

# Marshalls Park School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102345
<b>Local Authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	307976
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roger Whittaker

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>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	789
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr Geoffrey Starns
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pam Mason
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 April 2005
<b>School address</b>	Pettits Lane Romford RM1 4EH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01708 724 134
<b>Fax number</b>	01708 746 021

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<b>Age group</b>	11–16
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Marshalls Park School is a smaller than average 11-16 comprehensive school. It was awarded Specialist Performing Arts status in February 2006. The socio-economic background appears high but the number of parents that have accessed further or higher education does not reflect this. Some 60% of the school's intake comes from three Havering LA primary schools. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with national standards. The percentage of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below national levels. Students with moderate learning difficulties are the largest group. However, the percentage of students with statements of special educational need is above average. 8.1% of students are from minority ethnic groups, well below national figures, with only 0.8% of students whose first language is not English. There are more boys than girls in each year group.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

One parent said of the school, 'My son has made great progress since starting at Marshalls Park School and I am very happy that he attends this school'. This is a good school. It not only enables students to reach good academic standards but also to develop into mature, well-rounded young people well prepared for the next stage of their education and life. Their personal development is good. Central to this are the strong sense of community and the very good relationships amongst staff and students that contribute to their achievement and enjoyment. Students involve themselves enthusiastically in the life of the school and, consequently, they take a pride in their school and are keen to do well.

Standards are above average in all year groups. Throughout their time at Marshalls Park School, students make good progress and their results in public tests and examinations at the end of Years 9 and 11 are above average. There has been a dip in the achievement for girls. However, the school acted quickly in identifying the causes. Curriculum and teaching and learning changes were made and have resulted in girls being on track to reach higher standards. This quick identification of and response to needs demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve. Good teaching and the students' positive attitudes are significant factors in explaining good academic standards. Lessons contain interesting and challenging activities to which students respond well. However, in a few lessons students are not sufficiently involved. This happens when activities do not enable them to work independently and when work is not accurately matched to their ability. In some lessons students do not know what level they are working at or how to improve. Systems for tracking and monitoring students' academic progress are in place but subsequent support is inconsistent.

The curriculum is good at Key Stages 3 and 4. The school continues to strive to ensure that the courses offered meet the needs of all students. Performing Arts college status is having an impact in developing a more varied experience for students and so developing their confidence in order to achieve the higher grades. Students in Years 10 and 11 are provided with a curriculum, which meets a wide range of their needs and interests through, for example vocational provision both at school and off site. There is a full range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities for the students and many of them get involved. Care, guidance and support for students are good. Students feel well cared for and are treated as individuals. Teachers know the students' needs well and there is a wide range of support systems in place.

The school is well led and managed. Staff are committed to getting the best from the students and teamwork is a key strength amongst all managers, teachers and support staff. The headteacher and school leaders have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Improvements have been made since the last inspection. Links with partner schools and support agencies are good. Improving leadership has resulted in good systems for using assessment data to inform curriculum and lesson planning. However, some leadership at all levels is still inconsistent and so restricts the pace of improvement. Marshalls Park School enjoys a good reputation in the local community, especially through good partnerships with primary schools and other agencies. Parents are supportive of the school.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the consistency of leadership, at all levels, so that it does not restrict the pace of improvement.

- Enable students to be more consistently involved in learning by increasing the opportunities for them to work on their own or in groups and for them to know what level they are working at and how to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Students get off to a good start and make good progress throughout Key Stage 3, achieving above average results in national tests at the end of Year 9. Students consolidate their learning in Key Stage 4 and reach above average standards. The percentage of students who achieve 5 A\* to C grades and those who achieved these grades including mathematics and English, improved in each of the past three years. The schools' assessments and tracking of students' progress show that standards for the present Year 11 are on track to be higher in 2009.

The school has placed a high priority on improving students' progress. In particular, careful monitoring of any underachieving students leads to effective targeted support.

The school's improved focused support for the students with behavioural or moderate learning difficulties means that these students achieve as well as others in the school.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Students have a positive attitude to learning. The good relationships they show improves their confidence and self-esteem and helps them to achieve. They are well behaved in lessons and around the school. They are courteous to adults, are polite and work very well in pairs or in groups. Students report that they feel safe in the school and know who to approach if they have concerns. Students say that bullying and racist incidences are rare and are dealt with swiftly. Student voice has strengthened and they feel confident to raise matters of concern. The school councillors take their duties seriously. They are pleased that they are able to offer suggestions about improving the environment of the school and feel that their issues are taken seriously.

