



# St Augustine's CofE High School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 101154  
**Local Authority** Westminster  
**Inspection number** 285987  
**Inspection dates** 13–14 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Barry Jones

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Oxford Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		London
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19		NW6 5SN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7328 3434
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	706	<b>Fax number</b>	020 7328 3435
<b>Number on roll (6th form)</b>	111		
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Rigg
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Alex Thomas
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 December 2001		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–19	13–14 November 2006	285987

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Augustine's is a smaller-than-average secondary school that serves an inner city area that has high levels of deprivation. It has higher proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups than the great majority of schools and, in addition, there is also a higher proportion who do not have English as their home language. Attainment on entry has risen steadily. It is now broadly average but was below average for the Year 11 cohort which took GCSE examinations in 2005. This is also the picture for the proportion of pupils joining the school at other than the usual times. The school has been a specialist college for science since September 2004. In recent years, the school has experienced recruitment difficulties but for the first time from September 2006, it is fully staffed with specialist teachers.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Augustine's is an improving school providing a satisfactory education which has good features. The school has for some years placed a high priority on successfully developing its ethos and creating a safe and secure environment. Consequently, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and reflects the Christian values of the school. Students show a good understanding and respect for other beliefs and cultures and the rich diversity of their backgrounds is celebrated. Their positive attitudes are demonstrated by their good attendance and behaviour. They enjoy coming to school and feel safe there. This is a result of effective measures taken by the school and by the consistent and sustained leadership given by senior managers.

Having established a positive climate for learning, the school is now focussing on raising students' standards and achievement but with more mixed success. Standards have risen rapidly at Key Stage 3 and students make outstanding progress, particularly in mathematics. This has been underpinned by a rigorous monitoring of teaching quality, effective use of performance data and very good implementation of national improvement strategies. Standards at GCSE level are below national averages and rising. Given students' starting points they achieve satisfactorily. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is good and so students make good progress in these subjects in Key Stage 4 but progress in some other subjects has been unsatisfactory. As a result, the GCSE results were too low in 2005 but there was a very marked improvement in 2006 because the school identified and rectified the problem. This cohort was the first where the school received an intake which contained the expected proportion of higher attaining students in Year 7. Expectations were not sufficiently raised to meet all their needs so that some of these more able students did not do as well as they should have in 2006. The school is taking actions to remedy this and early indications are that they are being successful. Overall, standards and achievement are satisfactory except for the much smaller proportion of students on advanced courses in the sixth form who make inadequate progress.

Teaching and learning and the curriculum are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, manage their classes well and cultivate climates in classrooms that are conducive to learning. However, they provide too few opportunities for pupils to show initiative and to find out things for themselves. This is a weakness in preparing students for the sixth form and is one of the reasons that sixth form students do not do as well as they should.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Senior managers have been effective in Years 7-11 in maintaining a high level of care and there have been significant improvements in students' achievements in the last year. The headteacher provides good leadership and the school knows its strengths and weaknesses well. Staffing difficulties meant that the school was not able to develop its science specialism as quickly as it would have liked. These have now been resolved, standards in science are rising and this success is beginning to make a positive impact on other areas of the school's work. The school's capacity to further improve is good. The school's overall

effectiveness is satisfactory but its performance in the sixth form is inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that is made in remedying this weakness. The school would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 4**

The quality of provision in the sixth form is inadequate. There is variation between subjects in the students' examination results but, overall, the standards are too low and achievement is inadequate. Results at GCE A level declined from 2003 to 2005 but improved in 2006. However, this was accompanied by a fall in performance in advanced vocational courses in Year 13 and a marked decline in examination results at the end of Year 12. As a result, there are small numbers of students following advanced level courses in Year 13 and some class sizes are small and uneconomical. This partly stems from the poor performance by students at GCSE level in 2005. Entrance criteria to courses were relaxed and the guidance given to some students was inappropriate. Procedures for monitoring students' progress are less rigorous than in Years 7 to 11 and underachievement is consequently not addressed sufficiently strongly. Even though the school is small it has effective and well-managed arrangements with other schools within a consortium and is able to offer a satisfactory curriculum.

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

- Ensure that students' progress in the sixth form is monitored rigorously and that the data are used to raise students' standards and achievement.
- Help students to develop skills to learn independently.
- Ensure that students, particularly the more able, make good progress in Years 11–16 in all subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 4**

Standards at GCSE level are average to below average but improving. They are average and improving rapidly at Key Stage 3. This partly reflects the better quality of intake but more substantially it is the result of the school's efforts to drive up standards. For instance, in mathematics the decision to raise teachers' expectations and to prepare two classes instead of one for the highest levels has proved to be the correct one and has resulted in improved performance. The standards attained, and the progress made, by students in English, mathematics and science are consistently higher than those achieved in most other subjects. This reflects good teaching and leadership in these departments. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress as a result of the good support that they receive. There are no groups of students that consistently underachieve but Black Caribbean students do relatively less well. The

school has identified this and is taking appropriate action. It is taking part in a national project to raise the achievement of Black students but it is too early to judge its effectiveness. At GCE A level, there is too much variation in the performance in different subjects. Over the last three years, students' performance has been unsatisfactory in information, communication and technology (ICT), physical education and history.

