

# Kidbrooke School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100185
<b>Local Authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	307323
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 September –1 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter McGregor

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>	Secondary
<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 (total)	1270
Sixth form	270
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Carol Ward
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Trisha Jaffe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 October 2004
<b>School address</b>	Corelli Road Shooters Hill Road London SE3 8EP
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8516 7977
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8516 7980

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

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Kidbrooke is a larger than average secondary school. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is well above that found nationally, as are the number of students for whom English is an additional language, and the number having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learning difficulties and disabilities are mainly dyslexia, moderate learning, autism and behaviour and emotional issues. The percentage of students with statements is below that found nationally. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is high; the main groups are any other (than White British) White, mixed backgrounds, Asian, Caribbean and Black or Black British African. The number of students entering or leaving the school other than at the usual times of transfer is much higher than the national average. The school has specialist arts college status. At the time of the inspection about a fifth of students were absent from the school attending a major religious festival.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Kidbrooke is a good and improving school. Good teaching, an outstanding curriculum, and excellent academic and pastoral care, enable students to achieve well and thoroughly enjoy their education. Students' good personal development is seen in their positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour. The school is moving forward effectively under the leadership of a strong and highly capable senior team, ably supported by governors. The school's aim of 'Learning together, Enjoying success' is being achieved.

Many of the students, speaking over fifty languages amongst them, have experienced challenging circumstances in their lives and see the school as an oasis of calm where the supportive environment enables them to flourish. Students referred to an absence of bullying because problems are always solved quickly and firmly. The most vulnerable students, including looked after students and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent guidance and help. Consequently, they achieve as well in their GCSE and 6th form examinations as other students. Students feel safe and have great pride in their school.

In the main school, entry standards are well below the national average. Many students arrive and leave during Years 7 to 11 as their circumstances change, making it difficult for the school to provide continuity in learning. Additionally, high numbers of students have limited use of English. As a result of student application and the support the school provides through good teaching, standards by Year 11 have improved to below average overall. The school believes that standards could be higher. Suitable initiatives are in place to achieve this, particularly in improving attendance for a minority of pupils, and making teaching more focused on assessing needs in the classroom through effective questioning. In lessons where this is not the case, there is insufficient challenge and progress slows.

The curriculum is outstanding with an excellent emphasis on preparing students for their working lives. The specialist arts nature of the school has a major positive impact on the curriculum and student confidence and also on the other schools with which Kidbrooke is associated. It has enabled students to perform at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and experience many other high profile dance and drama performances. Students' progress is tracked with meticulous care and highly effective guidance provided where needed.

The headteacher is dynamic and challenging, leading by example. She is committed to raising standards and providing all students from whatever background with a high quality education. The positive school ethos and excellent use of a wide range of agencies helps to keep students in school. Senior staff are extremely self-critical, evaluating the work of the school in great detail, and striving to make improvements. Middle leaders, several of whom are new in post, are not yet consistently effective in reviewing and evaluating their areas of responsibility although training is already in hand. Since the last inspection, effective progress has been made in all identified areas. The school has outstanding capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

The sixth form successfully serves the needs of all students across a very wide range of abilities. 'Being here is upgrading me', commented a student who has decided to return to school after a year out. The overall picture is that students make good progress to achieve broadly average standards but that masks achievement that is outstanding for a significant number of individuals.

For example, English for Speakers of Other Languages students make exceptional progress through levelled courses to achieve their targets. Figures for 2008 indicate that A-level students have done even better than in 2007, when results were similar to the national average. The curriculum is an excellent, diverse and rich blend of courses, including AS, A2 and vocational work. Students' work is extremely carefully monitored to ensure that they are on track to attain their goals, and that they receive the appropriate guidance. Students say they feel safe and exceptionally well supported. In this multicultural setting, ample opportunities are used well to explore religious beliefs and a variety of cultures. Excellent links with external organisations are used very well, for example when sensitive moral and ethical issues are discussed at conferences organised by the popular Students' Union. Very good relationships between teachers and students underpin the good quality of teaching and learning. In less successful lessons, teaching does not make effective use of questioning to engage students sufficiently in their learning. Students enjoy taking responsibility, such as supporting younger students in the school and working to achieve their own academic targets. Leadership and management are good. The clear vision is to maximise students' enjoyment of education and their standards. Evaluation is sharp and effective action is being taken to improve punctuality, attendance and the overall quality of teaching. This, together with the current levels of achievement, reflect an outstanding capacity to improve in the sixth form.

