



Northumberland Park Community School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102155
Local Authority Haringey
Inspection number 286293
Inspection dates 1–2 November 2006
Reporting inspector Carmen Rodney HMI

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

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| Type of school | Comprehensive | School address | Trulock Road |
| School category | Community | | Tottenham |
| Age range of pupils | 11–16 | | London N17 0PG |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 02088010091 |
| Number on roll (school) | 1006 | Fax number | 02082754888 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Mr Reg Rice |
| | | Headteacher | Mr Andy Kilpartick |
| Date of previous school inspection | 14 January 2002 | | |

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| Age group | Inspection dates | Inspection number |
| 11–16 | 1–2 November 2006 | 286293 |

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

The school serves one of the most deprived wards in Greater London. It is above average in size, although the school population varies each year because frequently, a significant number of students, new to the country, join throughout the year. Most students are from minority ethnic groups. The main ethnic groups are of Turkish/Kurdish, White British and African or Caribbean heritage. Over 62% do not speak English as their main language and a small minority are at an early stage of learning English. The group includes an increasing number with asylum or refugee status. The proportion of students with a learning difficulty and/or disability is considerably well above average as is the percentage eligible for free school meals. Attainment on entry, though improving remains below average. Following the last inspection, a new headteacher was appointed in 2004. Since that time, the school has developed an extensive community programme with the diverse ethnic groups in the community. The school works very closely with the secondary sector of the Vale Special School, which shares the same site. The school gained specialist status in Art in September 2006. Currently, the school is working with other local secondary schools to open a new sixth form centre in September 2007. It is also deliberating a federated model for next academic year. The school buildings are old and a new build is planned over the next two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with a number of outstanding features. Parents rightly feel that since the headteacher's appointment, the school has been transformed. For example, its standing in the local community has increased because now behaviour is good and there is a strong emphasis on raising standards. The school's rapid recovery after a very difficult period led, for the first time, to a demand for places at the start of the new academic year.

Students see their school as a happy place and speak compellingly about the benefits they have gained from the changes. Although the social circumstances of many students are complex, the school is a vibrant place in which students' personal development and well-being are good. This school community works harmoniously and demonstrates the advantages of students from different heritages learning together. For example, students respect each other's cultures as different strands of the curriculum provide them with insight and opportunities to explore other traditions. This good curriculum with its excellent vocational and work-related courses ensures that students gain validated and valuable qualifications. The courses are carefully matched to students' needs and interests. As a result, students who attend these courses in Years 10 and 11 thrive very well and are confident and mature young people. The curriculum is enhanced by an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities.

One of the school's outstanding strengths lies in the high level of respect and understanding students show when working in lessons and moving around the site with students from the Vale Special School. The collaborative work with the school is exemplary. Students and parents recognise a high standard of care, safety and support are provided. Nevertheless, the school recognises that there is still some unevenness in the support provided for students with learning needs and or disabilities, the more able students and for those at an early stage of learning English. A small minority of parents confirm this.

All students have well-chosen targets but the quality of guidance is not always clear enough on how they might improve their work. The teachers have gained the respect of their students and make a significant difference to their behaviour and attitudes to learning, but there are inconsistencies in promoting literacy, independent learning and in adopting creative teaching methods.

Although the majority of students joining the school arrive with below average knowledge and skills, the good teaching, and skilful mentoring ensure that they make rapid progress especially in Years 10 and 11. As a result, by the end of Year 11, students exceed all expectations

The school's success in helping most students to make excellent progress is linked to the headteacher's outstanding leadership and management skills. The headteacher knows the client groups and has been exceptionally effective in ensuring that staff understand his vision for the school's future development. He has successfully built up a strong leadership team that works well together. The senior team has an accurate assessment of the school; their review of teaching and learning is rigorous as is their

analysis of public examination results. At this stage, the school recognises that it needs to use assessment information unremittingly to inform planning and teaching in order to improve the progress of higher attaining students and all students in Key Stage 3. The school is very well placed to sustain the momentum of change and improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

* Spread the most effective practice of marking and target setting so that students are clear about what they must do to improve their work

* Raise the quality of teaching to the best so that:

(i) work is sufficiently challenging for the more able students

(ii) students with learning difficulties are given effective support in relation to their achievement

(iii) teachers are prepared to take risks and promote independent learning

(iv) teachers develop literacy skills in all lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students enter the school in Year 7 with standards that are below national expectations. This is especially true with their literacy skills. The 2005 GCSE results were below average but the percentage of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at grade C or above showed significant improvement. Results in 2006 showed a continuation of this improvement with GCSE passes at grades A* to C rising to well above national averages. The achievements of some of these pupils were outstanding. Results in national tests for students in Year 9, in 2005, were in line overall. The 2006 results continue this trend. Analysis of results over time for students in Year 9 indicates some fluctuations but the trend is an improving one. While results in mathematics and science are above average, those in English remained below average, but overall, results in 2006 represent further significant improvement.

The school has successfully developed detailed and robust assessment and monitoring systems which enables it to identify groups of students who need extra support to gain examination grades that reflect their ability. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities and those learning English as a second language do not achieve at the same rate as other students. This is because the proposed system of support is not yet fully in place. The school recognises that some gifted and talented students are not reaching their full potential because teaching does not always provide them with consistent challenge.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good with some outstanding features. In this richly diverse school community, the students make very good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students enjoy the benefits of learning amid a range of different heritages and one pupil highlighted the pleasure of tasting the favourite dishes of her peers in food technology. As students mature within the school, their understanding and tolerance for personal differences develop well and they speak with pride about this positive feature of the school. Students from the Vale School are successfully integrated into lessons and shown respect around the school.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good and this is an area of significant improvement since the last inspection. Staff hold consistently high expectations, based on the right of all students to learn free from distractions and disruption. Students confirmed that this stance helps them to achieve, enjoy school and feel safe. Bullying, where it occurs, is effectively dealt with. A diminishing number of students currently fail to meet the high expectations of behaviour, in particular, boys of African or Caribbean descent. Their exclusions do have an impact on the school's attendance figures, but overall attendance has improved in recent years. This reflects the increasing enjoyment and aspirations of the majority of students and the effective strategies to support them.

