

Leytonstone Business and Enterprise Specialist School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103101
Local Authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	308221
Inspection dates	16–17 January 2008
Reporting inspector	David Butler HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	876
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Watkins
Headteacher	Mr Luke Burton
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2004
School address	Colworth Road Leytonstone London E11 1JD
Telephone number	020 8988 7420
Fax number	020 8988 7430

Age group	11-16
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Leytonstone Business and Enterprise Specialist School draws the great majority of its students from the London Borough of Waltham Forest. There are substantially more boys than girls on roll. The school has a rich ethnic mix, with two thirds of students coming from backgrounds other than White-British. Approximately one third of students speak English as an additional language and about one in ten are at an early stage of learning English. The school was designated as a specialist business and enterprise school in June 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Leytonstone Business and Enterprise Specialist School is a good and improving school with particular strengths in the support it gives to preparing students for adult life. The school is friendly and welcoming. Students from diverse backgrounds get on very well and support one another. The school is making very effective use of its specialism to help raise achievement through improving teaching and learning and enriching the curriculum.

Students make good progress and achieve well in most subjects. The good achievement of students is due to effective teaching and the high-quality individual support they receive. Improvements to the curriculum, particularly in the provision of a wider range of courses in Years 10 and 11, have also played a significant part in raising achievement through meeting the learning needs and career aspirations of students. The proportion of students attaining five or more A* to C grade passes in GCSE, or equivalent qualifications, is in line with the national average but below it when English and mathematics are included. While teaching is generally good, in a small minority of lessons, there is weak planning and some teaching does not fully engage and challenge students.

The great majority of students enjoy their education, attend well and have good attitudes to learning. Students rightly feel that the school is safe and friendly and that teachers and other staff are very caring and supportive. The great majority of students behave well in lessons and around the school. Misbehaviour is managed well so that it rarely disrupts other students' learning. The numbers of incidents of students being sent out of lessons or experiencing fixed term exclusions is falling but remains substantial. Students know how to lead safe and healthy lives and behave responsibly towards each other. The excellent new sports facilities have greatly enhanced the opportunities for students to engage in physical activities, resulting in a high take-up of extra curricular sport activities by both girls and boys. Students make a very positive contribution to both the school and the local community and there are good opportunities for students to exercise responsibility, for example through the school council. The school's strong emphasis on enterprise education has helped students develop excellent work place and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher, senior managers and governors provide clear direction and they have successfully engendered a culture of innovation and improvement throughout the school. Managers at all levels have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. Good progress has been made in the areas for development identified in the last inspection report and in other important aspects of the school's work. The school is very well placed to become even better in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of students attaining GCSE A*-C grades in both English and mathematics.
- Ensure all lessons are well planned and consistently engage and challenge students, so that even more teaching is good and outstanding.
- Reduce further the incidents of students being sent out of lessons or experiencing fixed term exclusions.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students enter the school with below average levels of prior attainment. Their achievement by the time they leave school is good. The proportion of students attaining five or more A* to C grade passes in GCSE is close to the national average but below it when English and mathematics are included. Very good support ensures that there is no underachievement by any specific group of students. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and looked after children achieve at least in line with other students. There has not been any set pattern to the differences in achievement between boys and girls or between different ethnic groups in recent years. The school monitors individual students' progress very carefully and makes early interventions when there is evidence of underachievement. The school is making good progress towards meeting its challenging targets, including its specialist school targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students' personal development is good. In the great majority of lessons students respond well to their teachers and work effectively together. They feel safe and have confidence in adults working in the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They respond sensitively to spiritual and moral issues, such as when Year 10 students discussed the Seven Deadly Sins in their performing arts lesson, working well together to draw out meanings. Students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory. Students attend well. Punctuality at the start of school is good but a small minority are late in arriving at the start of lessons. Students have good attitudes towards health issues and understand how a healthy diet contributes to their well-being. The take-up for physical activities, both in lessons and as part of extra-curricular provision, is good. Students make a strong, positive contribution to both the school and wider community, for example through their work with local primary schools, in their roles as peer mentors and through charity work. Students develop excellent skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being through a wide range of enterprise projects and through their application of literacy, numeracy and information technology to a variety of contexts. A high proportion of students go on to further education and training.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lesson observations during the inspection confirmed the school's view that teaching is generally good and there is very little inadequate teaching. In most lessons teachers' high expectations, good subject knowledge and passion for their subjects contribute to students making good progress and enjoying learning. The generally very positive classroom relationships are conducive to teachers adopting a range of teaching styles which helps promote effective learning. In a small minority of lessons planning is sometimes weak and the tasks set did not always meet the different needs of students. Some lessons proceed at too slow a pace and the teaching did not fully challenge and engage students.

