

# Aveling Park School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103094
<b>Local Authority</b>	Waltham Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	308216
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen Grounds 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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	536
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs L Pease
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs R Woodward
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2003
<b>School address</b>	Aveling Park Road Walthamstow London E17 4NR
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8527 5794
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Aveling Park is a smaller than average, multicultural comprehensive school near the centre of Walthamstow. The school has more boys than girls. Almost 40% of students are entitled to free school meals, a proportion which is well above the national average. Three quarters of the students come from a range of minority ethnic groups and almost 40% have English as an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs is significantly above the national average. The school has increasing numbers of students who join after Year 7 or who leave before Year 11.

The school has been in a federation with Warwick School for Boys since January 2006. The headteacher, who was formerly the headteacher of Warwick School, has been in post since September 2007. She is also the executive head of the federation and the two schools have the same governing body. In September 2008, Warwick school will close and Aveling Park will become the Frederick Bremer School on a new site with students from both schools. The school is applying for specialist status in engineering with Warwick School.

The school is supported by the National Lottery Association Awards for all Schemes and has gained the Quality in Study Support and Sportsman Awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Aveling Park School provides a satisfactory standard of education. Attainment on entry varies but is usually below average. Hence, although results in tests and examinations are below average, students make satisfactory progress given their starting points. The school's self-evaluation clearly indicates that its new headteacher and its senior staff have a good understanding of the school's strengths as well as what the school needs to do in order to improve. These staff are fully focussed on the well-being of the current students in the school, especially those who will leave before the transition to Frederick Bremer School.

Students achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school. Students' progress is better between Years 7 and 9 than in the upper school. There has been a rising, if fluctuating, trend in GCSE results over the last five years, although the results, as measured by the percentage of students gaining five or more higher grades, dipped in 2007. Overall, students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in line with other students. Students' personal development and well-being are good. Students are punctual and have positive attitudes to learning and to their own health and well-being. Inspectors found students well-behaved around the school and warm and courteous to visitors. Attendance is monitored rigorously and has steadily improved and is now above the national average, a feature which displays students' increasing enthusiasm for attending school.

The satisfactory progress is a consequence of the teaching which, as judged by the school itself, and corroborated by the inspection is satisfactory with good features. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and a small number of outstanding lessons were seen. Behaviour is well managed and work is carefully marked. There is satisfactory, improving support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but an inconsistent approach to the support of the more able. Even though teachers are beginning to use information and communication technology (ICT) more effectively to make activities more interesting, there is at present inconsistent use of ICT across subjects. The use of assessment in lessons so that tasks are well matched to individual students' abilities and what is known about them in terms of test results, varies across departments and is an aspect in need of development.

The level of care, guidance and support that the school provides for all students is good. Child protection policies are good and the school is a safe environment. Students' emotional and behavioural needs are supported well. The school needs to improve further the ways it analyses and tracks students' academic progress, a development which it has in train. It will then be able to intervene at an appropriate stage in order ensure each reaches his or her potential.

The small size of the present school imposes some constraints on the curriculum it can offer. Nevertheless, what is offered caters for the needs of most. There are some limitations in the current provision for citizenship in that it operates within the school's programme of social, moral, spiritual and cultural education and not as a separate subject, and there is no GCSE option for religious education in Years 10 and 11. On the other hand, since the last inspection students can choose from an increased number of vocational courses.

Sound steps to improve were made after the previous inspection, but much has changed since then, both in staffing and student composition and this period has been marked by uncertainty and ambiguity over the school's long-term strategic future. The process of planning and improvement has accelerated under the new headteacher who has a strong track record of success in her position in the partner school. Together with the deputy headteacher, also from

the partner school, she has ably carried out her two responsibilities of planning the new school from September 2008 and carrying Aveling Park School forward and ensuring an improvement in its provision throughout its remaining three terms of operation. Improvement is already evident in several respects, notably in behaviour, attendance, and the quality of teaching. The last is benefiting from the importation of staff from the partner school, as, for example, in the art department. A training course for staff in data analysis and target setting, which has been successful in improving student achievement in the partner school, has been put in place in Aveling Park. All these elements are part of the copious evidence of the school's strong capacity for improvement.

