

Langdon Park Community School

Bright Street, London E14 0RZ

Inspection dates	29–30 June 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders' work to create a culture of ambition and high aspiration is driving sustained improvements in the standard of education.
- The school's assessment system closely monitors pupils' progress, enabling leaders to intervene quickly and address underperformance. Interventions are timely and effective.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers use questioning skilfully to probe pupils' understanding and plan activities that meet most pupils' needs.
- Teachers provide incisive and effective feedback which pupils can use to take their learning forward.
- The school's work to support vulnerable pupils secures smooth transitions as pupils move from primary school. Local partnerships, combined with a strong school focus upon ensuring progress from the beginning of Year 7, are improving outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance and punctuality are high and there are effective systems in place to support pupils who struggle.
- Pupils' outcomes at GCSE improved markedly last year and that trend continues. The proportion of pupils gaining at least five GCSEs at grade A* to C, including English and mathematics, was well above average and pupils' progress is greatly improved.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress towards outcomes in line with their peers nationally.
- The sixth form is good. Now in its third year, the cohort and curriculum in 16 to 19 study programmes are expanding rapidly. Leaders work closely with students to ensure that they study the best programme that suits their needs and make progress towards ambitious targets.
- Enrichment opportunities such as clubs, competitions and charity work complement an effective programme of personal development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders and governors do not evaluate all aspects of the school's work sharply. Development planning is detailed but some leaders' work is not rigorously reviewed to support further planning.
- The most able pupils are not consistently stretched to achieve their best in all subjects.
- White British pupils do not make enough progress from their starting points.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that leaders and governors thoroughly evaluate the impact of all initiatives on pupils' progress.
- Improve outcomes for White British and the most able pupils by ensuring that teachers across year groups and subjects use assessment information consistently to plan activities that meets these pupils' needs.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has worked determinedly to improve the standard of education that pupils experience. He recognised that much work was needed to raise the level of expectation within the school and to heighten aspirations through better teaching and high-quality opportunities for personal development. This ambition is having the targeted effect; pupils are keen to learn and teachers are delivering better lessons consistently.
- Leaders have a full and accurate understanding about the progress the school has made since the last inspection. Leaders' evaluation reflects careful consideration of the way their work has brought about change and informs their plans for development. Development planning identifies key priorities within time-bound goals that filter into department planning and teachers' appraisal. Leaders have received effective support from the local authority and other external partners to help guide their planning.
- The sixth form is well led and managed. Leaders' ambition is reflected in their dedication to developing the sixth form, which they view as an aspirational target for younger pupils to aim for.
- The curriculum is well matched to pupils' abilities and develops their skills for later life well. Close work with the Poplar Partnership of primary schools enables leaders to know and understand pupils' needs before they join in Year 7.
- Subject leaders and heads of year understand their role in raising standards and are held to account through presentations to governors. Middle leaders use regular cycles of checking pupils' work across their areas of responsibility and closely monitor pupils' progress. Underperformance is responded to quickly through lesson-based and extra-curricular interventions. The 'Ensuring Student Success' programme has been particularly effective in identifying underperformance and rapidly improving pupils' progress.
- Leaders have secured pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through well-planned activities in addition to regular routines within the school. Pupils are provided with opportunities to reflect upon their place in the world in subjects and during events such as 'Debate mate', developing a clear sense of their contribution to life in modern Britain. This school is a key contributor to the local authority's food bank and pupils take pride in the impact of their role in the community. Students in the sixth form enjoy weekly enrichment sessions, some of which involve input from other sixth forms within the Sixth Form East consortium.
- Teachers, including those who are newly qualified, have personal development targets that are closely linked to the school's development plans. A cycle of review, supported by trained coaches, and teacher working parties help teachers develop their skills and encourage them to plan creative lessons. Further work remains to be done to ensure that leaders know the precise effect of each professional development strategy so that underperforming aspects can be quickly identified.
- The school receives a significant amount of pupil premium funding which is well used to support disadvantaged pupils' progress so that it is consistently now in line with their peers. Leaders and governors have secured the school's financial sustainability through a local authority-mandated deficit reduction programme.
- Leaders have worked extensively on developing closer relationships with parents in order to further secure pupils' progress. The school's survey information indicates that this is effective, with the majority of parents now attending parents' evenings and other information events. Parents' responses to Ofsted's survey indicate a recognition of improved communication with parents.
- There is variability in the extent to which leaders' actions are fully evaluated over a year. For example, leaders regularly evaluate the impact of the school's comprehensive intervention programme. However, leaders have not established a system to evaluate the impact of the enrichment programme. Similarly, it is not clear where responsibility for the catch-up programme sits.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors know the school well through regular visits and informative meetings. Governors recognise what has been done to improve pupils' outcomes through better-quality teaching but are not complacent about the gains that have been made. They value the external support provided through the local authority and other parties, who offer different perspectives when holding leaders to account.
 - Governors support leaders in ensuring that pupils receive equal opportunities through their probing of data on pupils' outcomes, attendance and behaviour. Governors are informed about and take part in