The school has developed an innovative programme of professional development to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This has been enthusiastically received by teachers and

is starting to have an impact. The schools' specialism has resulted in improved provision of computers and interactive whiteboards in classrooms. Inspectors observed some effective use of these facilities to enhance teaching and learning but this was not always the case. Students' work is marked regularly, written comments are generally constructive but some are too bland to be helpful.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum, which is broad and balanced and meets the different interests of students. The school takes great care in identifying the needs of students early and making appropriate provision. The provision for religious education and citizenship has been improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. An enhanced range of applied and vocational courses, with a business and enterprise focus, has been introduced in Years 10 and 11. Business and enterprise skills are developed through a range of subjects and on days when the normal timetable is suspended. Approximately 30 students each year are involved in the Young Enterprise scheme and several of their companies have been very successful in local competitions. Students are very appreciative of the wide range of opportunities offered by the programme of extra curricular and enrichment activities. The school draws on the diverse range of cultural backgrounds, for example students with English as an additional language took part in a very successful 'teach your friend a language' event. All of this contributes effectively to students' achievement and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good quality care, guidance and support provided by the school is a key factor in enabling students to make good progress. Arrangements for ensuring the safety of students are secure. There is particularly effective support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with a range of other specific needs. This support is very well coordinated through the inclusion team which draws on the excellent links it has with a wide range of professionals outside of the school. Staff quickly build very positive relationships with students when they join the school and are skilled in understanding and assessing their individual needs. The popular breakfast club provides additional help for literacy and numeracy, as well as support for homework. The learning support unit provides a safe and secure environment for vulnerable students and staff have a good range of skills to support students' emotional needs, including, for example, the use of art therapy. The academic progress of students is closely monitored and appropriate interventions are made when difficulties are identified. Most students are aware of their personal targets and what needs to be done to achieve them but the quality of target setting varies between different teachers. Students have access to good quality careers guidance and a high proportion go on to full-time further education or training.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, senior managers and governors provide good leadership and management. Staff are fully committed to the values of the school and work hard to ensure that students do their best and are well cared for. Managers at all levels make good use of data and other information to identify areas for improvement. Governors provide effective support, have a

good understanding of the issues facing the school and are prepared to ask challenging questions about its performance. The administration of the school is efficient. The school works effectively in partnership with others to support students and raise achievement. The school does much to communicate with parents and involve them in the life of the school but a substantial minority still feel that insufficient account is taken of their views.

Much has been done to improve the effectiveness of subject leaders since the last inspection. There is greater accountability of heads of department to senior managers and appropriate interventions are made where necessary. There is a strong programme of professional development and support for middle managers. These measures are having an impact on improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement.

Good progress has been made in many other areas of the school's work since the last inspection, demonstrating there is good capacity for further improvement. The curriculum has been enhanced and support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities has been improved. The school has gained specialist status and now has excellent new facilities for physical education. The school uses its resources efficiently and effectively and finances are well managed. The cramped nature of much of the accommodation makes movement around the school difficult but buildings are clean and well maintained.

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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 ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2
The behaviour of learners	3
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	1

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

29 January 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Leytonstone Business and Enterprise Specialist School, London, E11 1JD

We enjoyed our recent visit to your school and would like to thank you for helping us with the inspection and making us feel so welcome. I would like to share some of our findings with you.

We think your school is a good and improving school, which prepares you very well for adult life. Many of you told us that your school has a very friendly and welcoming atmosphere and that you feel well cared for and supported by teachers and other staff. We agree with these views. The great majority of you enjoy coming to school, attend well and feel safe. We were impressed by how well you get on and support each other. Incidents of bullying and other forms of harassment are rare and dealt with promptly when they are reported. Most of you make very good progress in your work and your achievement is good because you are taught well and given very good support. You are provided with a good choice of subject options in Years 10 and 11. Your personal development is good. You know how to lead healthy and safe lives. Many of you are involved in helping with activities in the school and in local primary schools. You also benefit the wider community through raising substantial funds for charities. Many of you told us how much you enjoyed the wide range of business and enterprise activities and how you felt they had increased your self-confidence. We feel that your school is well led and managed and that is very capable of becoming even better in the future.

We have asked the school to make some improvements.

- Although achievement is good, more of you need to get GCSE A*-C grades in both English and mathematics.
- Some lessons need to be planned better and need to make sure that the tasks you set really engage and challenge you.
- The great majority of you behave well. The number of you being sent out of lessons or being excluded from school for poor behaviour has been falling but we feel it is still too high and needs to be reduced further.

We hope you play your part in bringing about these improvements and wish you every success in the future.

David Butler

Her Majesty's Inspector