

Charles Edward Brooke School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100627
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	285833
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number on roll	
School	874
6th form	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Margaret Spooner
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Cruse
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2002
School address	Langton Road London SW9 6UL
Telephone number	020 7793 3901
Fax number	020 7735 8132

Age group	11–19
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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

This Church of England school is slightly smaller than most. It specialises in media arts and music, and is a full service extended school. There is joint sixth form provision with Archbishop Tenison School and links with London Nautical School. The school occupies two sites that are approximately a ten-minute walk apart within a residential area of Lambeth. Half of the students are entitled to free school meals. The number of students with a learning difficulty is higher than expected nationally and attainment on entry is well below the national average.

Approximately one fifth of the students start at the school at times other than at the beginning of Year 7. Students represent an increasing range of diverse cultural backgrounds with over 50 different languages spoken at home. The Neptune Centre for refugees and asylum seekers is part of the school provision for girls and boys over the age of 15. Many of these students have no relatives or carers within this country. Consequently, the number of students in the care of the local authority is high.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Charles Edward Brooke School is a good school where lively, loud and energetic students benefit greatly from the good curriculum on offer. They are a challenging and demanding group of girls who respond well to strong discipline and sensitive guidance. As they get older they take increasing advantage of what the school has to offer and, as a result, make good progress in their personal and academic skills with outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students attain average standards.

The sound of music and preparation for performances of all kinds can be seen and heard throughout the buildings at all times of the day. The school's choice of media arts and music specialisms is very appropriate to the needs of the students. These subjects enhance the curriculum and contribute significantly to the good progress and the outstanding contribution that they make to the community. This progress is further supported by a wide range of activities and events for students and their families available as part of the extended school service. The partnership that exists with other services and groups within the community is an outstanding feature of the school.

Governors and senior staff demonstrate good leadership and management of the school, including its sixth form and its extended services. They promote the importance of learning and achievement at every opportunity by encouraging students to aim for greater things. This helps students to achieve things for themselves that they might not otherwise have considered possible. For example, students can take a range of musical tuition before settling on a particular instrument, and in the sixth form students can start courses to see if they will be suitable for them. The headteacher is a key point of contact for the students, particularly for the older girls, who value the support and guidance that she gives to them in preparation for the next stage in their lives.

Much has been achieved since the school was last inspected. Attendance has risen and is now above average. Teaching and learning across the school are now good although it varies too much. This is because not all lessons are planned sufficiently well to match the best ways in which students can maximise learning. Students especially love their lessons for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Particular improvement can be seen in the development of mathematics throughout the school. Actions taken to address weaknesses have been very successful and standards in mathematics are now rising quicker than for other subjects. In addition, students are very enthusiastic about the teaching of mathematics. All of these improvements, together with good evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses by all leaders, put the school in a good position to improve even further.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The effectiveness of the sixth form is good. Students reach average standards, which represents good progress in relation to their starting points. Examination pass rates have increased well over time. The proportion of students completing the courses is very good and this reflects their determination to succeed. Students with English as an additional language, including those attending the Neptune Centre achieve particularly well with all students passing Level 1 for media.

Personal development of students is very good because of the very good care and support that they receive. This guides their academic as well as their personal development. A major strength is the use of tutorial time to address areas of personal well-being. Teaching is good. Students enjoy learning and thrive on the constant drive to achieve their best. Teachers have high levels of subject knowledge and they model work well. The curriculum meets the need of the students well. There is a wide range of A level and AS courses as well as vocational options. Progression pathways are available in some subjects; however the leadership team are aware that this is an area for further development in partnership with other local sixth forms.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further by ensuring a better match of teaching to learning styles.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Students who spend all of their school life at Charles Edward Brook achieve well. Standards are in line with national averages and have risen gradually over several years, closely matching the challenging targets that the school sets for itself. Given the well below average starting points, this represents good progress. Students from across the range of minority ethnic groups make good progress. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities also make good progress as a result of the good support they receive.

From Years 7 to Year 9 students make faster progress in mathematics than in English and science. This reflects the school's decision to focus on more innovative ways of teaching mathematics in order to drive up standards. This good practice is now being spread to other subjects. Progress for older students is affected by high numbers of students joining the school at different times. In 2006 just over two thirds of those who joined in Year 7 remained in Year 11. In addition, a number of students with troubled histories joined Y11 in that year. Despite their complex needs and because of the school's inclusive ethos, they remained on the school roll and had an undue impact on the overall results.

At A level, although numbers are small the picture is improving. Over the past three years, students' progress has been good, reaching broadly average standards across a range of subjects. The specialist school subjects of media studies and music are increasingly popular and successful as are vocational courses.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The overwhelming majority of students enjoy school, do their best to be on time for lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well, feel safe in school despite walking between two sites for lessons and are clear about staying safe outside school. High numbers take part in sports and other physical activities during daily enrichment sessions, and this reflects their commitment to fitness and adopting a healthy lifestyle. Students work well together in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. For example in PSHE lessons they take good advantage of opportunities to discuss and reflect on life and work issues. The discipline policy effectively promotes good behaviour because it structures expectations and

responsibilities. The mentoring project is to be extended so as to train girls to support one another further in maintaining appropriate behaviour for learning.

