

## Stanley Park High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number103003Local AuthoritySuttonInspection number335998

**Inspection dates** 10–11 November 2009 **Reporting inspector** Meena Wood HMI

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

Type of school

School category

Age range of pupils

Gender of pupils

Gender of pupils in the sixth form

Number of pupils on the school roll

Of which, number on roll in the sixth form

Community

11–19

Mixed

Mixed

Mixed

869

89

Appropriate authorityThe governing bodyChairMs Jane PascoeHeadteacherMr David TaylorDate of previous school inspection5 September 2006School addressStanley Park Road

Carshalton Sutton

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 Age group
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#### **Introduction**

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 40 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, and students. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan and department reviews, a range of school policies, local authority reviews, governing body minutes, internal teaching and learning observations, students' work, 229 parental questionnaires, 196 pupil questionnaires and 33 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' levels and prior attainment
- the learning and progress of individual students in lessons
- whether the curriculum in the main school and the sixth form is appropriate for the changing needs of students, and raises standards at GCSE and GCE A level
- students' behaviour in lessons and around the school.

#### Information about the school

Stanley Park High School is a small comprehensive school with a sixth form. The school has been designated by the local authority as the One School Pathfinder and is part of the Building Schools for the Future initiative in September 2011. The school has Specialist Status in Applied Learning and mathematics and computing and is the Lead school for Human Scale Education. As a provider of BTEC courses in hairdressing and motor vehicle engineering, students from five schools in the local area attend these courses in the school. The school also delivers aspects of extended schooling in collaboration with the local adult education provider and is working towards the Sustainable Schools programme.

The proportion of students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs, is significantly high; these include behavioural, emotional, social and communication needs, dyslexia and autism. There is an Autism Unit on site.

The number of students eligible for free school meals is well above average. A significantly high proportion of students join the school after the start of the school academic year. The majority of students at the school are White British, with a quarter of students from minority ethnic groups, the largest group being from Black African and White other backgrounds. An increasing number of students are at early stages of learning English, including a number of refugees and asylum seekers. The most common heritage languages spoken are Polish, Tamil and Turkish.

### **Inspection judgements**

#### Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

#### The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

#### **Main findings**

Stanley Park High School is a good school with a satisfactory sixth form. Since its last inspection, through the actions of its good leadership and management, students' outcomes at Key Stage 4 have significantly improved and are now good. Students benefit from a balanced academic and vocational curriculum that is responsive to their needs. Younger students, in particular, enjoy a well-organised skills-based approach to learning in Key Stage 3. One student summed up their experience at the school as, 'Teachers give lots of support and help us to do well in our work!'

Students enter the school with below-average attainment. As a result of satisfactory teaching and assessment in lessons, along with a range of responsive and well-structured interventions that are personalised to the range of students' learning needs, they make good progress in their time in the school to attain standards that are broadly average by end of Year 11 and 13. Learning and progress in lessons are generally strongest in Years 7 to 9, where some excellent teaching was observed. Students' learning and progress in some lessons, especially in Years 10 and 11 in English and mathematics, are slower as teachers do not always take students' prior attainment fully into account when planning lessons. However, there is good assessment for learning practice across some other subjects, but this is not shared across the departments. Areas highlighted by inspection activity as inconsistent are ensuring that students catch up on work missed or redraft work as necessary, and teachers checking what knowledge and skills students are acquiring in lessons and subsequently, planning appropriate tasks and activities to meet their different learning needs.

Students receive very good academic guidance on their next steps in Years 8 and 9 through a 'mini' options process that enables them to gain tasters of the courses they may wish to undertake. This explains the significantly high outcomes achieved at 16 in five A\* to C GCSEs (excluding mathematics and English) that enables students to progress to further education, training and employment. The harmonious and cohesive ethos of the school greatly enhances students' own attitudes to learning. Overall, students are very well behaved in lessons and the majority are respectful and well motivated and take responsibility for their own safety. This helps to explain why personal development outcomes are so strong.