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

- Ensure that the standards students attain, particularly in English, mathematics and science, are raised through effective subject management and improving attendance.
- Improve the quality of teaching by better use of questioning so that work is always matched to students' needs.

### **Achievement and standards**

#### **Grade: 2**

Effective strategies devised to ensure all learners progress from whatever their starting point might be, result in students' progressing and achieving well. By the time students reach Year 9 many have made good progress, though their standards in English, mathematics, and science are below national expectations. Standards in these subjects are slowly improving. Changes in leadership and better teaching, particularly in mathematics, are beginning to have an impact on standards, though the school appreciates that there is more to be done.

By the end of Year 11, students have made very good progress, particularly in English, compared to those from similar backgrounds. The impact of the performing arts specialism is seen in the popularity of the GCSE Drama course and its results are the best in the school. Caribbean students do particularly well overall. Many students take longer than usual to reach the nationally expected grades at GCSE. They often continue into the sixth form, where they improve upon lower grades or follow similar courses with increasing success. Throughout the school, excellent tracking systems and enhanced support, particularly for those on the threshold of Level 5 in Year 9 and a grade C pass at GCSE, are proving effective in raising standards. The very high mobility of students, often joining after a disrupted previous education and from a very wide range of cultural backgrounds, have a major impact on school standards. In 2008, approaching a third of students attained five GCSE grades A\*-C including mathematics and English; almost half that Year 11 cohort did not start their secondary education at Kidbrooke.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Students speak confidently and very positively about their school, which they find an extremely enjoyable place to be. 'The persistence of the teachers', they said, has enabled them to change their lifestyles. They know well that there are many advantages to eating a healthy diet. Students feel extremely safe and know that their peers and staff provide help when needed. Behaviour both in and outside lessons is good. Some students, however, are excluded from school because of inappropriate behaviour. This situation has improved greatly; the number of exclusions reduced by more than half in the last year. Although attendance has improved and is now satisfactory, a small core of irregular attenders are not achieving as well as they should. The school continues to make every effort to improve attendance further. Spiritual development is good. Outstanding moral and social development are seen in students' friendly, caring attitudes. The number of students taking up the many opportunities for participating in physical activity is increasing, but slowly. The school is aware of this and strives to involve more. A major strength of the school is the number of students participating in music and drama activities, through which they learn to be confident and creative. Students make outstanding contributions to the community, raising substantial sums for local and national charities and helping, for example, the local elderly and at a children's hospice. The progress students make in their studies, good teamwork opportunities and the personal confidence they develop prepare them well for their future lives.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

On many occasions, teaching is good and students progress well. Students know how well they are doing and relationships between teachers and students are excellent. In some outstanding teaching of drama and English, expectations are very high. For example, Year 9 students enacted the aftermath of the sinking of the Titanic and created a very intense and moving atmosphere through their persuasive arguing skills. Teachers' good knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses is often used skilfully in lessons. Specific and helpful attention is given to those who have, for instance, dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties, autism or behaviour and emotional issues, so that their progress is as good as others. Teaching assistants work well supporting teachers and students. Occasionally, techniques teachers use to question pupils do not lead to a clear identification of pupils' needs. Consequently the work set is not appropriately challenging, and some students struggle with their work, whilst others have to wait to be given additional challenges. The school's current drive to improve assessment techniques in lessons, to match work better to students' needs, is helpful and appropriate.

