

Rokeby School

Barking Road, Newham, London, E16 4DD

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students make good progress in a wide range of subjects and this has resulted in good examination results overall.
- Teaching is typically good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers use a range of approaches, have strong subject knowledge and work successfully with high levels of commitment to secure effective learning.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very constructive and this supports a positive and competitive learning environment across the school.
- Good teaching results in extremely well-motivated students and good achievement. Students are very well prepared for further education or training.
- Leadership and management are effective. The pursuit of excellence is evident and results in good quality teaching and leads to good achievement.
- Behaviour is good. The school is a welcoming and safe place where students are well cared for. They are very proud to be part of Rokeby School.
- Attendance has improved continuously since the previous inspection. The need to use fixed-term exclusions has reduced and exclusion rates are now below the national average.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teaching is not consistently outstanding. A minority of teachers do not provide all students with enough opportunities to extend and develop their understanding. At times, not enough challenge is provided early in lessons, particularly for the most-able students.
- A minority of middle leaders have not acted effectively enough to ensure that the few remaining weaknesses in teaching and learning are eliminated.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 48 lessons, of which eight were observed jointly with senior staff.
- Discussions were held with groups of students from different age groups.
- As well as evaluating students' written work and teachers' marking during lessons, inspectors also scrutinised a sample of books.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body and of the local authority, the headteacher, senior staff and middle leaders.
- Inspectors evaluated school documentation, including information on 2013 GCSE results, students' current progress, the curriculum and improvement plans, as well as procedures and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of a parental survey organised by the school, 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 48 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors studied the school's self-evaluation and achievement tracking procedures.

Inspection team

Philip Storey, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Maggie Brady	Additional Inspector
Beverley Dobson	Additional Inspector
Marion Hobbs	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average boys secondary school.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The vast majority of students are from a wide range of ethnic minority groups. A very high proportion of students, more than six times the national average, speak English as an additional language.
- Compared with the national average, there is a high proportion of students who join or leave the school other than at the usual times. Approximately two thirds of the students who start in Year 7 are still on roll to take their GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs who receive support at school action is below the national average. The proportion of students who are supported at school action plus or who have statements of special educational needs is slightly above the national average.
- The school does not educate any students off site.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families) is well above average. Currently, there are no service family children on roll and the number of looked after children is low.
- Slightly more than one quarter of Year 7 students are eligible for catch-up funding, which is for pupils who did not achieve the expected level in reading and/or mathematics at the end of primary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of lessons where teaching and learning are outstanding by ensuring that all teachers:
 - have a strong focus on providing greater challenge at an earlier stage in lessons, particularly for the more able students
 - set challenging tasks which promote and extend higher-level thinking.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management, building on the good practice of the majority of leaders in the monitoring of the quality of teaching so that the very best practices are shared and adopted by all teachers.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school with attainment significantly lower than national averages. Good teaching, close monitoring and effective support result in most students making good progress and achieving well by the end of Year 11.
- In GCSE mathematics, students do particularly well.
- The proportion of students achieving five good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, has declined over the last two years. This was due partly to the students' declining and particularly low levels of attainment on entry to the school in Year 7.
- Although the percentage of students achieving A* to C grades across most subjects is typically above national averages, the proportion of students achieving these grades in English and core science dipped in 2013. However, taking into account their starting points, a greater proportion of these students than nationally made or exceeded the expected levels of progress in English and science. The actions taken by leaders are already having a strong impact in these areas and the school's accurate internal data show the attainment in Year 11 is now rising rapidly.
- The percentage of students achieving A and A* grades across a range of subjects is generally in line with the national average.
- Students with special educational needs make good progress across the majority of subjects, particularly in English and mathematics. An appropriate curriculum, good quality teaching and additional support are effective in helping students to achieve well, especially in reading.
- The school has provided additional tuition for targeted students supported by the pupil premium and ensured that they have appropriate resources to secure good progress, particularly in English and mathematics. These students make better progress than the same group nationally.
- In 2013, students receiving the pupil premium attained above the national average point scores for this group of students in GCSE English and mathematics. The gap between this group of students and others at the school is now closing rapidly. Between 2012 and 2013, the progress of these students closed the gap on other Year 11 students both at the school and nationally. Their progress in English and mathematics is now broadly in line with that of other students at the school.
- Students are not entered for GCSE examinations early.
- Students with low-level reading skills at the end of Key Stage 2 and are eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported, resulting in much improved confidence in their own comprehension skills.
- Students from different minority ethnic backgrounds make progress broadly in line with the progress of the same groups nationally.
- The large number of students who speak English as an additional language make more progress in English and mathematics than the national average for these students.
- Because students make good progress and achieve well, they are well prepared for their next steps in education or training.
- In the overwhelming majority of lessons observed, the achievement of most pupils was good. However, in a small proportion of lessons, the achievement of some of the more able students could have been extended even further.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is typically good and frequently outstanding in English, mathematics, science, humanities, technology subjects and art. Teaching was particularly effective in two Year 11 mathematics lessons because the teachers used extremely skilled questioning to challenge students of all abilities. Consequently, students worked with determination and grew in confidence to try things out for themselves, experiment and not be afraid to learn from their

mistakes. The more able students were encouraged to teach new concepts to others. This generated searching questions, helping to clarify the understanding of all students. In another lesson, students explored the mathematical vocabulary within questions and the teacher had high expectations, which ensured that students demonstrated excellent attention to detail when carrying out calculations. An activity in which students were challenged to identify mistakes in an incorrect model answer helped to minimise the likelihood of students making those errors. Mathematical concepts were brought to life by encouraging students to explore the correlation between smoking and life expectancy.