The headteacher has provided strong leadership in conveying a vision of high expectations. Together with his managers and staff, he has successfully tackled key weaknesses in student outcomes in the main school. This has moved the school on apace from the satisfactory outcomes judged at the last inspection and demonstrates good capacity for further improvement. The school is now focusing its attention on the sixth form in order to make improvements in curriculum and guidance on subject

choices so as to further improve recruitment, retention and outcomes in the current year.

#### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve learning in lessons through:
  - matching activities and tasks to students' abilities
  - consistently effective marking and ensuring students redraft their work and catch up on work missed
  - a greater focus on learning, progress and assessment during internal lesson observations
- Ensure that there is a clear drive on raising sixth form standards for current and future AS and A2 students that promotes higher levels of recruitment and retention through:
  - developing curriculum and progression pathways that are more responsive to the intake for 2010/11
  - more appropriate guidance on subject choices in Key Stages 4 to 5 geared to the more appropriate curriculum offer.

#### Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Over the last three years, students' standards have risen and current Year 11 students are set to attain broadly average standards. Progress is especially good in Key Stage 3, with most students meeting nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science. The school has put effective support and interventions in place for a significant number of underachieving groups of students that enable them to make good progress. These include students in the Autism Unit, those identified with moderate learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, and those identified with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Students who enter the school as casual admissions after the start of the academic year, many of whom have a history of poor attendance and are living in challenging circumstances, are well supported during transition and enabled to make good progress. Outcomes for students who are refugees or asylum seekers and are at early stages of English acquisition are good owing to the well-targeted, inclusive support they receive during lessons.

In a number of lessons observed by inspectors, students were well motivated and enjoyed their learning. They displayed responsible cooperative relations with one another, which resulted in productive team working and focused peer assessment. In the best lessons, careful matching of the work to individual needs and good assessment techniques, such as open-ended questioning to check students' understanding, help ensure rapid progress. Occasionally, however, learning opportunities are missed because too few students engage in responding to questions or participating in discussions. Where learning is slowed, it is usually because too much time is spent on teacher input and whole-class activities that some students find too easy and others too difficult.

Students report that they feel safe in the school. The uptake of sporting activities is high and students adopt healthy lifestyles, particularly benefiting from the on-site Fitness Studio facilities for extra-curricular activities. They enjoy participating in a wide range of activities outside the school. These include Year 9 students on childcare courses working in nurseries and primary schools, and students following horticulture courses and developing a local allotment. As a result of the religious education GCSE that all students follow, their fundraising activities and voluntary working in local primary schools, students' moral, cultural and spiritual awareness is good and they make a strong contribution to local and international communities.

Students behave very well in and out of lessons and levels of exclusions have significantly decreased. This has contributed to the overall positive ethos in the school. Students' attendance has improved owing to the rigorous efforts of school managers and at the time of inspection was in line with the national average. Punctuality has improved and students demonstrate a high sense of responsibility in reaching their lessons on time. However, a very small minority are regularly late for school at the start of the day. In a few instances, students arriving at school at the start of the day without the correct school uniform are sent home and so miss their learning for a part of the day. The school is aware that whilst this may contribute to the positive ethos of the school, it may also have a negative impact on those individual students' attendance and standards.

Students' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are satisfactory and most are able to demonstrate the wider skills and aptitudes they will 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			
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3		
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2		
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress			
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2		
Pupils' behaviour	2		
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2		
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community			

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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

The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

#### How effective is the provision?

Common features of the good quality teaching seen by inspectors were the use of good group and pair work. For instance, Year 10 English students studying the anthology of poems from other cultures developed good higher-order thinking skills as they assessed each other's knowledge of language and context. In a Year 7 geography lesson with a thematic approach, students studying the history of Roman Britain worked on mind maps and were encouraged to develop independent and collaborative skills through sharing research and were clearly enjoying the challenges of finding out information and working in teams. A number of lessons, especially in Years 10 and 11, lack challenge and unclear learning objectives as all students, regardless of their learning styles and ability, are required to complete the same tasks, in the same length of time. This leads to some students not understanding or enjoying their learning and not making the progress they could.

