



# Fulham Cross Secondary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 100360  
**Local Authority** Hammersmith and Fulham  
**Inspection number** 285779  
**Inspection date** 20 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Gill Close HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Munster Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		London
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16		SW6 6BP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls	<b>Telephone number</b>	02073810861
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	589	<b>Fax number</b>	02073865979
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Valerie Carter
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Carol Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 September 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 11–16	<b>Inspection date</b> 20 September 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 285779
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Fulham Cross Secondary School received specialist status for languages in October 2004 and is the lead secondary school in the Fulham Education Improvement Partnership. It is a small school for girls. Students come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and more than half speak English as an additional language, of whom a small proportion is at an early stage of learning English. Over half of the students are eligible for free school meals; this is high. Roughly one tenth of students has learning difficulties or disabilities, which is below the national average. Student mobility is relatively high, with one eighth of students joining the school after Year 7.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Fulham Cross is an improving school which has undergone many changes since the new headteacher took office in April 2005. Her good leadership has successfully enabled her vision for putting learning at the forefront to be shared by staff and students. The views of students, parents and staff have been used well to identify key areas for development. The initial drive to improve the learning environment and behaviour has been successful, as has the professional development programme in broadening the range of teaching styles. Progress during Key Stage 3 has also improved and is now good. There have been appointments of leaders and many new staff; there is a substantial proportion of strong leadership that has contributed to the recent improvements. Suitable structures and conditions for learning are now in place. However, the focus on students' learning and progress throughout the school is not as sharp as it might be, as shown for example in some lessons, assessment and monitoring of teaching. The standard of education provided by the school is satisfactory, and the recent improvements demonstrate that it has a good capacity to continue to improve.

Students' personal development and well-being are good. On entering the building, the good relationships between students and with staff across the rich cultural diversity in the school are immediately apparent. These factors contribute to good behaviour around the school, although in some lessons there is low level disruption which is not consistently dealt with by some teachers. Students demonstrate good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They reflect well on moral issues and develop a good awareness of different cultures. They show strong concern for each other and understand well how to stay healthy. They contribute very well to the community in school and beyond, making a real difference. They grow in confidence, are aware of their rights and responsibilities, and enjoy being at school. In spite of this, some do not have a good record of attendance or punctuality.

Standards are broadly average. Students' achievement is satisfactory; they make satisfactory progress by the time they leave school. Factors contributing to this not being better are some weaknesses in tracking progress, targeting intervention and identifying appropriate examination tiers or syllabuses. The school has recognised inconsistencies in these areas and introduced improved systems.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with an increasing amount that is good or better. Improvements in teaching, such as in questioning, range of styles, and opportunities for pupil discussion, have been achieved through a suitably planned professional development programme. In most lessons, students have a good attitude to learning; they listen well and ask questions. They work hard and make at least satisfactory progress, but the work is not well enough matched to their needs to ensure that they are all sufficiently challenged to make good progress at all times. This is because assessment is not used consistently to build on what they already know, set challenging targets and check progress.

Evaluation has been open and honest in identifying appropriate areas for focus and has led to accurate overall judgements of the school's effectiveness. Nevertheless, there is variability across the school in the accuracy and quality of the evaluation of teaching, student progress, and causes for the rise and fall in results.

