

# Eastlea Community School

## Inspection report

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|                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 102784         |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Newham         |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 382138         |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 9–10 June 2011 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Robin Gaff     |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Comprehensive                                      |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11–16  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 921  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                 |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Linda Jordan                                       |
| <b>Principal</b>                           | Chinye Jibunoh                                     |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 18 September 2007                                  |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Pretoria Road<br>Canning Town<br>London<br>E16 4NP |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 020 75400400                                       |
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|---------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Age group</b>          | 11–16          |
| <b>Inspection date(s)</b> | 9–10 June 2011 |
| <b>Inspection number</b>  | 382138         |

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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. They visited 41 lessons for 20 minutes or longer, observing 40 teachers and observed four lessons jointly with the principal and other senior leaders. The inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to lessons, an assembly, and other activities in order to observe the students learning. They held meetings with groups of students, staff and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at self-evaluation and planning documents, policies and procedures, as well as the school's own analysis of students' attainment and progress. A total of 95 questionnaires completed by parents and carers were received and analysed during the inspection, as well as questionnaires completed by students and members of staff.

## Information about the school

Eastlea is an average-sized secondary school. It gained specialist status for technology in 2001. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. A high proportion of students are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which is Black or Black British–African. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is high. The school has a specialist unit which caters for a small number of students with physical and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). The proportion of students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. A higher than average proportion of students join or leave the school at other than the normal time for transfer. The school has been below the government's floor target with regard to students' attainment and progression at the end of Year 11 in recent years. There have been a large number of changes in staff, as well as changes in the roles of middle and senior leaders since the last inspection. The current principal took up her post in September 2008. At the time of the inspection, a major rebuilding project was in progress.

**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

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                               | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Achievement</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Teaching</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>                           | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Behaviour and safety</b>                                | <b>2</b> |
| Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being? | Yes      |
| Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?     | Yes      |
| Does the school provide value for money?                   | Yes      |

### Key findings

- Eastlea is a good and highly inclusive school which has emerged from a period of turbulence and is improving rapidly.
- Students' attainment is below average but is rising quickly, especially in English and mathematics, because of the good teaching and the excellent care which students receive. Students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, make better than expected progress. School leaders are well aware that a higher proportion of teaching needs to be outstanding in order to ensure that students' attainment rises still further.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the school. Many of them comment on how behaviour has improved in recent years. A very large majority report that they feel safe in school. They also say that bullying is rare and decreasing, and that the school deals promptly and effectively with any incidents that do occur.
- Students from a wide variety of backgrounds get on extremely well together. They respect each other's traditions and show that they value the contribution made by those with different abilities. Students show a strong understanding of right and wrong, and are able to apply this understanding to the world they live in.
- Most parents and carers are highly appreciative of the school, agreeing in particular that it helps them to support their children's learning. A minority have yet to be convinced of the school's success in ensuring that students behave well. Attendance by parents and carers at school events is variable.

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

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- The leadership provided by the principal, ably supported by her senior colleagues and the governing body, is outstanding. She has accurately evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses, and has put in place measures which are now bearing fruit in terms of improvement in the quality of provision and of outcomes for students.

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

- Raise students' attainment in English and mathematics further, so that by 2012, it is consistently in line with national averages.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
  - lessons consistently give students opportunities to learn for themselves and from each other
  - all students receive sufficiently detailed advice about how to improve their work.
- Ensure that parents and carers are more fully informed about and involved in all aspects of the school's work.

## Main report

Students' attainment when they join the school is below, and in many instances well below, national averages. This is especially the case for the above average proportion of students who join the school at other than the normal time for transfer. GCSE results in 2010 showed an improvement in terms of the proportion of students gaining five or more passes at the higher grades, but results in English and mathematics were well below national expectations. However, passes already achieved and module results gained by current Year 11 students, as well as the school's own reliable assessment data, indicate that their attainment is now rapidly approaching national averages. This represents satisfactory progress from students' starting points. In a large majority of lessons observed during the inspection, students' learning and progress were good. Teachers' skilful use of 'key words' and clear explanations of grammatical points help students, particularly those who speak English as an additional language, to gain an increasingly good grasp of communication skills in writing and speaking. Students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those catered for by the PMLD unit, make good progress. This is because teachers include tasks which are well adapted to meet their needs, and because of the expert support which the students receive from specialist teachers and teaching assistants. In two lessons, this enabled students with specific needs to learn by leading activities for their classmates. Students show very positive attitudes to learning. For example, they are prepared to listen intently to and learn from one another as well as from their teachers. In the few lessons where students made slower progress, this was because teachers did not give the students enough

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opportunities for independent learning, or did not include sufficiently stimulating activities. Students mostly enjoy their lessons and know how well they are doing and what their targets are, but are not always clear about the detailed next steps they need to take to reach them.