many activities to support pupils' personal development, such as careers events.

- Governors' overview of most aspects of the school's work is detailed and accurate. Governors have introduced new procedures where weaknesses existed in the past.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff and governors are well trained through regular updates on issues such as female genital mutilation and forced marriage. The school was part of the Tower Hamlets pilot for developing school approaches to tackling extremism and the 'Prevent' duty. Staff are able to identify signs of risk and use school systems to ensure pupils' well-being. There is a strong focus upon raising pupils' awareness of national and local issues. They are taught about e-safety and pupils told inspectors that they appreciate the support they receive in understanding the risks of abuse and recreational drugs. The school works closely with external agencies and draws upon appropriate expertise when required. Checks are made relating to staff's suitability to work with children prior to employment. These are stored on the single central register, which required some administrative corrections during the inspection but is compliant. Staff, leaders and governors know and demonstrate their duty to keeping children safe and this is reflected by parents' views through Ofsted's and the school's own surveys.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers model leaders' high expectations in their work with pupils. Not only is this supporting pupils' positive attitudes to learning but it has helped to generate clear, well-rehearsed and respected routines that underpin more effective learning.
- The school's assessment system is embedded across departments. Subject leaders choose to adopt particular approaches to assessment that suit the skills and knowledge being taught. The consistency of tracking and monitoring of pupils' performance in all year groups means that underperformance is identified and quickly addressed. The information that results from moderated assessments is used by teachers to inform parents about their child's progress. Subject leaders' evaluation of their teachers' use of assessment is accurate.
- Pupils understand how to make good progress in their learning due to the consistent use of probing and effective feedback. Where this is most effective, leaders' aim of greater teacher and pupil dialogue allows pupils to reflect on their mistakes and correct them, avoiding the same mistakes again. Pupils are keen to engage in discussion about their work and they told inspectors about how teachers 'go the extra mile' to help them.
- The school's focus upon developing literacy and numeracy across all subjects is well developed. In mathematics, literacy is enhanced through pupils writing solutions to problems in full text, demonstrating both their writing skill and development of mastery of the subject.
- Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their extended writing skills across the curriculum. In humanities subjects pupils write about historical and geographical themes, receiving support to develop their use of specialist terms. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and regularly borrow from the well-stocked library.
- Teachers value the professional development opportunities that the school offers. They take advantage of the working parties that explore different aspects of leaders' plans for development while taking on key messages from training sessions to improve their skills. Underperformance is quickly identified and supported to improve, which has strengthened the consistency of good or better teaching across the school.
- Newly qualified teachers reported their enthusiasm for their work, which is closely supported by the school's comprehensive programme. Teachers at all stages in their careers are able to access the professional development opportunities created, and most opt into the voluntary aspects to develop their skills.
- Teachers set homework that extends learning from lessons. The best examples encourage pupils to think deeply about the topic and encourage pupils to enquire. This encouragement is further supported by the well-maintained displays on classroom walls, which celebrate pupils' achievement, support good behaviours and motivate pupils' own questioning.
- Teachers use questioning to probe and challenge, encouraging pupils to develop their thinking. Teachers draw upon their strong subject knowledge to develop more complex concepts and capture the imagination. Teachers occasionally miss these opportunities, which means that pupils' progress is not as rapid, particularly that of the most able.
- White British pupils continue to underperform. Although the focus of a whole-school programme, the

