

Deptford Green School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100740
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	335593
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Meena Wood 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 of pupils on the school roll	1050
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Pennant
Headteacher	Peter Campling
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 32 lessons and held meetings with the chair of governors, leaders and managers, teaching staff, students and parents and carers. They observed the school's work in Years 9, 10 and 11 and looked at the school development plan and departmental reviews, a range of school policies, local authority reviews, governing body minutes, internal teaching and learning observations, students' work, 93 parental questionnaires, 140 pupil questionnaires and 34 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether teaching and assessment practice are sufficiently tailored to students' abilities, levels and prior attainment
- GCSE attainment and the progress of students between Years 7 and 11
- the learning and progress of individual students in lessons
- whether the curriculum meets students' needs and levels and helps raise achievement
- students' behaviour in lessons and around the school
- the capacity of leaders and managers to make sustained improvements.

Information about the school

Deptford Green School accommodates students in Years 7 and 8 and those in Years 9 to 11 on two separate sites. It has specialist status in humanities that includes English, citizenship and drama, and is an extended school. It is also a Leading Edge school and a Training School, and it has recently achieved National Healthy School Status.

The number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have statements of special educational needs is very high. Most of these students have dyslexia or speech, language or communication difficulties, while a smaller number have moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or autism. Nearly two thirds of the students are from a minority ethnic background with Black African and Caribbean being the largest groups. The number of pupils who speak languages other than English is high. The main heritage languages are Somali, Turkish and Vietnamese. A high proportion of students are in receipt of free school meals.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Deptford Green School is a satisfactory school with great strengths in its provision for students' personal development and well-being. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully addressed low attendance and punctuality and is developing an ethos of greater academic rigour for students. GCSE results have risen in previous years but fluctuated in the last two years with the 2009 cohort's results falling to well below average. However, taking into account current students' standards and their predicted outcomes, attainment is broadly average with students making satisfactory progress, despite significant variations between subjects and groups of students. Students' behaviour in Years 7 and 8 has improved significantly in recent years, and they, along with the older students, are well behaved. All students take pride in their school and most are well motivated and happy to take on responsibilities. This, along with a very diverse range of productive local and global partnerships, helps promote a truly cohesive and welcoming community for students and staff. As one parent reported, 'My children will leave school achieving their full potential, with an eagerness to learn and have respect for others.'

A satisfactory academic curriculum, with its emphasis on developing students' literacy and citizenship skills across the curriculum, especially in Years 7 and 8, is enhanced by enjoyable extra-curricular sporting and cultural activities, helping to ensure students develop into well-rounded individuals. However, the school recognises that Key Stage 4 accreditation can be better tailored to the needs of some students, leading potentially to higher attainment outcomes at 16 and beyond. Satisfactory teaching and assessment result in most students making encouraging levels of progress. In those lessons where teaching and assessment activities were well structured in line with students' abilities, inspectors observed high levels of enjoyment and engagement in learning, and students made good progress in developing independent learning skills through collaborative activities. In too many lessons, however, teachers' planning did not take the full range of students' prior attainment into account and teachers did not always check the knowledge and skills students were acquiring. Across subjects, the quality of feedback on students' written work is too variable; significant numbers do not know how to improve against their targets. Students receive good academic guidance on their next steps in Years 9 and 11 and students moving from Year 8 to Year 9 benefit from a well-structured induction into the upper school.

The headteacher and his senior team have provided strong leadership in developing a learning environment of mutual consideration and respect. A robust analysis of performance data by senior and middle managers, using new tracking systems this year, ensures the early identification of potential underachievement for all students across the

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school. According to school data, this factor, along with rigorous monitoring by managers of attendance in Year 11 subject revision classes, is predicted to have a positive impact on raising GCSE outcomes in 2010.