Teachers establish good working relationships with their students and have high expectations of them in terms of work and behaviour. They know their subjects well, and they plan their lessons carefully to include a good range of activities, including, for example, group work and discussions. In an outstanding history lesson, students made excellent progress in their understanding of the great battles of the First World War. This was because the teacher succeeded in communicating her enthusiasm for the subject to the students, and encouraged them to take on the roles of the generals in discussing military tactics. Students also benefited from the opportunity to evaluate each group's presentation. Teachers make good use of questioning to check students' learning at regular intervals during lessons. This enables them to adapt activities if necessary in order to maintain a good pace of learning. Occasionally, teachers take too long to explain tasks before allowing students to start learning for themselves. Teachers enable students to learn from assessing their own work, and ensure that they are well aware of examination requirements. This was particularly apparent during the Year 11 revision sessions. Teachers mark students' work frequently but do not always give them enough detailed feedback about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.

Students are polite, welcoming and helpful to visitors. They talk positively about their experience of school, and many of them say it has improved in the time they have been there, particularly with regard to students' behaviour. Students' enjoyment of school is reflected in their rising attendance which is above the national average. They say the new principal is 'strict but fair', and they appreciate the fact that their voice is heard. Students support the school's raised expectations with regard to behaviour, and understand that misbehaviour, including bullying, will be quickly identified and dealt with rigorously. As a result, exclusions are low and are decreasing. Students' behaviour makes a positive contribution to their learning in most lessons. Very occasionally, their behaviour is less than good because they are not given sufficiently challenging or stimulating activities. Many students take an active and intelligent interest in current affairs and are not afraid to express their opinions, while respecting the views of others. Members of the student 'eco-committee' set a good example to others by picking up litter around the school. Students' respect for their school is demonstrated by the way they look after the environment, such as the absence of graffiti. Students develop a good understanding of the different faiths and cultures represented in the school and in the wider world. This is enhanced by a range of opportunities to take part in visits and exchanges, including an exchange with a school in southern France. Students behave safely around the school and in lessons, including practical sessions. They learn how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, in a Year 8 personal, social and health education lesson, students learned about different forms of domestic abuse and how to respond to it. The school ensures that students are fully aware of and know how to avoid potential hazards associated with the ongoing building works.

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The principal and other senior leaders are highly visible around the school. They praise, encourage, and when appropriate, reprove students, and are passionately committed to improving not only their achievement, but also their well-being, so that every student can fulfil his or her potential. As one parent said, 'The school treats every child as an individual.' Aply supported by her senior team, as well as by the governing body, the principal has restored stability following the departure of a number of key staff. Members of staff at all levels, including middle leaders, understand and strongly support senior leaders' drive for improvement. New management structures have led to greater accountability, and have ensured that all staff focus relentlessly on raising students' attainment, which is having an impact. Senior leaders have also been prepared to act decisively and firmly in order to improve the quality of teaching. The governing body brings a good range of experience and expertise to the school, and is prepared to challenge as well as support school leaders. Its members show a good understanding of the challenges facing the school. These factors demonstrate the school's good capacity for further, sustained improvement.

The school is well equipped to identify students who are at risk of underachieving and to ensure that they receive the support they require. This has had a strong impact on improving students' achievement, and demonstrates the school's successful promotion of equality of opportunity in narrowing gaps in performance, particularly for those groups who underachieve nationally. There is no evidence of any discrimination. The school provides students with a good range of courses which correspond to their needs and interests, and help to prepare them well for the next stage of their education and for employment. The school's specialist status in technology is reflected in an enhanced range of courses in this area. This has helped to ensure that the proportion of those who are not in education, employment or training, after they leave the school, is low.