impact of that in too many lessons is not clear. Where attitudes to learning were weak during the inspection, inspectors noted that it was usually where this group of pupils were not engaged with the lesson. This is reflected in White British pupils' books, where progress was typically weaker.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. School systems are well used by staff that care about their pupils' future prospects.
- Teachers make visits to pupils' primary schools prior to them joining in Year 7 in order to smooth their transition into secondary school. As a result, pupils make friends quickly and get to know school routines that make them feel comfortable. Teachers also know what level to plan their lessons to in order to avoid a dip in performance at the start of secondary school.
- The school's inclusion unit provides a central point of support to vulnerable pupils. The team of dedicated staff work to provide pupils with care and support so that behavioural or health issues do not create unavoidable barriers to learning.
- Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their physical well-being through the physical education curriculum and through sports clubs. Pupils are encouraged to make healthy eating choices, which forms part of the strategy to develop pupils' independence. The school is part of the 'Year here' programme, which means that pupils benefit from focused social enterprise programmes delivered by recent graduates.
- Pupils reported to inspectors that they feel that there is a sense of community in the school. Pupils look out for one another and report that incidents of bullying are rare. Should incidents arise, they are quickly addressed. Sixth-form students act as role models to the younger year groups and also provide mentoring support to pupils as they join the school.
- The support and guidance that pupils receive, particularly when making decisions about their subsequent education, training and employment, is a strength of the school. Pupils know what their choices can lead on to, so they understand the implication of their decisions. Close relationships with nearby businesses have created excellent opportunities for pupils to experience work placements and benefit from dedicated work-related enrichment days delivered by external speakers.
- Leaders are sensitive to pupils' and their parents' feedback, responding to concerns and being proactive about gathering feedback in order to make further improvements. Consequently pupils feel listened to and parents are increasingly engaged with the school's work to support pupils' development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' conduct around the school demonstrates a culture of respect and tolerance that supports the underlying ethos of this community school. All staff hold high expectations for pupils' behaviour, and this high bar is met by most pupils, who recognise the positive effect this is having on their learning.
- Pupils are well prepared when they arrive in lessons. Punctuality is good, with pupils rarely late to lessons. The school's rules and expectations are clearly signposted around the school and pupils respond well to reminders from teachers if their behaviour slips. Where behaviour in lessons is less strong, it is when pupils are not being stretched or their particular needs are not met.
- Attendance across all year groups continues to be better than the average in secondary schools, and is supported by systems that pupils and staff understand well. Because of leaders' work to improve attitudes to learning, pupils are voting with their feet and enjoy coming to school.
- Exclusions have gone up marginally in the past two years, following the headteacher's raised expectations for pupils' behaviour. The combination of close pastoral support and the inclusion unit is supporting better behaviours, but where pupils fall short leaders are uncompromising in their response. Governors support this approach robustly.
- The school site is tidy and well respected by pupils and staff. Inspectors found no instances of graffiti and observed pupils playing games and talking to one another. Pupils were often keen to express their fondness of the school to inspectors. Pupils' work is celebrated around the school and maintains the ethos of ambition and a 'can do' attitude.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' outcomes are continuing to improve from a strong set of GCSE results last year. From relatively low starting points pupils made sound progress in 2015 overall, with many more pupils than in previous years gaining five GCSEs at grade A* to C, including English and mathematics. Most pupils made the level of progress expected in both English and mathematics, an improvement on previous years.
- As a result of the school's work to raise aspirations and encourage pupils to take pride in their achievements, pupils' attendance at GCSE revision sessions before and after school, and at weekends, regularly exceeded 80% of the year group. Consequently pupils' performance in the school's Year 11 mock examinations show stronger progress than last year.
- The school's assessment system draws from assessed work that is moderated to ensure consistency and accuracy. This information indicates further improvements in GCSE outcomes and progress this year, with the gap between boys' and girls' progress narrowing compared to last year.
- Historically, too many pupils were entered for only one science GCSE and outcomes were poor. This has been addressed so that most pupils will now attain at least two GCSEs in science and current information indicates strong progress towards better outcomes. There was also a gap in progress between English and mathematics, which is closing as a result of work to improve literacy and numeracy earlier in pupils' secondary schooling.
- Disadvantaged pupils continue to make good progress towards outcomes that are at least in line with their peers. As the majority of the school's pupil population are eligible for pupil premium funding, their progress is a key priority for teachers.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have underperformed in the past. Their progress is supported by a dedicated team of trained adults who support their work in lessons and provide additional support outside of class time. Pupils' individual needs are well catered for as a result, and their progress towards the same aspirational targets as their peers has improved.
- Literacy support, particularly for pupils who speak English as an additional language, is strong. Pupils acquire key language skills quickly in order to access the learning across the rest of the curriculum. Lower-attaining pupils' numeracy is developed less quickly outside of mathematics lessons.
- Inspectors found that pupils' work in books reflects the assessment information used by the school to inform interventions and support. Pupils make good progress when they are challenged and work is closely aligned to their needs. White British and the most able pupils make slower progress than they could, because teaching does not always meet their needs. This is a consistent picture across year groups although in some subjects, such as physical education, White British pupils do better. In mathematics and English the most able pupils are making stronger progress than in science. The White British most able pupils, however, make slower progress than their peers.
- The school's curriculum and assessment system is designed to allow pupils to excel. The advice and guidance that pupils receive to support their decision making means that potential barriers to a smooth transition are minimised. A careers advisor from the local authority works with a team drawn from across the school's staff and governors to provide opportunities for pupils to make informed decisions about their subsequent education, training and employment.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- Leaders of this small but rapidly growing sixth form are tenacious in their drive for improving outcomes for their students. Leaders have a detailed understanding of students' needs and work hard to support their academic and personal development.
- The curriculum offer has expanded rapidly since the sixth form opened in September 2013. Leaders manage the curriculum to provide opportunities to pupils, who join with typically lower prior attainment at GCSE. Students are closely monitored prior to joining the sixth form to ensure that their study programmes are right for them and are provided with extensive support in the decision-making process. The curriculum is then shaped around students' needs and most students continue through to the end of Year 13.
- Vulnerable students are particularly well catered for by the foundation programme that includes a specialised skills development course for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The majority of students continue their education after the sixth form by going to university or pursuing work-related courses and apprenticeships. Sixth-form leaders have cultivated strong links with London