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

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Students organised an excellent assembly which had a multicultural theme and exemplified the good relationships between students and the mutual respect between them and adults. As one student said, 'What I like most about this school is the way they consider other religions, everyone is respected'. Behaviour has improved and this due to the hard work of the staff. Students are appreciative of this and as one said, 'If you do not understand the teachers will help you at lunchtime or after school.' The school council is effective and representatives feel that their views are valued by the school. In particular, they have been able to influence decisions regarding the environment, healthy eating and the quality of the toilets. Those in Key Stage 4 help younger students to settle in to school life. Students in Years 7-11 make good progress in acquiring numeracy and literacy skills and their ICT skills are satisfactory. Consequently, economic well-being is satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Teachers have good subject knowledge and make good use of resources including interactive whiteboards. They manage their classes well. Teaching is consistently good in English, mathematics and science and there are examples of good practice in other subjects. In a Year 8 geography lesson, students investigated what our weather is like. The work was planned to meet the differing abilities within the classroom and well-targeted, careful and effective questioning by the teacher helped to develop students' appreciation of the issues. The lesson was conducted at a good pace and the students consequently made excellent progress. All teachers mark thoroughly and conscientiously. Most also give constructive feedback to students which means that they know how they might improve further. Teaching does not encourage students to learn independently sufficiently well, particularly in the sixth form. Overall, the quality of teaching in the sixth form is satisfactory. The improvements in the quality of teaching are due to effective strategies used by the school, some good recent appointments and the fact that the school now has a stable staff with a full complement

of specialist staff. Some of these changes are so recent that the good teaching has not yet fully overcome the legacy of underachievement by some pupils.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The curriculum is good at Key Stages 3 and 4 and meets the needs of the students well. There is good provision for numeracy and literacy and for students' personal and social development. Improvements since the previous inspection include the introduction of more vocational courses including health and social care and catering. The school provides alternative programmes for students whose needs are not met by the normal courses of study at both Key Stage 4 and post-16 and this adds to their motivation and improves attendance. The school also links well with other institutions in the borough to provide a broad, satisfactory curriculum post-16. Hence, a suitable range of pathways is on offer post-16 even though it is a small school. The school continues to develop the curriculum. For instance, provision for gifted and talented students is being extended and has been accelerated following the school's analysis of the 2006 GCSE results. In the sixth form, the school has introduced further mathematics and take up has been good. A learning initiative based on computers is being established and is being used most in English, mathematics and science. However, the school has identified that there is insufficient use of computers to support learning across the curriculum in all key stages. All students have access to a good range of extra-curricular activities. These contribute to their enjoyment of school, especially in drama, music and sport.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 4**

Care, guidance and support are good for students in Years 7 to 11. The school has a very inclusive approach which is in keeping with its ethos, and provides a welcoming environment. Consequently, students feel safe. Students are treated as individuals with specific needs. There are good procedures in place to ensure that these needs, and the best strategies to meet them, are shared with all staff. Students are confident that they can talk to an adult, including a learning mentor, if they have a problem. As one student remarked, 'The learning mentor sorts it out.' The support for those with learning difficulties and disabilities is very well coordinated and as a result they make good progress and take part fully in school life. There is also good support for those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Academic guidance given to students is good. The precise use of data, allied to a thorough tracking programme, means that students who are underachieving are identified at an early stage. In these cases, the school devises intervention programmes and these are usually successful. The care, guidance and support are only satisfactory overall because of the weaknesses in the sixth form.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

#### Grade for sixth form: 4

Leadership and management for aspects relating to Years 7 to 11 are good, have significantly raised standards and achievement and maintained a high level of care. The headteacher has shown determination and vision and has assembled a strong team. Together they initiate and tackle successfully areas where there has been underperformance in the past. For instance, subject departments are held rigorously to account and specific actions have been taken where underachievement has been detected and this has led to improvements. This has been accompanied by an appropriate training programme for middle managers. Consequently, the quality of middle managers is now good.

Self-evaluation is usually good at departmental and senior level and is underpinned by the very good systems that are in place. As a result, the departments produce useful development plans although in some subjects there is insufficient emphasis on evaluating students' progress. The governors are both supportive and challenging. Before this inspection they had expressed concern over the quality of results in the sixth form and have called for further evaluations. It is weaknesses in the leadership and management of the sixth form that diminish the successes of leadership and management elsewhere. However, the school is well placed to improve further. While academic guidance and tracking of students' progress are weaknesses in post-16 they are strengths in Years 7 to 11. The school has established good practice that it can draw upon. The senior managers have a proven record for managing change that leads to rising standards. Consequently, capacity to improve is good overall, and through this support, is satisfactory for the sixth form.



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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</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	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
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	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>	2	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	4

<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	4
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	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	

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

Thank you very much for your help and cooperation which you gave to us when we inspected your school. We found you courteous and polite. You told us that one of the things you most like about the school is the way you all get on. This is what we found also. This helps to make your school a very welcoming place. Your school council members told us how their views are valued. They have been able to help with improvements to the teaching and the environment. You enjoy coming to school and feel safe there. Your teachers look after you well and there is an adult to whom you can turn if you have a problem.

Our main finding is that St Augustine's is a satisfactory school that has several good features. It is well led by the headteacher and the school has made considerable progress in recent years. Results in the Key Stage 3 SATs are improving year on year and show that you make excellent progress. You continue to make good progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 4 and results in science are improving. This is because you receive good teaching and have a good variety of experiences. It is also because you attend well and behave in class so that others can learn too. The special needs department looks after students that it supports well and these students make good progress in their work as a result.

St Augustine's is a relatively small school. It links well with other schools and colleges to ensure that there is a range of courses, both academic and vocational, that you can study post-16. Not all students have made the progress they should on these courses and this is one of the areas that we are asking the school to improve. We are also asking the school to ensure that you make the same good progress in other subjects that you do in English, mathematics and science. One of the ways we suggest the school might do this is to help you to learn on your own as well as being taught by the teacher. You can help too by making sure that you ask when you do not understand and by continuing as good ambassadors for the school.

We wish you every success in the future.

Barry Jones

Lead inspector