

# Chalcot School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100092
<b>Local Authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	307292
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Greg Sorrell

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	42
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Gill Roy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Donna McCallum
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 October 2004
<b>School address</b>	Harmood Street London NW1 8DP
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7485 2147
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7485 9297

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Chalcot School is a community special school that admits up to 42 boys aged 11-16 serving Camden and neighbouring local authorities. All have a statement of special educational needs relating to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Some have additional specific learning difficulties and a small number are 'looked after'. Approximately half of the students are of White British origin and the remainder are of black Caribbean/African or Asian heritage. The school works in partnership with a number of local schools and for whom it provides outreach support. The school has received the Healthy School Award and has Investors in People status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Chalcot is a good school where the students achieve well in relation to their targets and in nationally accredited qualifications. Standards of attainment when compared to mainstream schools are well below national expectations, nevertheless, as a result of good teaching they make good progress. Some students make outstanding progress in creative subjects such as art and photography. The school is well thought of locally, and the school's own evaluations rightly indicate that it is a good school. It also enjoys the confidence of parents. One parent wrote, 'My son has come on leaps and bounds educationally, I am so happy for him'.

The school is successful in promoting the students' personal development and well-being. The students confirm they enjoy school, feel safe and know they have someone to talk to if they have problems. The students' behaviour is good overall, although some still experience difficulty in remaining focussed all day. Interruptions to learning are minimised by good team work between teachers and teaching assistants. There are many factors that support the students in improving their behaviour, these include good role modelling by staff and regular opportunities for students to reflect on their attitudes to others.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It offers a wide range of academic courses that offer accreditation and many popular enrichment activities that include residential journeys and adventurous outdoor pursuits. Although the students have appropriate careers education and guidance, there are no opportunities for the students to experience the world of work first hand, nor are they able to exercise choice of subjects to study.

The overall quality of care, guidance and support is good. The school makes strenuous efforts to ensure students attend every day and although this is not achieved consistently, the students' attendance is satisfactory overall. Robust child protection and safeguarding procedures ensure that students' well-being is a priority. Students receive personalised intervention to effectively support their academic and emotional needs, although a small minority of students' behavioural targets require more frequent review. Teachers' use of assessment to plan lessons is good. Annual reviews and those for looked-after children are of good quality and take full account of students' and parents' views.

Leadership, management and governance are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by her deputy headteacher. They have recently identified improvements to make even better use of students' achievement data, although have yet to share this with all subject leaders and governors. Collectively, they have a good overview of the school's effectiveness. The governing body gives good support on different aspects of the school's work such as personnel, premises, curriculum and finance. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and its capacity to improve further is also good.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the recent improvements in the use of achievement data to all subject leaders and governors.
- Increase the provision of work experience, community involvement and choice for students.
- Ensure all students individual behaviour targets are reviewed regularly to maximise opportunities for success.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The students' achievements are good. Students enter the school with standards of attainment that are well below those expected of students of a similar age. This reflects the emotional and behavioural difficulties students have and the significant disruption experienced, including lengthy periods out of formal education. They make good progress in literacy and numeracy and all students in Year 11 leave with formal accreditation in all subjects taken at GCSE or Entry Level. Achievement in core subjects such as English, mathematics and science, is good and a few achieve outstanding results in photography and art. The school's senior management team monitors progress thoroughly and has identified appropriate strategies to raise students' achievement further.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The majority of students enjoy school, as seen by their improved attendance compared to their previous schools. On arrival, some take advantage of breakfast club and show a developing awareness of healthy eating. Despite the school's best efforts some students fail to attend regularly and this has an adverse effect upon their achievement. Students' behaviour is good and the number of exclusions are falling. They feel safe and able to discuss problems with staff. One commented, 'I've been able to build up friendships and relationships much better than anywhere else'.

The vast majority show respect for the school rules and rewards system. Inevitably, a few students find it difficult to maintain acceptable behaviour all day and they benefit from support and mentoring. Following any incident, students know they are expected to make amends to peers and staff. Through the humanities curriculum, students discuss social and moral issues such as poverty, crime and punishment. They experience the cultures and faiths of others to develop a sound spiritual and cultural understanding. They make a satisfactory contribution to the community through displays of art, including high quality photographic exhibition. Other opportunities, such as fund-raising or working with others less fortunate are not currently available. Most students respond positively to collaborative working in lessons and express opinions during tutor periods and student council meetings.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall, especially where teachers have good subject knowledge and engage the students in meaningful activities. In a science lesson, the teacher employed a good range of teaching and learning styles to explore the properties of polymers and everyday applications. Students responded well to this and good gains were made in technical vocabulary by regular reinforcement and accurate recording. Skilful questioning by the teacher encouraged the students to show how much had been learned during the lesson. Where the lesson content is well matched to the students' needs, there is less emphasis on managing off-task behaviour. Occasionally, behaviour management is less effective, although teaching assistants and other staff use effective strategies to minimise disruption. Teachers provide good role models and show the students high levels of respect. In physical activities, all staff play a full part and this