Students have a clear understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. High numbers of students take part in the many sporting activities that the school offers and appreciate the need for a balanced diet. Students are developing an understanding of living in a multi cultural society and show an appreciation of other cultures.

Students are prepared for their future economic wellbeing through well-structured work related activities and their good development of skills in literacy and numeracy.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have a high level of subject knowledge that is used successfully to raise students' confidence in their learning. Questioning is used well to share the ideas of the class, to stimulate discussion and to allow further development of thought. Students display good behaviour and positive attitudes in all lessons. Students say that they really enjoy their learning in the active lessons where they can develop independent thinking skills. In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations and use information and

communication technology to develop thought and independence. In most lessons, students' interest is sustained with a variety of tasks and appropriate challenge. However, in a few lessons learning is hindered because students do not know what level they are working at and how to improve.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and positive relationships stimulate students learning, for example, in an English lesson where subject specific language was enhanced through good independent group work. Students respond well and are determined to achieve their potential. All groups of students have their needs matched in lessons and this creates challenge for students. Relationships between students and staff are very good.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of the curriculum is good. An innovative broad and balanced curriculum provides good opportunities for students to progress and perform well. The school has undertaken a curriculum review and has improved the provision, particularly in the performing arts and this has encouraged the development of independent learning skills. There is a good range of option choices at Years 10 and 11, which are well suited to all levels of learners. For example, students can choose vocational courses, which are run as part of the collaboration with the local Further Education College. Provision for gifted and talented students, in areas such as drama, has allowed early GCSE entry and enabled them to start to study for AS level drama during Year 11. Students study citizenship and religious studies and there is a planned programme of personal, social and health education. This contributes significantly to their good personal development. There are wide and varied opportunities for enrichment activities through the extra-curricular programme especially in music, sport, drama and philosophy. The specialist school status is enhancing links with primary schools through a Year 5 and 6 drama club led by Year 9 students.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

There is good care guidance and support in this inclusive school, which contributes well to students' personal development and achievement. Students say that they feel safe and secure because the staff know them well and respond quickly to their needs. There are secure arrangements to ensure the safety of students, including robust child protection systems. Although academic guidance and tracking of students' progress has improved, there are inconsistencies in the application of these systems. All staff show a high level of commitment to meeting students' needs, often using the student's perspective to help teachers reflect on and improve practice. For example, the school took part in research to challenge discrimination and attitudes to difference. As a result, teachers are more confident to challenge such attitudes and behaviour and students find the environment supportive. There are good relations with outside agencies, who give additional support to students in need. There is a useful range of support available for those with differing learning needs.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The leadership and the management of the school are good. The very effective headteacher has a clear vision for the future development of the school that is shared by all staff and pupils. The school's effective self-evaluation has led to greater accountability across the school and improvements in the leadership and management. However, the school recognises that there are still some inconsistencies in leadership at all levels. The school has systems for recording and analysing assessment data. While there has been improvement in practice there is some inconsistency across departments.

There are good links with outside agencies to support and promote community cohesion. The school's performing arts status is having a positive impact on the many aspects of its work. The school promotes equal opportunities well by providing a range of curriculum opportunities for all students. School governors are well informed and work effectively to fulfil their responsibilities. They evaluate the outcomes and provide strategic good support and direction for the school.

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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	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	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
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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B**

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

09 December 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Marshalls Park School, Romford, RM1 4EH

Following our visit to Marshalls Park School, we would like to share our findings with you. We thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us and for the helpful way you talked to us about your school and your work. We can now report to you that Marshalls Park School is providing you with a good standard of education. We are pleased that you enjoy school and the many opportunities it provides, particularly the after-school activities. We are equally pleased that you are respectful to staff and other students. Standards in national tests and examinations are above the national average. Progress continues to improve and is good.

The school is a happy and friendly community where everyone is valued equally. Your teachers are very committed to helping you and they look after you well. We are pleased that you have good awareness of how to be safe around the school. Your headteacher is working very hard, with the rest of the staff, to give you even more opportunities to learn as well as you can.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to focus on planning lessons, which provide more opportunities for you to be more actively involved in your learning. We have also asked them to make sure that all the leadership is consistent so that it does not restrict the pace of your progress.

Yours sincerely

Roger Whittaker

Lead Inspector