- Work is well marked. Throughout the school, teachers and students communicate through written and oral feedback; this includes regular reference to how students can improve. However, occasionally students do not act fully on the advice given. Students' written work is sometimes too brief, so that opportunities for writing practice and for increasing their depth of understanding are not always maximised.
- There is a strong emphasis on self- and peer-assessment, which supports good progress.
- High-quality homework is set and marked regularly.
- Support staff, including teaching assistants, ensure there is an effective balance of support and challenge for those they are responsible for.
- Basic literacy skills are supported successfully, not only in English lessons. Students are encouraged to practise their literacy skills and benefit from additional support.
- In sessions where teaching is of good quality, teachers:
 - use probing questioning to explore students' understanding and develop their understanding and higher-level thinking skills
 - plan carefully to ensure work is set according to students' personal needs
 - provide well-organised, adult-supported activities to encourage good progress
 - tour the classroom skilfully, offering extra advice and support.
- In lessons where teaching is less effective:
 - more challenging activities are provided too late, particularly for more-able students, resulting in a slow pace and more limited progress
 - teachers do not always ensure that all students fully understand the instructions given and that they are clear about what they need to do
 - group work is not structured enough, so that not all students have clearly defined roles.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- There is a good ambiance in the school. It provides students with a safe environment and they respond politely, sensibly and considerately.
- Relationships are good and there are high levels of mutual respect all round. Very high quality care and support staff effectively provide for those students who are most vulnerable.
- Positive attitudes to learning go hand in hand with good behaviour. There are occasional instances when a minority of students are prone to lose concentration in class, but this is usually when they are not suitably challenged.
- The school promotes a noteworthy thirst for knowledge in the vast majority of students, so that they take great pride in themselves and their school. These attributes contribute to the very positive ethos and the successful learning environment.
- Students are keen to come to school and eagerly make use of the impressive sports facilities outside normal school hours.
- The school has effective procedures in place for monitoring and improving attendance and focuses consistently on those students who regularly miss school. As a result, attendance continues to improve and is slightly above the national average.
- The school's records show that the use of fixed-term exclusions is below the national average, and declining. The school has high expectations of students and sets clear boundaries to ensure that the school community is settled and productive. Effective support is in place to address any

potential behaviour issues.

- Students report that bullying and discrimination, in particular, are rare and are confident that the school deals effectively with any that do occur. Students appreciate that victimisation can take different forms, such as cyber bullying, racism and homophobia. They are aware of how to keep safe and stay healthy.
- Students say that behaviour is typically good in lessons and learning is only very rarely hindered by other students losing concentration.
- The school places a great emphasis on developing students as leaders. Student prefects and students in the 'Harmony' team take very seriously the responsibilities afforded to them. These students, together with many others, are developing good leadership qualities. They serve as strong role models, making a significant contribution to the extremely supportive atmosphere at Rokeby School.
- Of the parents and carers who completed the online Parent View survey, virtually all said they would recommend the school, strongly believing that behaviour is very good and that everyone is kept safe.
- Those staff who responded to a questionnaire are positive about students' behaviour and are proud to work at Rokeby School.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads with passion, drive and a steely determination to achieve exceptionally high standards across all areas of the school. Together with her senior and middle leaders, the headteacher works tirelessly to ensure that weaknesses are identified and eradicated. As a result, this is a highly cohesive, positive and hard-working school where morale among staff is high and there is a collective commitment to improvement.
- The school has thorough and accurate data to track the progress and attainment of students as well as the quality of teaching.
- The headteacher, senior and most middle leaders are very clear about how the school can improve further. Detailed and effective plans are being carried out to make sure that these improvements are fully secure. However, a minority of middle leaders are not as effective as their colleagues in monitoring teaching. Consequently, some aspects of best practice are not identified and capitalised upon in terms of being shared and adopted by all teachers.
- The local authority provides limited support due to the high capacity to reflect and improve within the school's senior leadership.
- School leaders have rapidly and fully addressed the fall in English attainment which affected the proportion of students achieving five good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, in 2013.
- The school offers a broad range of subjects, focusing mainly on academic qualifications. A small, but significant, proportion of students also study vocational programmes in art, music or sport.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is supported very well through assemblies and the curriculum, which includes lessons featuring personal, social and health education, religious studies, and 'Philosophy for Children' lessons. There is a comprehensive range of clubs and opportunities to make a positive contribution to society, which in turn benefits students' personal development. The school actively promotes equality of opportunity.
- Students are provided with good guidance and support as they move into other schools or colleges for post-16 provision. This means that all students continue into education, employment or training, and this compares very well against the national average.
- The quality of teaching is monitored rigorously. School leaders' observations about the quality of teaching are accurate. Challenge is provided for most students through questioning, extension tasks and written feedback. However, not all school leaders ensure that all teachers provide high levels of challenge early enough in lessons to maximise the progress of all students
- There are good arrangements for monitoring the quality and impact of teaching on students'

achievement, linked to pay scales.

■ Safeguarding and child protection procedures fully meet statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are committed to supporting the school. They work effectively with the headteacher and are prepared to challenge constructively in support of improvements. They are well organised and pay careful consideration to the ways in which staffing and finance are used to support students and their achievement, especially those eligible for pupil premium funding.
- The governing body ensures that the performance management of staff is used carefully in relation to pay and promotion.
- Governors are well informed about how well students are doing, how they behave and the incidence of exclusions. Through their diligence, the governing body makes sure the budget is managed very effectively.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	102777
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	429516

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	845
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	Not applicable
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Miles
Headteacher	Charlotte Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	30–31 March 2011
Telephone number	020 7540 5620
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