Students clearly articulate the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and safe practices. The combined effects of good personal development and improving academic standards mean that leavers are very well placed to succeed in the world beyond school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school evaluates the quality of teaching and learning as good and inspectors agree with this judgement. Recent appointments, the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and a strong commitment to staff development are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning but the sharing of best practice is still at an early stage.

Teachers share the learning objectives with students effectively, plan suitable practical activities and review students' learning at the end of lessons. They manage potentially challenging behaviour well. They establish good working relationships that are reflected in the students' ability to work productively in pairs, groups and occasionally independently. In the best lessons, teachers ask questions that make students think and take an active part in their learning. Here, the teaching is dynamic, literacy is promoted well and it provides consistent challenge to all students, which results in them achieving highly. Where teaching is satisfactory, the pace of lessons is slower and the tasks do not always match students' needs sufficiently closely. In these lessons,

students' behaviour deteriorates and the teacher has to focus on restoring discipline. Independent learning is not always promoted consistently. Teaching assistants give good individual support, but the provision is only satisfactory overall as the improvement strategies are too recent to have had an impact yet.

Assessment data is used effectively to inform long-term planning but strategies to involve students in assessing and improving their learning are not fully embedded. The quality of marking is inconsistent.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The school provides good opportunities for all learners, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, to achieve well. Learners are well served through the curriculum because different pathways are well matched to their needs. The school has developed a good programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE)/citizenship. Conference days, supported by reinforcement in different subjects, ensure that all areas are covered well.

The vocational courses including the personalised work-related programme for some students are outstanding features of the curriculum. The very good flexible option choices in Years 10 and 11 provide students with a wide range of opportunities within the school and at the local college. The increased flexibility enables students to link work at the local college or a work placement with studies in school. At this stage, the school does not yet offer entry qualifications at level 1 or opportunities for Year 9 students to begin accredited courses. The provision for students requiring additional support in literacy and numeracy is good. However, the school recognises the need to reinforce the literacy strategy across the curriculum. The provision for extra-curricular activities is outstanding. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used in all subjects and students are encouraged to develop their ICT skills outside of lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school judges the quality of care, guidance and support to be satisfactory. The inspectors find it is good. The procedures to assess and monitor students'

progress are rigorous and are impacting positively on their achievement. Academic review days are used well and parents say they are very helpful. Most students know their attainment levels and can explain their targets for improvement. However, they do not always receive clear guidance on what to do to achieve them and only a minority have an excellent understanding of their next steps when teachers provide sharply focused feedback on specific improvement points and related to attainment targets. The support for a minority of disaffected learners is constantly being reviewed and developed. There are good procedures in place to ensure students' welfare, health and safety at all times.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides outstandingly good leadership. This has been one of the most important features in helping the school to achieve so very well. Since his appointment, standards and achievement have more than trebled in two years from a low base. There has been a relentless and successful push on improving behaviour and standards of attainment. As a result staffing is now stable and the reputation of the school has improved in the local community. The headteacher has been very well supported by the senior staff, who all provide good leadership and management. Together, they share a clear vision for the future.

The senior managers and all staff work together effectively as a team. For example, they share resources, monitor plans, take part in coaching and spreading good practice through mentoring and departmental meetings. This cohesive leadership team extends their training and expertise well. For instance, the exemplary procedure for departmental reviews has been used very effectively to identify areas of strengths in teaching and the training needs of individuals, departments and the school. Professional development has been a key factor in developing the capacity of middle managers. Assessment data is well managed and analysed, so that the achievement of students by ethnicity and ability can be carefully monitored. However, the school recognises that there is still more to do in this area. The governance of the school is good. Governors are well informed and are well placed to monitor spending, challenge and support the school.

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Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
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Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

| | |
|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| 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 | 1 |

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 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 |
| 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 all for welcoming us into your school. We really enjoyed spending the two days in your school, meeting and talking to you, your parents and teachers.

Your school is a good school with a number of outstanding features. Your headteacher is an excellent leader and manager. The staff have supported him very well and together, they have worked very hard to improve the quality of your learning. As a result, your performance in the Key Stage 3 tests and GCSE examinations are improving each year particularly in Year 11 where the majority of you make rapid progress. The standards reached in the GCSE examinations are good and are now above the national average. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. You recognise the importance of keeping to the rules and recognise the consequences if you break them. This is all good news. The school now has a good reputation and you told us that you are proud of it.

We were impressed with the relationships you have with each other because you accept and respect each other's cultural traditions. The school helps you to work together because there are opportunities for you to learn about other cultures and you are surrounded by very good role models. You display a great deal of understanding and respect for the pupils at Vale School and work alongside them in and out of lessons. You have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and issues around safety. Your parents agree that the school is secure and you are well cared for. You are confident that unacceptable behaviour and bullying are dealt with firmly.

The teachers know you very well and provide good support and guidance. They are committed to helping you achieve your potential. This is very evident from the time and care they have put into designing the curriculum to provide courses to match your interests and ability. We saw some good teaching and learning and were also impressed with the good relationship between you and your teachers. We believe this is contributing to the success of the school.

We have asked the school to consider two areas for improvement. The first is to make sure that marking tells you how to improve your work and meet your targets. The second is to raise the quality of teaching to the best so that work is always carefully matched to your needs.

Yours sincerely

Carmen Rodney HMI