There has been slow progress towards the language college targets owing to staffing difficulties, which have now been overcome. There is limited impact of the specialist status within the school but there have been successful exchange visits to France and work with primary schools and teachers in the local authority.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- raise the quality of teaching to increase the challenge and the focus on progress for all students
- use data more effectively to raise students' progress, set targets and evaluate the school's performance
- improve attendance, punctuality and the consistency of behaviour for learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards are broadly average; they have met the school's targets at Key Stage 3 but not at Key Stage 4, where they have fallen since a rise in 2005. Progress is satisfactory. It has risen in recent years at Key Stage 3 and is now good; at Key Stage 4 it is satisfactory. All groups of students make at least satisfactory progress, although this satisfactory progress is slightly lower for higher attainers than for others. Language college subject targets have been met at Key Stage 4, but with lower entries than planned, and the school has not monitored them at Key Stage 3.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Students make a good contribution to the school community and beyond. They choose charities to raise funds for, are effective peer mediators and enjoy supporting learning in primary schools. There is an active school council which gives all students good experience of contributing to the democratic process. Members are knowledgeable and collect and disseminate information efficiently to their classmates. Students have influenced decisions and contributed to improvements such as in school meals, range of courses, behaviour and anti-bullying policies, and toilet facilities. However there remain some shortcomings in the quality and availability of food to enable all students to benefit from a nutritious lunch. Students have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and a substantial proportion make healthy eating choices. The take-up of some extra-curricular sporting activities is good, although Year 11 students have little taught time for physical education and a low skill level. All students develop sound skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being through work experience and reaching broadly average standards in the core subjects.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Effective self-assessment by students has been developed in some areas, although the assessments they make and the targets they set themselves do not support their progress as much as they could. They focus more on actions than on subject skills and knowledge, with assessments such as 'I asked for help' and targets such as 'I will listen harder'. Leaders have correctly identified areas of good assessment practice and set in motion ways of sharing it across the school.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Recent changes have introduced vocational courses and altered some syllabuses to better meet students' attainment and aspirations. The school has correctly identified a need for teachers' professional development to support delivery of these courses. The class grouping system has been revised to improve students' access to courses that meet their needs although some restrictions still remain while it is being phased out at Key Stage 4. There have been improvements since the last inspection in the provision of information and communication technology (ICT) lessons for all students. However, systems do not ensure students' full curriculum entitlement at Key Stage 3 in design and technology, or in music where there is no timetabled provision at present owing to staffing difficulties. The school has taken steps to secure music provision for next term. There is a sound selection of extra-curricular activity with good take-up of some of the sport and dance options.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support of students are satisfactory. Staff are strongly committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of students. There are robust procedures for child protection and vetting of adults who work with the students. The school works closely and effectively with feeder schools and other external agencies, and supports vulnerable students well, such as those in public care. Students with low attendance have been well-supported to raise their attendance and have done so, however overall figures have fallen markedly since 2005 when they were just above average. Systems have been put into place to cut the large number of school days lost through family travel abroad in term time and these are beginning to have impact. Students have contributed to the behaviour policy, which has underpinned the improvement in behaviour. However, sanctions for poor behaviour are inconsistently applied in lessons and sometimes there is not enough emphasis on celebrating the substantial amount of good behaviour. Shortcomings in the tracking of academic progress lead to guidance on courses and examination entry and the targeting of academic support for students being satisfactory.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has successfully introduced a culture of improvement through matching teachers' professional development to their identified needs. It has set in place an effective system of lesson monitoring that has led to well-focussed coaching and consequent improvement in teaching. However, lack of subject expertise and the structure of written records has sometimes placed insufficient focus on students' progress or contributed to inaccurate judgements.

Effective planning and evaluation systems have been put in place. The annual self-evaluation cycle includes input from a wide range of stakeholders and analysis of their views by a professional company. Nevertheless, there remain areas in which some students and parents consider that their views are not taken well enough into account, for example regarding lunches.

The governing body has recently reached its full complement. Governors have had a strong impact on the recent changes in staffing and know the school's main strengths and weaknesses.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	3

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

When I visited, you welcomed me very warmly and were most helpful in telling me about the school.

I found that the school had improved recently. You have had your say in how it could improve and made a real difference, for example in brightening up the building, suggesting new courses and developing policies for behaviour and bullying. Teaching is better and behaviour has improved, and you are now making good progress in Key Stage 3. However, there is still some misbehaviour in lessons, and you told me that there is not always enough emphasis on praising good behaviour. I have asked the school to improve this and you can help out by making sure you all behave well in lessons. You now have a wider range of courses on the timetable although there is no music at present. The lunches have improved but you rightly still have concerns about the quality and amount of food.

You develop well into confident young people who help each other and the community. You get on well together and with your teachers, who make sure you are safe. In lessons you work hard but you do not always make as much progress as you could because the work is sometimes too easy or too hard for some of you. I have asked teachers to make sure the work is right for you so you make good progress in lessons. You can help by thinking about how much more you know and can do when you assess how you are getting on. I have also asked the school to check your progress more carefully so teachers can help you meet more challenging targets.

Many of you have good attendance and punctuality but some of you are missing too much school time for journeys abroad and some of you are late. I have asked the school to improve attendance and punctuality to help you all make more progress.

I wish you success at school and in helping it to improve.

Yours sincerely

Gill Close

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools