

# The John Roan School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100192
<b>Local Authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	307326
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Lynes 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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1145
6th form	150
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Elizabeth Gardiner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Carl Dent
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Maze Hill Blackheath London SE3 7UD
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8516 7555
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8516 7594

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<b>Age group</b>	11-18
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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

The school is located on two sites surrounded by very affluent housing. However, most students do not come from the immediate locality. They mainly come from communities subject to high levels of social deprivation, for example, more than three times the national percentage are eligible to claim free school meals. There are significantly more boys than girls. About half the students are of White British origin; the remainder are from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few are at the early stages of learning English. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly higher than that found nationally, but the number of students with a statement of educational need is about the national average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

John Roan has some strengths: standards are beginning to improve as the direct result of intervention by the senior leadership team, the curriculum is developing well, some aspects of care and support are good and attendance is improving, partly as a result of good support from the local authority. However, behaviour is inadequate, as is the quality of too much teaching. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to behaviour, the quality of teaching and learning, and the standard of accommodation at one of the sites.

The headteacher and senior leadership team have worked assiduously in the past year to ensure that examination results in Key Stage 4 have improved. They now track the progress of students well, are able to identify potential underachievement early, and have taken some effective steps to prevent it. However, they have not got to grips with the root cause of that underachievement: too much poor quality teaching as the result of low expectations by some teachers. This is the main cause of much of the poor behaviour seen in classrooms. The deputy headteacher responsible for teaching and learning accurately assesses the strengths and weaknesses across the school. Although some poor teaching has been robustly challenged, it is not done so in a securely consistent way.

The other significant factor that restricts the quality of teaching and learning is the very poor accommodation at one of the sites: classrooms are small, dark, poorly resourced and not conducive to high quality learning. This has been evident at the last two inspections, dating back to 1998. The senior leadership team has managed to reduce class sizes and modified the timetable to ameliorate the impact of this inadequate accommodation. However, students now treat the building with a lack of respect and as a result it is becoming increasingly shabby. It is a matter of the utmost urgency that the governing body and the local authority act in a concerted manner to rectify this.

Inspectors received quite a high number of returns to the parental questionnaire expressing a wide range of views, some of which were supportive of the school. Parents have concerns about communication with the school and the quality of homework. Governors are aware of this and are working with senior leaders to improve the quality of homework. A significant number of parents had serious concerns about the behaviour of students, a view which inspectors share. Although it is difficult to summarise the views of parents one comment is largely representative: 'The school is clearly working hard and with some fine tuning can go on to much better things'.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 3

The sixth form is satisfactory. It is open to all students and the level of ability on entry is below average. Achievement across vocational and academic courses is satisfactory because there is close monitoring of progress and related support. Standards in relation to national expectations are low.

A questionnaire completed this term by students confirms that they think care and support from teachers are generally good. The curriculum is satisfactory, providing students with

flexibility in combining vocational and academic subject courses at different levels. This motivates students to achieve more and remain in the sixth form. Collaboration between local schools extends the range of courses available. There are many subject related clubs, but a lack of recreational activities. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Better lessons demonstrate strengths in teachers' subject knowledge and brisk questioning, but in some lessons teachers lead too much and students are passive. Students develop personally through taking responsibility, for example, by mentoring younger students. Leadership and management are satisfactory, as the head of sixth form has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.

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

- Raise the standard of behaviour in classrooms, around the school and in transit between the two sites.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 7 to 11.
- Work together with the local authority to improve the standard of accommodation rapidly so that it provides a more conducive climate for learning, and to ensure that a longer-term solution is swiftly reached.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory because students make around average progress between Year 7 and Year 11. However, there is too much variation between subjects because of inconsistencies in the quality of the teaching.

In 2007, examination results at the end of Year 11 showed a distinct improvement, although test results at the end of Year 9 were not as high as in the previous year. Standards at both key stages remained below average, reflecting the students' relatively low attainment when they first came to the school.

Students' progress in mathematics has been substantially better than in English for the past three years. Strengths in GCSE results in mathematics, science and art in 2007 were counterbalanced by weaker results in information and communication technology, design and technology and physical education. Challenging targets are set for students in Years 7 to 9 based on their prior attainment and these have mainly been met in national tests. A major factor in the students' improving achievement in Years 10 and 11 is the thorough and helpful 'assertive mentoring' carried out regularly by senior leaders. Staff work closely with underachieving students and those on the GCSE grade C-D boundary in English, mathematics and science. This helps students to achieve higher standards than they would otherwise have attained as a result of the inconsistent teaching they have experienced. There is no significant variation in the achievement of students from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The progress of students with learning difficulties and disabilities, those with statements of special education needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, is similar to that of their peers and is dependent upon the highly variable quality of teaching.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 4**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The personal development and well-being of students are inadequate because the behaviour of students is not good enough. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is satisfactory, with some good examples of moral education in lessons. The extent to which students adopt healthy lifestyles is good and the school has a healthy schools award. A large number of students take up the healthy school meals on offer and the curriculum provides above the recommended amount of physical education. Few incidents of smoking and virtually none of drug taking have been recorded in recent years. Students feel safe from bullying in the school and different racial groups mix together well.