Arrangements for safeguarding students, including child protection policies and procedures, are strong. Most parents and carers agree that their children are happy and are safe in school. However, while students testify to the improvement in behaviour, the school has not yet succeeded in convincing all parents and carers that this is the case. Leaders recognise the need to ensure that they receive an accurate picture, and to encourage more of them to play an active part in school life, by, for example, increasing their attendance at parents' evenings.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Eastlea Community 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 95 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 921 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements   | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |    | Strongly disagree |   |
|--|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
|  | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | %  | Total             | % |
| Q1<br>My child is happy at school                                    | 39             | 41 | 48    | 51 | 6        | 6  | 2                 | 2 |
| Q2<br>My child feels safe at school                                  | 42             | 44 | 39    | 41 | 12       | 13 | 1                 | 1 |
| Q3<br>The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can       | 48             | 51 | 42    | 44 | 5        | 5  | 0                 | 0 |
| Q4<br>The school meets my child’s particular needs                   | 35             | 37 | 55    | 58 | 4        | 4  | 0                 | 0 |
| Q5<br>The school ensures my child is well looked after               | 40             | 42 | 45    | 47 | 10       | 11 | 0                 | 0 |
| Q6<br>Teaching at this school is good                                | 40             | 42 | 47    | 49 | 5        | 5  | 1                 | 1 |
| Q7<br>There is a good standard of behaviour at this school           | 23             | 24 | 45    | 48 | 22       | 23 | 4                 | 4 |
| Q8<br>Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour                     | 17             | 18 | 36    | 38 | 32       | 34 | 6                 | 6 |
| Q9<br>The school deals with any cases of bullying well               | 35             | 37 | 42    | 44 | 9        | 9  | 4                 | 4 |
| Q10<br>The school helps me to support my child’s learning            | 41             | 43 | 51    | 54 | 3        | 3  | 0                 | 0 |
| Q11<br>The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed | 44             | 46 | 43    | 45 | 4        | 4  | 4                 | 4 |
| Q12<br>The school is well led and managed                            | 46             | 48 | 40    | 42 | 7        | 7  | 0                 | 0 |

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 all 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

| Type of school       | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) |      |              |            |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
|                      | Outstanding   | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools      | 46  | 48   | 6            | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 6   | 47   | 40           | 7          |
| Secondary schools    | 12  | 39   | 38           | 11         |
| Sixth forms          | 13  | 42   | 41           | 3          |
| Special schools      | 28  | 49   | 19           | 4          |
| Pupil referral units | 14  | 45   | 31           | 10         |
| All schools          | 10  | 46   | 37           | 7          |

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"> <li>■ The achievement of all pupils.</li> <li>■ Behaviour and safety.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of leadership and management.</li> </ul> <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.</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.**



10 June 2011

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Eastlea Community School, Canning Town E16 4NP**

I am writing to thank you all for being so welcoming and helpful to the inspectors when we recently visited your school. The purpose of this letter is to tell you about what we found.

Yours is a good and rapidly improving school. Your attainment, especially in English and mathematics, is rising fast and progress is improving. You know how well you are doing, though not always what to do to improve your work. You particularly enjoy and learn faster in those lessons where teachers give you plenty of opportunities to learn for yourselves and from one another. You get on well with each other and with your teachers, and you are very good at listening to and respecting other people's views. You understand the difference between right and wrong and you respect and value people's different traditions and ways of life.

You told us that you feel safe in school and are not too worried about bullying, because it is rare and is dealt with quickly and well. You behave sensibly in lessons and around the school. Many of you told us how much behaviour has improved in recent years. Your attendance has improved, which shows that you understand how important it is to come to school regularly. You respect the school rules and you know that its leaders listen to what you have to say. You can help make it even better by always doing what you know is the right thing.

The principal, staff and governing body are all working hard to make the school even better. To help them to do this, we have asked them to do the following things.

- Help even more of you to gain higher GCSE grades, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Make sure that teachers all give you enough opportunities for independent learning in lessons, and sufficiently detailed advice to help you to improve your work.
- Ensure that more of your parents and carers are better informed about the school and are able to become more involved in school life.

Yours sincerely

Robin Gaff  
Lead inspector

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