The school has been timely in its response to addressing weaknesses in GCSE attainment. This, along with senior managers now making support for middle managers a priority to help them address weaknesses in teaching and assessment and develop the Key Stage 4 curriculum, demonstrates that the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to ensure that the upward trend in GCSE results resumes in 2010 by:
 - matching activities and tasks consistently well to all students' abilities by using data on their prior attainment
 - checking more closely what students are learning during lessons
 - providing consistently effective marking, and informing students of how to improve on their targets through more focused guidance
 - ensuring a tighter focus on learning, progress and assessment during lesson observations by middle and senior managers
 - giving appropriate support to middle managers to help them improve the quality of teaching in their subjects.
- Conduct a thorough review of the curriculum in Key Stage 4 to ensure that students are offered the most suitable accreditation.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

After rising for some years, the number of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C fell in 2009 to well below the national average. While the school's own data suggest significant improvement in the current Year 11, there is still too much variability in progress and attainment across and within subjects and between groups of students, with girls, more able students and those on free school meals doing less well than they should. The standard of work observed by inspectors in lessons and in students' books confirmed this variation. In core subject lessons, too, many students are not achieving their potential because of low levels of challenge or insufficiently targeted activities. In the best lessons, students are responsive to well-structured paired or group tasks, actively contribute to discussions and visibly enjoy their work. Students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and with speech, communication, language difficulties and dyslexia, receive especially well-targeted support and most make good progress.

Students report that the school is a safe environment. They are aware of healthy lifestyles, although a significant number of students in the upper school do not take

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advantage of school lunches. Participation in a range of sporting activities is largely satisfactory, although popular choices like kayak and table tennis are well attended. The school's strong emphasis on restorative justice and cultural diversity has led to students having a good sense of how to behave and what is morally acceptable. Although a high number of students and some parents and staff voiced concerns about bullying, exclusions and incidents of anti-social and racist behaviour, these have reduced significantly since the last inspection. Many students are involved in shaping school activities through the school council and are keen to serve their local community by, for instance, working with the local authority and businesses on redesigning community facilities. Global fundraising activities, culturally themed assemblies, citizenship classes and mentoring responsibilities all contribute to students' outstanding moral, social, cultural and spiritual awareness. Students' punctuality and attendance are good and they display the responsible attitudes and aptitudes they need to equip them for further education and the world of work.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Relations between teachers and students are excellent. All teachers have strong subject knowledge and, in the best lessons observed by inspectors, use this and good resources to effectively inspire learning. In an art lesson, high expectations of students, along with good use of peer- and self-assessment by the teacher, encouraged high standards. In most subjects, but especially in English, a very wide range of ability groups does not always enable teachers to use the data they have on students' prior attainment to plan activities and tasks effectively for all students. This results in too much teacher input and whole-class activities for long periods of time. In these instances, too few students respond to questions or participate in discussions and a minority of students may waste time in social chatter. Not enough use is made of assessment activities to check students' learning before moving on to the next activity or input. The marking of students' work is of inconsistent quality across subjects. Even where marking is helpfully detailed, teachers do not consistently ensure that students catch up on work missed or redraft work as necessary. Not all students know what they need to do to reach their targets in individual subjects, although careful monitoring of students' attainment ensures that those who fall behind are offered regular, effective subject support.

Students and their parents receive good guidance on options in Years 9 and 11. The school offers a wide range of academic GCSEs that meet most students' needs, along with triple science and astronomy for the more able students and a Next Steps alternative college based curriculum which has enabled a small group of students to successfully pursue vocational pathways. The school is rightly reviewing its offer to find accreditations that are more appropriate to students' needs, and, additionally in 2010/11, will be offering a range of diploma courses. Students in Year 7 have especially benefited from the Transition curriculum. The school's specialist humanities status has led to links in drama with some primary schools, while all subjects include a citizenship dimension. The school offers GCSEs in community languages and has been especially successful with the number of high grades in GCSE Chinese.