The behaviour of students, however, is inadequate. The learning in too many lessons is impeded by low level disruption. Some behaviour in corridors, and when students move between sites, is poor. Punctuality in the morning is satisfactory but too many students are late to lessons. The level of fixed term exclusions, although reducing, is still high. Students enjoy being at school. Attendance is satisfactory and improving, partly as a result of good local authority support. Students make a good contribution to the school and the local community. They receive good preparation for the world of work but progress with important work-related skills is only satisfactory. There is limited provision for small group work and problem solving in lessons.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 4**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the sixth form but inadequate overall. In Years 7 to 11 a significant proportion of lessons are characterised by inadequate teaching and students do not learn enough. Lessons often lack pace, and expectations of students are too low. Students of all abilities are not appropriately challenged by interesting work and they are not given enough opportunities to work independently. Often this is because ineffective use is made of information about individual students to plan lessons that have a variety of activities to motivate them. Marking of work is not sufficiently regular or evaluative enough to provide students with clear information about the progress they make and how they could improve their work.

Too often students' lack of full involvement in lessons results in an attitude of passive indifference and they do not learn as well as they could. Where behaviour is not well managed the learning ethos in class deteriorates quickly and this reduces progress further. The better teaching is challenging and interesting so that students want to listen and work well. Some teachers use their good subject knowledge very effectively, especially in skilful questioning which keeps students' full attention. In the sixth form poor behaviour does not disrupt learning and students have more opportunities to work alone, explore and research information with teacher support.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. The school responds appropriately to the broad ability range by adapting its courses to individual needs. Those students who work quickly in English, mathematics, and science complete Key Stage 3 work by the end of Year 8. This provides them with more time in Key Stage 4 to study additional related GCSE subjects. Students with learning difficulties do not study a modern foreign language; the time is used for extra numeracy and literacy. A number of activities develop students' economic awareness and work-related learning: in Year 10 two weeks are spent in a work-place, and several vocational courses may be chosen in Key Stage 4. An external assessment recognised the strength of this area. Students appreciate the range of after-school clubs in many subjects that support their studies, the creative and sports activities, and the range of organised trips available.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Vulnerable students are known and looked after well. New arrivals to the school, including those from other countries, are very well supported. Looked after children are monitored closely and well supported; consequently they achieve well. At key points of change, such as from primary to secondary school, and from Year 9 to Year 10, considerable support is provided for students. Guidance on careers is good in the main school and in the sixth form. The procedures for promoting good attendance are rigorous and have improved considerably in the past year. Strategies and systems for improving behaviour, such as the new behaviour policy, are good but their impact is affected by inconsistencies in the way teachers apply them. The tracking of students' progress and the follow up of underachievement are good, although teachers are not using tracking data sufficiently well when planning lessons.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Senior leaders have taken carefully considered action to improve standards in examinations over the past year. They have accurately identified the academic underperformance of some students and taken appropriate steps to improve it. The senior leadership team have worked well with the local authority to improve attendance. In addition, they have taken robust action to address some weaknesses in middle management. The senior leadership team, under the guidance of the current headteacher, have therefore clearly demonstrated the capacity to improve. However, they have not tackled some inadequacies in teaching. Although behaviour has begun to improve, it is still not good enough as it continues to impact on the quality of learning in a number of classrooms. Senior leaders have accurately identified weaker teaching but have not taken steps to improve it sufficiently. The quality of middle leadership is too variable as it does not have consistent impact on outcomes for students.

The recently reconfigured governing body has a realistic view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and is increasingly holding the school to account for the performance of students. However, it has not yet demonstrated its ability to work strategically with senior leaders to address the areas for improvement identified in this report. The local authority has provided good support over the past year in order to improve standards, and its continued support will be essential.



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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	16-19
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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?	4	3
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?	3	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	3
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	3
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?	4	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	3	
The attendance of learners	3	
The behaviour of learners	4	
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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>	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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	3	
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?	Yes	

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

7 January 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of The John Roan School, London, SE3 7UD

Thank you very much for talking to us when we came to inspect your school. I am writing to let you know what we found. If you want to read the whole report, you can download it from [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The school cares and supports you very well in some ways. Those of you in Year 10 and 11 get good additional support, and in 2007 examination results improved. The curriculum is developing so that you are now offered a wider, more interesting range of subjects.

Although there are some good things about your school, and many of you told us that you enjoy going to it, too much of your behaviour is poor and too much teaching does not help you to learn fast enough. We have therefore issued your school with a notice to improve. This means that inspectors will visit the school over the next year to see if things are improving.

We have asked the school to improve the following areas over the next year:

- your behaviour, both inside and outside classrooms
- the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 7 to 11
- the quality of the teaching rooms in one of the sites.

Some of you told us that too many of your lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour. It is very important that you play your part in improving things. You need to work with your teachers whilst they are trying hard to provide you with more interesting and enjoyable lessons. I am sure that you want to do this, and will do your very best to ensure that we see improvement when we come back.

With very best wishes

Michael Lynes  
Her Majesty's Inspector