There is an inconsistency in the quality of marking and assessment of progress provided to students on a day-to-day basis. Following written feedback to students, teachers do not always ensure that corrections or amendments to work are implemented or that work missed through absence is completed. In some cases marking is not sufficiently informative.

Individual and small group academic support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is mostly good, and for students at early stages of learning English is very good. These students are all well integrated in the school. However, during some lessons, learning support assistants and teachers working with these students are not consistently providing them, along with other students, with the materials and activities that are best structured to their abilities and pace of learning.

Staff track students' progress regularly and those who fall behind are offered good targeted support through booster classes. Students who are unable to complete their homework make good use of the learning resource centre, staffed by learning support assistants during break times. The school works with a range of agencies that provide excellent support for vulnerable students, especially those who are in care of the council. Induction and transition arrangements for students joining school at all times are well structured.

The Key Stage 3 curriculum was redesigned in 2008 as an Excellent Futures Themed Curriculum, which develops 12 skills, including the key skills of presentation and team working, drawing on core knowledge from National Curriculum subjects. The school's evaluation of this demonstrates that it successfully meets students' learning needs and abilities. Students are advised very well on their choice of subjects in Key Stage 4 and

they benefit from a broad range of academic and vocational GCSEs. The specialist provision has had a good impact on the school and its local community through partnerships with local schools, businesses and further education institutions. The school has recently developed extra-curricular provision for gifted and talented students, although inspectors did not observe more able students in lessons being consistently challenged through activities and tasks. There is a strong provision of extra-curricular sporting activities with very good take-up from both girls and boys.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

#### How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a relentless drive and high aspirations. His ambition to improve achievement and standards in the school for all groups of students is shared by his staff. The school self-evaluation and planning process is analytical, with departmental plans fully aligned with key whole-school priorities. However, these evaluations have not provided a realistic detailed appraisal of teaching and the assessment of learning and progress as the school's internal observations are focused on teaching and do not have sufficient emphasis on learning and progress. Sharing of good practice through peer observations is not yet widespread, but is recognised as the way forward by middle managers. Through sound analysis of its data, the headteacher, assistant headteacher and areas of learning leaders have a good grasp of students' progress. Through the robust challenge and support they receive from their governors, and external support from the local authority, the school has been successful in exceeding the targets set for students this year.

The governing body has good leadership and the role of the link governor has helped the school monitor teaching and learning and its finances with rigour. Along with improving standards, the school has invested in buildings and specialist equipment that have significantly improved the environment for learning. The school provides good value for money and has now achieved the Financial Management Standard.

Community cohesion is good as the school has established good international links with schools abroad and in the local community. Students engage in a range of cultural activities and visits. Students in Key Stage 3 have sound opportunities to understand common identity and values in the 'Our Bubble' unit of work. Managers and the governing body gather evidence of community cohesion and equalities activities on student outcomes; however, these have yet to be fully assessed centrally in terms of the

impact.

The school satisfactorily fulfils its statutory duties in terms of equalities, but there is little focus on gender and the direct impact of actions on race and disability have not been fully audited to assess effectiveness. Safeguarding procedures and risk assessments are very robust, but need to be more systematic in implementation.