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

- Improve consistency across subjects in the use of ICT.
- Improve the planning of lessons so that tasks are better matched to students' individual abilities.
- Strengthen the systems by which the academic progress of students is tracked and supported.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

All students, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make satisfactory progress. For the three years to 2006, the overall index of value added performance, measuring the progress made by students in their time in the school, has been at or above the national average. In 2005 the school's performance in this respect was well above average. The school's own data suggests that the index for 2007 will be close to the national average.

In Year 9, test results across the core subjects have been significantly below national averages in the last three years. The numbers of students achieving level 5 or above in mathematics and science has been stable but in English there was a decline in 2007. Nevertheless, allowing for students' starting points students made expected progress in the three years to 2006.

There has been an upward trend in GCSE results, albeit with some variation from year to year and from subject to subject. The average point scores for both English and mathematics for 2007, measuring the attainment of all students and not just the more able, are close to national averages. The percentage of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades has been significantly below national averages and dipped in 2007; the dip was slightly less for those gaining five or more A\* to C grades including English and mathematics. Progress in Years 10 and 11 is less good than in Years 7 to 9, but is still satisfactory across the five years of the school as a whole. The school is challenged by increasing numbers of students entering the school from elsewhere in different years with the consequent disruption to their learning. It acknowledges that, as yet, it is not as adept as its partner school in supporting such students in their preparation for tests and examinations.

In 2007, the school narrowly missed its agreed target for GCSE performance including English and mathematics. It fell well below its other GCSE target as a result of unexpected poor performance in ICT and the school is closely monitoring the 2007–8 provision in this subject.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of the students are good. Students enjoy school, do their best to be on time for lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. Students behave well, feel safe, and are clear about staying safe outside school. Students appreciate the importance of staying healthy. Students take part in sports and other physical activities, and this reflects their commitment to fitness. Students know how to choose healthy lunches and are aware of the implications of poor nutrition.

The school council provides students with an influential voice that has an effect on positive changes around the school. In the wider community, students make a prominent contribution through a range of activities including fund raising and charity events. The recent introduction of a new behaviour policy has helped to give clear guidelines for good behaviour and the consequences for inappropriate actions. As a result, behaviour has improved rapidly and is now good overall. Students work well together in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and is reflected in the harmonious and inclusive relationships that prevail.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with good features. The school continues to respond effectively to staffing difficulties and a relatively large turnover. Its understanding of its teaching strengths and weaknesses through detailed reviews across all subject areas was corroborated by the inspection.

Teachers have supportive relationships with students and plan lessons well. In good lessons, challenging and varied activities help learners make good progress. Teachers target individuals with well-focused questions in order to develop a critical discussion of topics by all. Students generally enjoy learning and take pride in their work. Students of different ethnic groups work productively as happened, for example, in a Year 9 science lesson in which the use of microscopes was explored. Good summary sessions help students consolidate their learning. Most teachers manage behaviour well. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons by teachers and learning support staff. Individual education plans are more tightly structured than previously. Gifted and talented students are sometimes given more challenging tasks, although this practice is still inconsistent.

Teachers' ways of assessing and monitoring learners' progress are satisfactory and improving, with learners encouraged to assess their own progress. There is some good practice in some subjects but inconsistency in others. Although teachers mark work helpfully, not all students are aware of the levels at which they are working and ways to improve. The use of data across departments to maximise learning is inconsistent, an aspect which is recognised by the school.