Whole school involvement in the democratic process, through participation in a variety of school forums, is good. Students take on responsibility willingly, for example by acting as mentors for younger students, peer councillors to deal with occasional bullying, and school prefects and captains who ably assist in the smooth running of the school. In the wider community students make an outstanding contribution through a range of fund raising activities in addition to performances relating to the school's specialist status and extended school provision. The choice of media arts and music specialisms has had a positive impact on the students' motivation and personal development across the whole school. One teacher commented that 'the girls leave lessons elated with the music'. The media arts curriculum has helped to bridge and balance the many cultures, countries and social backgrounds represented in the school. It has significantly improved the creativity and confidence of the students through collaboration in performance based projects such as Using the Arts to Raise Black Achievement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall although there is too much variation across the school and between subjects. This is in line with the school's own self evaluation. The best lessons are lively and motivating, with students actively engaged in their learning. Instant verbal feedback as teachers move around the class helps students to be clear about what they have to do to improve and ensures good progress in lessons. In these lessons students of all abilities thrive because a variety of tasks match their interests and needs, and teachers ask questions which probe their thinking. Able students make most progress when given additional extension activities and others with English as an additional language achieve well when learning is interactive and represented in visual ways. This does not happen in all lessons. Planning for the needs and interests of different groups is inconsistent in matching activities to their styles of learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The school curriculum is good and meets all statutory requirements. The school's drive for challenge and inclusion are at the forefront of its design. Each key stage has a distinctive flavour. In Years 7 and 8 there is an emphasis on literacy and numeracy to support students' basic skills. In Year 9, additional PSHE lessons support their personal development and economic well-being. At Key Stage 4, flexibility is built in so as to increasingly meet the varying needs and interests of the students. A good range of GCSE subjects is available along with some vocational courses. Students in the sixth form have a choice of over twenty A and AS level courses. Where small numbers of students choose to take a particular subject the school offers imaginative solutions such as e-learning. The school is working in partnership with others to increase the range of courses, including vocational courses.

Creative innovations such as the 11th Day add to students' enjoyment of the curriculum. PSHE is a strong feature of the curriculum and is very popular with the students. The Aim High programme has been effectively included within the whole school curriculum and has made a significant difference to students' achievements. The school's specialist status has added the opportunity of working with many external partners and widens the range of activities for students during the school day as well as after school, at weekends and during the holidays.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Students achieve well as a result of the safe and supportive environment that the school provides. Clear guidelines for good behaviour and discipline help all students to know exactly what is expected of them and the consequences for inappropriate actions. Students with more complex social, emotional and behavioural needs are particularly well supported as a result of good relationships with form tutors and subject teachers. There is a well structured support system which includes learning mentors working with the Learning Support Centre and the Offsite Onsite Centre. This is very effective in keeping students at risk of exclusion in the school and enabling them to take GCSEs with other students. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress particularly as a result of additional help to improve literacy skills. This support is well planned and monitored effectively. In general, the support offered to students in class helps them to achieve the same task as others but is not planned effectively to include activities at their own level and interest. The Neptune Centre is a particularly innovative strategy to support refugees, including boys. This is typical of the school's inclusive ethos. Some Neptune students recently joined students in the main school in a creative project with the Royal Ballet. The academic guidance given to students to extend their education is a particular strength of the school. Students value highly the advice and support given to them, including that from Connexions, in developing their careers and guiding them to appropriate courses.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The headteacher, governors, senior team and head of the sixth form provide good leadership and management of the school. They set a clear agenda for raising standards and have developed a strong staff team who use every opportunity to instil high expectations for success amongst the students. As a result, many students rise to the challenge and achieve good results in relation to their starting points. Questionnaires received during the inspection show that the school enjoys overwhelming support from parents and carers.

The strategic approach that staff and governors have taken to developing the extended school service and subject specialisms have improved the students' life chances as well as their enjoyment of school. The school has an inclusive and harmonious atmosphere because staff are creative in their support for the diverse population that it serves.

The school evaluates its work well and this ensures continuing development based on a good understanding of what works well and why. Swift and decisive action is taken when evaluation

suggests that things need to change. Examples of this include the decision to group students differently for science and the intense investigation into why results last year were against the improving trend. Senior staff are mindful of the need to ensure that all teaching is as good as the best examples.

The school gives good value for money. This is demonstrated by its decision to employ additional staff to support the curriculum for English and mathematics, the way in which less popular examination subjects are offered, and their success in helping students with complex circumstances to continue their education in school.

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Annex A

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?	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
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	3	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	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
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	1	
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	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	2
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	2	
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

You will remember that we came to inspect your school just before the Easter break. You made us very welcome and so many of you helped us by sharing your thoughts about the school and showing us your work.

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the team, to let you know of our inspection findings. Your school is a good school. The opportunities that you have, including media arts and music, help you to make good progress during your time at the school. This is true for academic achievement and also for your development as responsible adolescents. It is very impressive that all of you are involved in drama productions and playing musical instruments. The sights and sounds of various drama and musical activities will be something that we remember especially. You clearly enjoy school. You gave us a very strong message that you really enjoyed PSHE and the 11th Day activities.

The headteacher, senior staff and governors lead your school well. They make sure that you are continually encouraged to aim high and to do even better than you think that you can. They give you good support. Students in the Neptune Centre are particularly appreciative of the help that they are getting to continue their education.

We believe that your school will continue to improve and know that staff will want to talk to you about how you can help. We have asked the school to make sure that activities in lessons are planned differently for different groups because we think that this is the key to helping you all achieve greater things.

We wish you well in all that you hope to achieve for yourselves.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Yaxley
Her Majesty's Inspector