The nurturing of respect for the school environment and a good code of behaviour is at the heart of the school's ethos. The school has ensured that its communication with parents and carers is strong, as echoed by one parent: 'the school has a very good headteacher and supporting staff who have high standards and expectations and I believe my child will have the opportunity to do well'.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account:  The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	2

#### Sixth form

Outcomes for students in this small sixth form are satisfactory overall. Standards in GCE A level are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory overall. Higher levels of learning and progress are made by students in GCE A2 lessons than in GCE AS lessons and there are variations between subjects. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Inspectors observed examples of teaching and assessment that encouraged students to research, debate and present their findings so as to develop critical and higher-order thinking skills. Students' attitudes to work are good; they are well motivated and display a high level of personal responsibility.

The curriculum does not match the needs of all students, a number of whom require courses at levels one and two and at level three in vocational rather than academic

subjects. As a result, guidance on subject choice in the sixth form is a relative weakness, whereas academic guidance that informs students on their progress against targets and how to improve is good. The school has sound plans this year for developing curriculum pathways, Key Stage 4 to 5 for instance, through the development of BTEC courses. This will give greater continuity between the different key stages and enable students to progress and stay on course through to Year 13.

Retention of students in Year 12 is low but has improved in the last year, as has the recruitment of students in Year 12. Opportunities for enrichment, including fundraising activities, are satisfactory and students are enthusiastic about these.

Leadership and management of the sixth form are satisfactory There has been a high turnover in senior staff in the last three years. The assistant head who has been in post as head of sixth form in the last year demonstrates a good understanding of areas of development and has coherent plans for improving the quality of curriculum, teaching and learning. The school recognises that there is an urgent need to establish greater stability and autonomy for the head of sixth form post for improvements to take place in the current year.

#### These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

#### **Views of parents and carers**

The majority of parents and carers believed that in their view the school provides their children with a good standard of education. While the majority report favourably on the extent of their involvement in school life, a significant number of comments were received from parents who expressed a desire for more regular marking of homework and better communication with subject tutors and the school on issues such as school closures, student progress meetings and the new Key Stage 3 curriculum. Most value the additional support that staff give to their children if they are struggling with aspects of their work.

#### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stanley Park High 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 229 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 869 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Stro Agı	ngly ree	Agı	ree	Disa	gree		ngly gree
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	34	139	61	9	4	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	67	29	155	68	3	1	1	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	69	30	140	61	12	5	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	65	28	135	59	16	7	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	63	28	144	63	10	4	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	22	147	64	16	7	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	22	149	65	16	7	2	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)	58	25	131	57	7	3	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	25	148	65	13	6	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	71	31	134	59	10	4	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	19	141	62	17	7	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	90	39	123	54	7	3	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	92	40	127	56	2	1	3	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 oustanding 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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:	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.
	<ul> <li>The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>The quality of teaching.</li> <li>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.



12 November 2009

**Dear Students** 

Inspection of Stanley Park High School, Stanley Park Road, Sutton SM5 3HP

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons, looking at the work that you brought to our meetings and talking with you. These are the main points we liked about your school.

- Stanley Park High School provides you with a good educational experience.
- The care, guidance and support you receive are good and help you develop into responsible young people who behave well and value the good relationships with teachers and each other. For those of you who need additional support and guidance in your studies, this is provided and you are able to make informed choices about which courses to follow in Years 9, 10 and 11.
- The headteacher and staff have worked hard to improve the school and to help you make good progress in your studies.
- The school provides you with a curriculum that meets your needs, and in particular, in Years 7 and 8, the Excellent Futures Curriculum helps you develop a wide range of skills such as team working and presentational skills.

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

- teachers match lesson activities to your abilities, consistently mark your class and homework and ensure that, wherever possible, you correct your work and catch-up on work missed, to help you do even better in your studies
- managers observing your lessons focus more on your learning and progress and how teachers assess this, so that all of you are helped to make greater progress and achieve higher standards
- managers and teachers in the sixth form put in place a more appropriate curriculum and guidance that help you choose the best courses, enjoy learning, stay on course and attain higher standards.

You can do your part to help by continuing to behave well and attending school regularly and punctually. We wish you all the best for your studies and the future.

Yours sincerely

Meena Wood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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