

# Eastbury Comprehensive School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101244
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barking and Dagenham
<b>Inspection number</b>	286004
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Adrian Lyons HMI

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1652
6th form	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Roy Patient
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Clive Swinton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 October 2002
<b>School address</b>	Rosslyn Road Barking IG11 9UH
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8270 4000
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8270 4042

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<b>Age group</b>	11–19
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

This is a very large secondary school in East London. The ethnic and linguistic composition of the school is changing rapidly, reflecting changes in the local community. Nearly half the students are from minority ethnic backgrounds whilst English is not the first language of one third of students. These proportions are well above average and growing. This is also true of the proportion of students entitled to free school meals. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The school is in its first year as a specialist mathematics and computing college and has recently moved to a single site. A new headteacher took up post in 2006 having formerly been deputy headteacher.

## 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 provides a satisfactory and improving standard of education with significant strengths. The impact of recent improvements leading to good leadership and management are evident in good care and guidance. It is too soon to see the impact of improved systems on the quality of teaching and learning and on students' personal development and well-being.

Inspectors largely agree with the school's self-evaluation. It correctly identifies strengths and weaknesses. These are understood by leaders, and action has been taken to raise standards based on this. Most of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been addressed; together with ongoing innovation and rising standards this provides ample evidence of the good capacity to improve. However, two issues identified in the last inspection report remain areas for further action; specifically provision for students with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language and, secondly, the provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and tutor time. This is symptomatic of the lack of opportunities for students to develop spiritual awareness or a corporate identity. Plans are now in place to address these issues. For example, the school has plans to change the curriculum to meet the legal requirements for citizenship and religious education. Provision for students with learning difficulties and disabilities or for whom English is an additional language is being enhanced.

Whilst the school gives students very good opportunities to prepare for their future economic well-being and the world of work students' personal development and well-being is just adequate in most areas. Whilst students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is only satisfactory, there exists a harmonious and tolerant community where students are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

Teaching and learning are only satisfactory overall reflecting inconsistent practice. Similarly, students and parents report that some teachers do not apply consistent policies to manage behaviour well. Representative of a significant minority of parents was the comment, 'There are a number of excellent dedicated staff at the school ... I am also very concerned to hear about some of the behaviour of the pupils.'

The school has used its specialist status effectively, both to support and develop the curriculum as well as improving the facilities and provision. GCSE results in information and communication technology (ICT) are good and ICT is used effectively to support learning across the school.

## Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

### Grade: 3

The school rightly seeks to raise students' aspirations by encouraging them to stay on in the sixth form. Consortium arrangements lead to a wide range of courses being available. Many students begin GCE A level courses with relatively low GCSE grades. They make generally satisfactory progress but results across the range of subjects are variable. Level 2 courses provide appropriate progression routes but retention rates are below average.

Sixth form provision is improving. The good monitoring and tracking arrangements in place for Year 13 are soon to be extended to Year 12. Timetables across the consortium schools are being harmonised so that students will not miss learning time as they now do.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all statutory requirements for the curriculum are met.
- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching and management of behaviour.
- Make effective use of the time allocated for personal and social education and tutor time.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

#### Grade for sixth form: 3

Students enter the school in Year 7 with standards below the national average and many are well below average. During their first three years in the school they make average progress in English and science although they do not achieve as well in mathematics. Results in the national tests in Year 9 are below the national average. Targets set by the school were met by students. The school has identified areas for development and has been working hard to improve standards.

All student groups make good progress in their time at the school. Standards at the end of Year 11 are improving although remain below the national average overall. In the GCSE examinations in 2006 the proportion of students who attained five or more passes at higher grades continued to rise, but was below the national average and the target set by the school was not met. Students achieved especially well in English, where GCSE results were in line with national averages.

Students' achievement in the sixth form is satisfactory. Standards are broadly average although there are inconsistencies between subjects.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

#### Grade for sixth form: 3

The personal development and well-being of students in all years of the main school and sixth form are satisfactory. The majority of students respect the views, values and beliefs of others. Students satisfactorily adopt healthy lifestyles and have sensible eating and drinking habits. However, the school acknowledges the need to increase the provision for physical education for students in Years 10 and 11. Relationships throughout the school community are good and students have opportunities to take responsibility. The student voice is particularly strong as the School Council is vociferous. Their voice has resulted in a wide range of improvements across the school.

The majority of students enjoy coming to school and attendance has significantly improved, the school having put in place many effective measures since the last inspection. Attendance is now above average. Students generally feel safe in the school and they behave satisfactorily in lessons and around the site. Nevertheless, the school acknowledges that there is further developmental work needed in order to ensure all students feel safe from bullying.

Whilst students are developing effective ICT skills across all years there is still a need to develop consistent literacy and numeracy skills in order to ensure that they are also effective tools for

learning. Equally, the lack of discreet citizenship and religious education for students in some years of the school inhibits their personal development. Yet the strong vocational courses ensure that older learners make good progress in their financial literacy and in their understanding of business and the economic framework in which it works.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The quality of lessons seen is in line with the schools' own evaluation. The school's monitoring process has led managers to develop an observation format that ensures better consistency in observations and a focus on particular aspects of lessons to support the development of good practice. Some lessons are well planned and include detailed information about learners with English as an additional language, and those with learning difficulties and disabilities, including suitable access strategies for individuals. However, the most able students are not identified in lesson plans and there is little extension work in lessons to create challenge for this group.