## Curriculum and other activities

### Grade: 3

Given the school's small size, the curriculum meets the needs of most students, being satisfactory with good features. Opportunities for all to study languages, ICT and vocational subjects have

been extended since the last inspection, for example, by the introduction of a popular new construction course in Year 10. Lower-attaining students have the option to attend local colleges for one day a week to study subjects such as hairdressing, motor vehicle maintenance and decorating. Students usefully participate in an enterprise challenge day in Year 9, and two-week work placements in Year 10. Careers guidance, helped by the Connexions service, is satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched through an increasingly-wide range of activities, including field trips and theatre visits, competitive sports, ICT clubs, revision classes and dramatic productions. Provision for citizenship education within the personal, social and health education lessons is satisfactory and developing; students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions, for example through the good school council.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school has good systems to promote students' personal, social and academic development. Clear structures ensure that students feel safe and well cared for in the school. New students are helped to settle quickly and happily, irrespective of which time of the year they arrive.

Students with more complex social, emotional and behavioural needs are well supported as a result of positive relationships with staff. One student commented, 'I was frightened before I came, but not now'. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress as a result of additional help to improve literacy and numeracy skills. Safeguarding procedures are of good quality and early identification of students requiring skilled support is provided swiftly by a number of external agencies. Health and safety and risk assessment procedures are in place.

Most students interviewed could explain their academic targets in some way. However, they were less clear as to what they needed to do in order to progress to the next level. The school recognises the need for more rigour in setting appropriate targets allied to more precise use of data by staff. There are good assessment procedures and practice observed in English, ICT and French.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Following the recent federation with the partner school, the headteacher, supported by governors and senior leaders, has demonstrated very clear vision in shaping ideas for the planned new school. Managers at all other levels work efficiently to promote improvement. Although it is rightly concerned about the lack of resources, the school makes good use of outside agencies in its work, including the local authority. School leaders are forging a positive climate for improvement which contributes to students' good personal development. Departments are beginning to monitor standards more rigorously to help improve students' academic achievement, although it is too early to judge the impact of this development. Support for new teachers is good. Teachers are positive about the school and enjoy working in it.

The school's development plans accurately focus on current issues relating to achievement, teaching and learning, accommodation and on the school's future direction. The committed governing body has played an important part in shaping plans for the new school, and ensured

that statutory requirements for child protection are met. It is well-informed as well as being prepared and able to take difficult strategic decisions. The setting of targets and the monitoring of them are still inconsistent in some areas. More training to share good practice in teaching and learning, and using assessment data to improve learning, is correctly identified as a priority. The school is strong in its pursuit of equality of opportunity and the finding of ways of tackling discrimination, aided by strong support from outside agencies including the local authority. However its examination performance makes this only satisfactory.



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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?	3
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?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	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?	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	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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	3
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	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	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

20 November 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Aveling Park School, London, E17 4NR

My two colleagues and I were very pleased to meet some of you during our brief two-day visit last week and to hear the many positive things you had to say about the school. We enjoyed our time in the school and the open way in which you talked to us.

We judged that the school is providing you with a sound education. Under its new headteacher, it seemed to us to be a lively and vibrant place. We were impressed by the urgency with which the head and the senior leadership team are trying to move the school forward and are preparing and sharing with you the transition to Frederick Bremer School.

The test and examination results need to be improved, but at the same time we judged that the progress you make throughout the school is at least at expected levels. Your personal development and well-being are good. You like school and attend well. The orderly and tranquil environment impressed us as we went about the school. You told us that the school is a harmonious place where students' different backgrounds are readily tolerated. The teaching varies in quality across the subjects but much of it is good. There are good support systems in place to guide you and a number of opportunities to do things outside lessons, especially on the sporting front. We were very impressed by what you do to raise money for other people and of your awareness of issues around the world.

We have said to the school that in order to improve it should improve its use of information and communication technology and organise lessons so that they better meet your individual needs. We are also encouraging the school to improve the way it keeps academic and test data on students and uses the data to set targets for improvement. This has already worked well at the partner school and we trust this will benefit you very soon.

We wish you well with your studies and your futures, both those in Year 11 who will be leaving in the summer and those going on to Frederick Bremer.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Grounds

HM Inspector