engages the students sufficiently well to the point where some take up similar sports in their community. The quality of relationships is good overall although a minority of students find it difficult to settle and their learning is impeded as a result. Staff give the students good feedback about their behaviour.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall and is relevant to the students' needs through its focus on English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). All subjects are offered for accreditation which supports the students economic well-being. A strength of the curriculum is the wide range of enrichment activities including residential trips and GCSE photography which enables the students to take photographs within the local community. One afternoon each week is given over to an exciting menu of physical activities including, boxing and canoeing. These experiences enable the students to gain awards and have a positive effect on their attendance, behaviour and preparation for life after school. The work-related curriculum currently provides too few opportunities for work experience unlike previous years. The PSHCE courses help to ensure that students understand the importance of sex and relationships education and drugs awareness, as well as learning to build relationships that promote healthy and safe lifestyles. Planned activities at lunch-time meaningfully engage the students, although opportunities for competitive sports are limited. The breakfast club has a good impact on the students' well-being and understanding of health-related matters.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The staff know the students well and share this knowledge at morning briefings to promote a considered approach to meeting the students' needs. The school also works closely with other agencies to support the students' personal and emotional development. All parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire were appreciative of the school's role and one wrote, 'The staff have been supportive to my son and me over the years'. Informally, several students continue to use the school for advice even though they have left. Students know their academic and behavioural targets well and make good progress in meeting them. However, in a minority of cases, targets for improving behaviour remain unmet and unmodified for too long. Significant steps are taken to support their emotional and behavioural development, for example, regular feedback, counselling and mentoring. Relevant external agencies include professionals who talk about potential dangers in the wider community and the consequences of offending. The school provides good support for students with learning difficulties in literacy and numeracy. Intervention includes individual tuition that has proved successful in improving reading abilities and mathematics test scores. There are appropriate systems to minimise risk and to ensure the students' well-being. Safeguarding and child protection procedures are well established and clearly understood by staff. Annual reviews and those for looked after students are conducted appropriately.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The quality of leadership, management and governance is good. The headteacher is well supported by her senior management team and collectively they have a good overview of the school's effectiveness. They survey widely and use feedback to secure improvement in the quality of its provision. They have recently identified even more precise ways of gauging individual students' progress. This development has not yet been shared with all subject leaders who already review their effectiveness and modify programmes of study. In common with some similar schools nationally, managers and governors are seeking to implement curriculum initiatives to make it even more relevant to the students' needs. Links with other agencies are well managed and some of these partners are closely involved in this review, for example, the educational psychology team. The school's expertise is sought and valued by other schools and the local authority. The governors are very well qualified in their own fields and their expertise is used to good effect in areas such as personnel, premises, curriculum and finance. Parents are known to support the school, but efforts to enlist representatives on the governing body have been unsuccessful. Finances are well managed and appropriately audited.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
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	2

### 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

### 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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<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
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

14 July 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Chalcot School, London, NW1 8DP

Thank you for helping me to get to know your school last week and for the warm welcome. I found that you make good progress while at the school. The headteacher and her senior management team have been working hard to enable the school to give you the education you need now and in the future.

Yours is a good school. The teaching you receive from the staff is good. You get lots of support to help you improve your behaviour and it is clear you become more confident as you get older. Your behaviour is good overall, but a few of you could improve how you behave in lessons and also in the corridor. Your attendance has improved and this can help you improve how good your grades are when you take exams.

You obviously enjoy practical lessons such as art, science, physical education and especially photography. Like many other visitors, I was very impressed by displays of your work around the school. The range of lessons you get is satisfactory, although your activities on Friday afternoon are good and I know how much you enjoy sports, including canoeing and boxing. These experiences and the certificates you receive prepare you well for when you leave school although more opportunities for you to serve the community and go on work experience would be even better. You mostly get on well with the staff and your fellow students. You know your targets well, but for a few of you, these targets need to be looked at more often.

The school works hard to keep you fit and healthy. The breakfast club gives you a good start to the day and your physical education lessons help you a lot. In order to improve the school further, I am asking your headteacher to improve the way the staff and governors use all the information they have about how well you are doing. I have also asked the staff to look at some of your behaviour targets and finally to give you more opportunities for choice, work experience and helping the community.

I wish you lots of luck in the future.

Yours sincerely

Greg Sorrell

Lead Inspector