## Curriculum and other activities

### Grade: 1

Year 7 students receive an excellent induction programme that welcomes them and their families to the school. For example, students work on projects together in groups with their personal learning tutor. This is very effective in settling them into the school and providing a boost to study skills. The curriculum meets all requirements and promotes understanding of personal and emotional development extremely well. Students benefit from regular physical education lessons. A wealth of subjects and choices for 14-16 study enable the curriculum to be carefully

matched to students' chosen study paths. Performing arts status has brought wide benefits to the curriculum and supported, for example, exciting opportunities to study music technology and media using professional recording studio and media software. An excellent variety of curriculum events for students inspires them and makes learning fun, including a partnership with professional artists. The local community becomes involved through, for example, a summer arts school where students perform and produce visual arts in a safe environment. The school provides a very good weekly programme of sporting, study support and special interest clubs during the lunch break and after school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Students thrive in an environment where safety and well-being are given the utmost priority. The words of one parent reflected the views of many, 'The school goes to great lengths to provide an excellent level of care to all its students. My son loves coming to school'. Students' comments echo those of their parents. Students new to the school are exceptionally pleased with the support they receive, such as from the grey-jumpered Year 11 monitors who are 'so kind and helpful'. The wide range of specialist staff, including counselling personnel are very effective in supporting students in need. This extensive range of in-house expertise, complemented by the high quality network it has established with external agencies, such as Youthreach and Teen Talk, enables the school to respond with the best form of help for individuals. Students receive excellent guidance for choices at various transition points, such as Year 10 options. The school is working towards each pupil making good progress each year using its excellent tracking system. Students are involved in setting and reviewing their own challenging targets and identifying any potential barriers to achievement. Absence has been an issue for some years. Significant recent improvement has resulted from reward initiatives for high attendance, rigorous daily checks, dealing with individuals and their parents the moment there are concerns, and the involvement of external agencies when necessary. The impact of this is starting to be seen in improved progress for these students. Safeguarding arrangements are robust, appropriate and regularly reviewed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

This highly inclusive school is successful because of the clarity of vision of the headteacher and senior leaders, and the teamwork of all staff that backs this up. The desire to provide an excellent calm environment where all students feel safe and enjoy their education is built upon a drive to maximise pupil achievement. Leaders are aware of the need to improve standards further. Monitoring of teaching and learning is of high quality. Evaluation that is both judgemental and supportive is helping to raise standards. Targets are challenging but the impact of high mobility and proportions of students for whom English is an additional language affects the extent to which targets set some years in advance are appropriate. The impact of leadership and management is seen in students' Year 9 results that met or nearly met the targets set and Year 11 targets were exceeded in 2007, the last year for which there is validated data. Although the majority of middle leaders contribute well to raising standards, a small number still need support in understanding their management role. The very wide range of cultures evident in the school are valued and understood. This is equipping students to live and thrive together in today's society and makes an excellent contribution to community cohesion. The school's

staff, facilities and resources, such as the good information and communication technology equipment in each classroom, have a strong positive impact on students' skills and approaches to learning.



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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	<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>	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
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	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2	

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	3	
The behaviour of learners	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
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**

13 October 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Kidbrooke School, London, SE3 8EP

Thank you for your welcome and help when we visited your school. We greatly enjoyed speaking to many of you and learning about how much you like Kidbrooke.

We agree with you that your school is good, and it is getting better all the time. The quality of care provided for you is excellent and the courses the school puts on for you are very carefully matched to your needs, both up to GCSE and in the sixth form. Staff work hard running a wide range of clubs and activities during the lunchtime and after school, but even more of you could make use of these opportunities, particularly in sport, which could help you get even fitter. The teachers check on your progress extremely carefully, so they know when you need to be pushed along a little harder and given support, and this is helping you to make good progress in your work.

You try hard and achieve well, enjoying your life at school. Your behaviour is good and you told us how the school is a calm and pleasant place to be, where problems are sorted out quickly so you feel very safe. A small number of you still need to control your behaviour at times; you know that the repercussions upset you and the staff. You gain the benefit from good teaching but we think you could achieve higher standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science in your national assessments at the end of Year 9 and in your GCSEs. We have asked the headteacher to check that teaching always matches work to your needs so you all do as well as possible. We congratulate all of you in Years 12 and 13 who are doing so well, and hope that the large group of you applying to university are successful.

Your headteacher, supported by her staff and the governors, is doing a really good job leading the school. She is putting pressure on those few of you whose attendance is poor to improve. Several of you have taken the advice; others still need to attend more regularly so that you can make the best of the opportunities provided. Staff are committed to improving your examination results and we have asked the headteacher to make sure that all subject leaders focus on this. We know you will all want to work with staff so that you are as successful as you can be.

Yours sincerely

Peter McGregor

Lead Inspector