businesses and universities, who provide chances for students to experience work placements and develop life skills.

- The sixth form is part of a local consortium, Sixth Form East, where schools work together to plan and deliver enrichment activities. This is appreciated by students, who were keen to tell inspectors about the opportunities they have been provided with to deal with contemporary issues. For example, these have included conflict resolution and Britain's European Union referendum.
- Students know how to keep themselves and each other safe, telling inspectors about the strong sense of camaraderie that exists. Students who join the sixth form settle in quickly, making friends and feeling welcomed.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in 16 to 19 study programmes is good. Teachers draw upon strong subject knowledge to plan lessons that help students meet the demands of level 3 courses. However, the most able are not always stretched enough and teachers recognise that sometimes they do not give students opportunities to fully explore their ideas.
- Outcomes from 16 to 19 study programmes are improving this year. Last year's A-level students made progress broadly in line with their peers nationally from low starting points. The few who pursued work-related or applied courses made stronger progress. Very few students resit either GCSE English or mathematics, and those who do often already have a C grade and are looking to improve on it to support their university applications. Current assessment information indicates an improving trend, with outcomes projected to be stronger overall.

School details

Unique reference number	100966
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10011883

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	952
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Cruse
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Richard Fitzgerald
Telephone number	020 7987 4811
Website	www.langdonparkschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@langdonpark.org
Date of previous inspection	16–17 January 2014

Information about this school

- Langdon Park Community School is an average-sized 11 to 18 secondary school with a far higher than average proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for disadvantaged children and children looked after).
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils in receipt of an education, health and care plan.
- The majority of pupils are from Asian or Asian British ethnic backgrounds. Other ethnic groups are in the minority.
- English is spoken as an additional language by the majority of pupils.
- The school receives support from Tower Hamlets' school improvement services.
- A small number of pupils receive alternative provision from City Gateway.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the impact of catch-up premium on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 42 lessons, with many accompanied by senior leaders.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised during observations of learning and outside of lessons. Subject leaders joined inspectors for analysis of pupils' books.
- Inspectors met with staff, including the school's senior leadership, governors and the school's external support partners, including from the local authority. Inspectors spoke to pupils both formally and informally.
- The views expressed by 10 parents through Ofsted's online survey Parent View were considered.
- Documents were scrutinised, including: minutes of governor meetings; assessment and attendance information; procedures and policies; the school's evaluation of its current performance and leaders' plans for development; and the single central register of checks made on staff.
- Years 11 and 13 were on examination leave at the time of the inspection.

Inspection team

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Sunday Ellis	Ofsted Inspector
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