Inclusion panels and good pastoral support constructively help students with their social, emotional and behavioural needs and the 'make believe arts' work helps to ease the transition into Year 7 from primary schools.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is a strongly motivated leader who, with the support of his senior

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managers, has worked hard to transform the learning culture of the school and to focus on its academic priorities; departmental plans fully reflect the need to raise Year 11 attainment. Termly areas of learning reviews effectively analyse a range of evidence including lesson observations, work samples and discussions with staff and students. These reports accurately identify weaknesses and strengths in provision and reflect inspectors' findings. Although new subject leaders have been supported in effectively analysing data relating to students' progress and attendance, they have not been sufficiently well supported in their management of teaching in relation to students' learning and progress. Moreover, the school's internal lesson observations have not focused enough on learning and whether all students make the progress of which they are capable. The school monitors students' outcomes at both individual and group level, and in line with its equalities policy, has recently identified targets such as single sex classes in science to help raise girls' achievement.

This year, advanced skills teachers are working effectively with staff on raising the quality of teaching. The sharing of good practice across subjects and key stages, which has been enhanced by the Learning Area structure, is still at early stages and could be developed further. Inspectors observed some uneven quality in a number of areas across the curriculum, such as lesson planning, lesson observations and classroom displays. However, displays of students' work around the school are imaginatively creative. Staff questionnaires and interviews by inspectors revealed a significant number of teachers who expressed a desire for more relevant, sustained professional development, sharing of good teaching practice and greater support from senior leaders on these. Support provided by the governors is satisfactory but the governing body has not challenged the school sufficiently about the quality of teaching and learning. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Much emphasis is placed by the school on equality of opportunity, the valuing of differences through cultures and religions, and the creation of a cohesive learning community. This emphasis, extended to the school's many productive local and global partnerships, effectively promotes community cohesion within and beyond the school.

Through its partnerships with schools, universities and other organisations, the school has developed a thriving extended school. This offers adult learning and parenting to local communities and, in particular, to the Somali and Vietnamese communities which have benefited significantly from strong parent partnerships and excellent mentoring links. This, in turn, has had a beneficial impact on students' personal development and well-being. Consultations with an active parent's forum on a range of issues inform subsequent school actions.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3

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The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers report favourably on the extent of their involvement in school life, their satisfaction with the school, the satisfactory levels of students' healthy lifestyles and the good pastoral and academic support received by their children. A significant number of comments were received from parents and carers who expressed a desire for more homework and more parents' evenings and information on their children's progress. A minority expressed concerns at some disruptive behaviour in class, with these parents feeling that these isolated incidents were insufficiently well dealt with. Inspectors did not find sufficient evidence to support these concerns, as the teachers and managers observed dealt effectively with any behavioural issues that arose.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Deptford Green School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 93 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,050 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	25	54	62	9	10	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	15	17	62	71	5	6	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	32	37	45	52	7	8	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	26	58	67	4	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	22	65	75	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	18	59	68	7	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	16	56	64	11	13	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	25	50	57	5	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	17	57	66	6	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	33	41	47	10	11	5	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	17	51	59	11	13	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	15	17	61	70	8	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	28	52	60	9	10	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 January 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Deptford Green School, Lewisham, SE14 6LQ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons, looking at your work and talking to you, and were impressed by how well behaved and polite you were. These were the main things we found out about your school.

- Deptford Green provides you with a satisfactory education.
- Most of you make satisfactory progress in your learning between Years 7 and 11 and attain broadly satisfactory standards of work. Through more rigorous monitoring of your attendance at additional classes, the school is helping many of you in the current Year 11 to make even better progress and attain higher standards. Congratulations on your recent GCSE results in mathematics and English!
- The care, guidance and support you receive are good. This, along with the school's range of partnerships and the external and internal responsibilities that you are involved in, helps you develop outstanding moral, social, cultural and spiritual awareness.
- The school provides you with a curriculum that broadly meets your needs and helps you, particularly those of you who take advantage of the extra-curricular activities, to develop into healthy and well-rounded young citizens.

To help the school improve further, the school's leaders have agreed to ensure that:

- all teachers consistently match lesson activities more closely to your abilities, involve all of you in your learning, ensuring that, wherever possible, you are given precise feedback on how to improve, to help you do even better in your studies
- you have a wider range of qualifications available to you in Years 9 to 11
- managers observing your lessons focus more on your learning and progress so that all of you can be helped to do as well as possible.

You can do your part by continuing to behave well, attending all lessons and studying as hard as you can. We wish you all the best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Meena Wood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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