and there is no significant underachievement by any groups. In 2005, the GCSE results significantly exceeded the school target. However, value added analysis shows that pupils performed in line with similar pupils nationally.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good because the school is a caring and supportive community. Pupils enjoy being in school and behaviour is good. The school has a clear behaviour strategy which involves outside agencies as well as staff in school. Pupils are polite and courteous although there is a small minority who sometimes disrupt learning. The inclusion unit, where pupils work away from their peers and for an extended school day, is an effective provision which supports the school's behaviour policy. There is a clear programme of reintegration for those who have been in the unit. There have been no permanent exclusions recently although fixed-term exclusions are high.

From the time they start at the school, pupils feel welcomed and safe because the school has a good range of strategies which deal with bullying quickly. Attendance is in line with the national average.

The school's sport college status has had a good impact on pupils' learning and fitness. Although changes have been made to the food on offer, pupils have not adopted healthy eating enthusiastically. They participate well in the wide range of clubs at lunchtime and after school. Pupils develop leadership skills very well through taking advantage of the many opportunities to take responsibility. For example: by serving on the school council; serving as prefects; supporting local and national charities and especially by the very good links with primary schools through sporting activities.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall although spiritual development is less evident than the other elements. Pupils have a responsible attitude and show respect for each other.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory. Whilst there are good and outstanding examples of teaching in some lessons, the best practice is not yet consistent across the school. A system of

monitoring and support for teachers is in place but is insufficiently robust to tackle the variation in the quality of teaching and learning. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory.

Where teaching is good or better, lessons are well planned and engaging for pupils. Good knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject by the teacher is displayed. Good relationships are clearly evident. For example, in a history lesson, pupils used sources effectively to write well structured speeches for Hitler on trial after the Munich Putsch. The pupils were able to present their speeches with confidence and flair. Their work was well respected by their peers who were able to suggest improvements.

In less effective lessons, teachers tolerate low level disruption. The pace of pupils' learning is slow due to low expectations of achievement. Pupils' written work rarely has comments on how they can improve and make progress in the subject. Good practice in marking and assessment of work is developing but is not yet consistent across all subjects. Pupils have too few opportunities to assess their own work and progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a good curriculum which meets all statutory requirements. Pupils have a good range of subjects on offer in Years 10 and 11. They include a wide range of traditional GCSE subjects and a developing range of applied courses, including B/Tec qualifications in sport. The school meets the different needs of individual learners well. Pupils on the gifted and talented register have a good programme of enrichment activities. Specialist status for sport has enhanced opportunities for the development of leadership through courses such as the very popular Junior Sports Leaders Award. There is an extensive range of out of hours learning opportunities for pupils, recognised by the awards of Sportsmark Gold and Artsmark Gold. Increasingly pupils are being challenged and given more opportunities by being entered early for examination courses.

The school makes good provision for effective and well structured learning in religious education and citizenship through the use of short course GCSE accreditation.

Whilst the curriculum is good, there is room to take further steps to provide an even greater range of courses to meet the needs of different learners in Years 10 and 11 and to further develop work related and enterprise learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, support and guidance are satisfactory overall with some very good aspects. The school provides a safe and caring environment, but one where academic guidance has not been challenging enough. Heads of house work closely with tutors and support staff so individual learners are well supported and cared for. Teachers and support staff provide effective support for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties. There are good links with other agencies which provide a range of services available to support learners' well-being. Older pupils receive good guidance to help make

choices for GCSE options and post 16 study or work. The school deals fully and well with health and safety issues. Risk assessments are in place and child protection procedures are well implemented. Pupils feel safe and are confident in approaching staff when troubled.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is providing commitment and a clear vision. This is well supported by the senior team. He is creating a supportive ethos, which is valued by the staff. The school's accurate self evaluation shows how leadership has analysed the weaknesses and has put strategies into place to address these, for example through the use of mentoring students during Year 11. Subject leaders are beginning the process of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning within their curriculum areas, but this practice is inconsistent across the school.

Staff at all levels are supported by the senior team. Professional development has been effective in helping to bring about the improvement in results.

The school is well supported by its parents. Pupils feel their views are listened to and they have been involved in the development of school resources. The school council helps ensure pupils views are effectively collected and acted upon.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are involved in the school self-evaluation programme and have regular meetings with the school leadership team.

Overall, whilst the leadership of the school has correctly identified areas for improvement and strategies to bring about improvement, systems are not yet robust enough to ensure that initiatives are carried out. With the relatively new senior leadership team, there have been good developments which have not yet had time to make an impact.

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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

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

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

Pupils

As you know, we have just finished inspecting your school and I am writing to tell you our findings. First of all, I would like to thank you all for welcoming us to your school, for talking to us about your experiences in school and for letting us see your work. As a result of our inspection, we have found that yours is a satisfactory school with good features.

The best features of your school are: * The staff have worked hard to raise examination results in recent years. * The opportunities you are given for personal development are good, especially the opportunities that so many of you take to work with children in primary schools for your sports leaders' qualification. * The school is a happy, caring place that you enjoy attending. * The standards of behaviour when we were in school were good. * The range of subjects you are offered, especially in Years 10 and 11, is good. * Many aspects of the way in which the school cares for you and looks after you are very good. * You told us that your new headteacher is helping the school to improve.

To become an even better school we have asked the headteacher and senior leaders to: * Use the information they have on just what you are capable of to set you targets that will be tough, but will encourage you to reach the highest grades you can. * Make sure that teachers talk to you about what you could achieve and how best to do it so that you really understand what you need to do to produce your best. * Meet their legal responsibilities for collective worship. There are a lot of good things going on in the school but sometimes benefiting from them depends on which class you are in. For example, we noticed that marking to tell you how to improve your work is better in some subjects than in others. We have asked the school make sure that you all benefit from the best practice.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Lyons

Her Majesty's Inspector