Students make best progress when teachers provide opportunities for learning through collaboration and interactive approaches. For instance, in mathematics, lower attaining students were confident in sharing their strategies for working out problems, with the rest of the class. Most teachers use interactive whiteboards. In some lessons these are used creatively for instance for interactive games related to the curriculum vocabulary. The use of visual images for learning new vocabulary, for instance in French, supports speaking conversation in front of their peers. Generally, an over-emphasis on teacher-led whole class teaching results in only satisfactory progress by students. In some subjects, verbal feedback in lessons and marking in books, is not yet consistently linked to learning objectives and showing students what they do well and how they can improve, for instance to move to the next level. The setting of homework is inconsistent across the school.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The school offers a satisfactory curriculum that has been refined since the last inspection. Across all years it is broad and balanced and incorporates a good range of visits and events. There is an apt focus on vocational learning and vocational courses such as hospitality and catering, construction and media are popular with students. The school has imaginative plans in place for the future to further enhance vocational provision. A particular strength of the vocational curriculum is that it reflects the job opportunities in the local area. Sixth form students also have a wide mix of vocational and academic courses via the consortium arrangements. Linked to the school's specialist status there is good improvement in the use of ICT by staff and students alike.

The statutory requirements that were not met at the time of the last inspection are still not fully met with regard to religious education and citizenship. Also, the inconsistencies that were evident in the personal and social education and tutor time still exist. There are many interesting

opportunities for extra curricular enrichment, such as Street Dance; Roleplayer's Guild; Judo and Beautician classes, which have a high take up and are much enjoyed.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The school looks after its students well and has good arrangements for safeguarding them. The school involves students in decision making through, for example, the School Council. A working party involving students and staff has re-drafted the bullying policy leading to an increasing understanding of the importance of dealing openly and honestly with these issues. Effective strategies to improve attendance include the appointment of an attendance officer and the development of relevant vocational courses that motivate students.

The school provides satisfactory support for vulnerable and lower attaining students. Regular meetings with a range of external agencies identify relevant action for vulnerable students. However, when students enter the school the process for supporting students with literacy or numeracy needs is not sufficiently systematic. The school has correctly identified that targets in individual education plans do not consistently provide sufficient short-term help for students. Guidance for students in the Sixth Form is inconsistent with arrangements for those in Year 13 being better developed than for Year 12.

The school has responded positively to the key issue from the previous inspection to make better use of data to improve achievement. The development of a computer database, accessible to parents and all staff, provides up-to-date information on aspects such as attainment, attendance, commendations and concerns. This powerful tool helps to motivate students and communicate promptly with parents. The school has supported this initiative through providing five hundred computers to homes that previously had no access to the internet.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Leadership and management are good. After an unsettling period, the school is now responding well to strong leadership. It has made satisfactory interim arrangements for managing the sixth form. The clear direction provided by the headteacher results in a palpable sense of purpose in an ethos of caring for and including every student. The competent and knowledgeable governing body undertakes its role of 'critical friend' to great effect. Together with the senior leadership team and middle managers, they have evaluated school performance well. They have an earnest and realistic view of what needs to be done to move the school forward.

Many valuable initiatives are making a positive impact, though this is currently sporadic. Good progress has been made in dealing with most of the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection. For instance, robust monitoring of the work of the school is now in place and is being carried out well, though targets for learning are sometimes unchallenging. Day-to-day management of the school is smooth and efficient. Use of additional money associated with the school's specialist status has been very well spent, especially enhancing the quality of computer-based learning. The recent move to a single site has contributed to developing a

greater feeling of unity in the school. All this has created a community in which students are encouraged to achieve, and indicates good capacity to improve.



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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>	<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	3
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	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
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>	3	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	3	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

### The quality of provision

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	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	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	

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

24 May 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Eastbury Comprehensive School, Barking, IG11 9UH

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 many good features.

The best features of your school are:

- The range of subjects you are offered, especially in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form, is good
- Many aspects of the way in which the school cares for you and looks after you are good
- The school has developed a very useful way of using ICT to keep your teachers and parents informed about you
- The headteacher and senior leaders are improving the school
- Examination results are improving.

We know that while most of you and your parents are very happy with the school there are still things that could be better and your headteacher and teachers understand this too.

To become an even better school we have asked the headteacher and senior leaders to:

- Try to make sure you all experience good teaching and good behaviour
- Make sure that you learn all the different subjects you are supposed throughout the school, for example citizenship and religious education
- Make better and more productive use of the time you get with your form tutors.

There are a lot of good things going on in the school but sometimes benefiting from them depends on which class you are in. We have asked the school make sure that you all benefit from the best practice.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Lyons HMI Lead inspector