

# Cumberland School

Oban Close, London, E13 8SJ

## Inspection dates

6–7 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher's high ambition and strong determination to continually improve the school are shared by all members of the school community, including the governing body, and are summed up by the school's motto, 'aspire to achieve'. Self-evaluation is accurate and robust.
- Provision within the specialist unit for students with autism is outstanding. Students in this ASD provision and students with autistic spectrum disorders within the main body of the school thrive because the school meets their needs extremely well.
- All groups of students within the main school achieve well given their starting points.
- Relationships between students from different backgrounds are extremely positive. Students' behaviour is outstanding, and is marked by respect for each other and for their teachers, and a keenness to learn that supports their good and sometimes excellent progress.
- Teaching has improved swiftly since the last inspection and is now good. Teachers have high expectations of all of their students.
- The curriculum contributes extremely well to students' learning and development, with the result that almost all stay in education or enter the world of work at the age of 16.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of some teaching is occasionally less secure and does not match the standard of the best.
- Not all of the teachers mark and assess students' written work to the high standard required by the school.
- Relatively few students achieve the highest grades in their GCSE examinations.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 56 lessons and 55 teachers, a small number with a member of the school's senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of students, members of staff, and with a representative of the local authority.
- Telephone discussions were held with members of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of the 10 responses made to the online questionnaire (Parent View) submitted before and during the inspection, as well as the results of the school's most recent survey of parents' and carers' views.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at information about students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and vulnerable students, and about students' attendance.
- Inspectors examined documents including the school's self-review summary, improvement plans, the governing body minutes, and the school's records about teaching and lesson observations, performance management and appraisal.
- Inspectors scrutinised 99 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Patricia Barford, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Robin Gaff	Additional inspector
Alastair McMeckan	Additional inspector
Pat O'Shea	Additional inspector
Una Stevens	Additional inspector
Clifford Walker	Additional inspector

## Information about this school

- Cumberland School is a much-larger-than-average secondary school.
- Six out of ten students are supported by the pupil premium grant, which is additional funding provided by the government for students in the care of the local authority, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and children of service families. There are no children from service families currently on roll and four are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students who are entitled to free school meals is well above the national average.
- Three quarters of students are of minority ethnic heritage. This proportion is well above average. Half of all students speak English as an additional language, which is well above the national average.
- About one in five students is supported through school action, and about one in six is supported at school action plus or has a statement of special educational needs. These proportions are both well above the national average.
- There is specialist provision for students on the autistic spectrum. These students range from 11 to 16 years of age. There are places for 15 students. 25 pupils were on roll at the time of the inspection.
- A small number of students at Key Stage 4 follow alternative courses with other education providers. Programmes are commissioned by the local authority on behalf of its secondary schools.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Ensure that more teaching is outstanding and matches that of the best by:
  - making sure that the quality of marking is consistently in line with the school's expectations, so that all is as good as the best
  - sharing the school's best practice in assessment more widely, so that students always understand the feedback they have received and can use it to improve the accuracy of their work.
- Increase the proportion of students achieving the highest grades at GCSE by ensuring that:
  - all teachers plan lessons that provide enough stretch for higher-attaining students, including the use of questions that challenge students to think and to respond in depth
  - all lessons proceed at a rapid pace, to make sure that every student can make the fastest possible progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good.

- Most students join the school with levels of attainment that are well below average.
- Students, regardless of their ethnic background, reach standards in their GCSE examinations that are broadly average, thus making good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- Standards in most subjects, including English and mathematics, have risen sharply since the last inspection, and the reliable information provided by the school about current students shows that standards and progress are continuing to improve.
- Fewer students than is the case nationally, however, gain the highest grades at GCSE.
- The gap between the standards reached in English and mathematics by students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and other students is much smaller than is the case nationally. This is because of the school's very good use of the pupil premium grant, especially in helping students to improve their reading skills. None of the four students who are looked after by the local authority is in Year 11. These students also achieve well and in line with their peers in the school.
- There is a high value placed on reading by all members of staff, including those in the learning resource centre. Students speak enthusiastically about their choice of books and are keen to give advice to each other about what to read next.
- Students who find reading more difficult are provided with well-tailored support. Careful records are kept about students' reading development and the information used to determine the best way to spend the Year 7 catch-up premium grant, a grant allocated to schools by the government to support students who have fallen behind in their reading.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make good progress because teachers adapt activities well to meet their needs.
- The school provides excellent support for disabled students and those with special educational needs, including those who are based in the specialist provision, with the result that they make good and often excellent progress, some from very low starting points.
- Students at Key Stage 4 who follow alternative courses achieve nationally recognised qualifications that prepare them well for the next stage of training, education or employment.
- Early entry to GCSE examinations is used sparingly and to good effect. No students achieve less well than they should because they are entered for examinations before they are ready for them.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved a great deal since the last inspection. Teachers establish very good working relations with students, leading to a very positive atmosphere for learning in lessons.
- The best teaching in the school is characterised by high expectations, rooted in a strong understanding of students' starting points.
- Teaching is knowledgeable and many lessons are planned well to successfully engage students' interest. These lessons proceed at a good pace because students respond very well to teachers' high expectations of them, and their extremely good behaviour ensures that little time is wasted.
- In the small proportion of less excellent teaching, there is sometimes a slow pace to the learning.
- Mostly, written and spoken feedback to students is generally specific, encouraging and helpful, so that they know how to improve. In a few cases, however, marking is not good enough to contribute to even better progress for students. It does not always, for example, help to promote the accuracy of students' writing.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs, some of whom have very high levels of additional need, make good and sometimes excellent progress because teachers work

very closely with teaching assistants to ensure that these students are fully included in lesson activities.

- Students who are in danger of underachieving in English and mathematics benefit from a carefully planned programme of additional support, including one-to-one teaching and extra classes on Saturday mornings, at which attendance is high. This has led to improved performance in English and mathematics since the last inspection.
- Teaching enriches students' cultural development, as for example, in a highly engaging music lesson where Year 7 students learned how to conduct an orchestra, about its instruments and about musical traditions.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Behaviour and safety have improved enormously since the last inspection.
- Students behave extremely well in lessons and show positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other's contributions in class.
- Students report that they feel very safe at school. Instances of bullying are very rare and are quickly dealt with if they occur.
- Relationships between students from different backgrounds are extremely harmonious.
- Students are confident and polite. They move sensibly around the school and, for example, at lesson changeovers, the very large number of students on the move creates no discord whatsoever.
- Students are punctual to their lessons and are on time for school in the morning. They participate enthusiastically in out-of-school activities.
- Although only a small number of parents and carers responded to Parent View during the inspection, nearly 300 completed the school's own questionnaire at the start of the spring term and most agreed that the school makes sure their children are well behaved.
- The overwhelming majority of staff who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school manages students' behaviour well.
- Rates of student attendance have risen consistently and are now above national average.
- Students who follow courses at other institutions attend well and are very well behaved.
- There have been no permanent exclusions in the last year and the rates of fixed term exclusions have fallen substantially.
- This is because the school has been extremely successful in improving the behaviour of those students whose conduct has caused concern.
- Students have a good understanding of the range of future opportunities available to them as a result of the well-planned and well-delivered careers advice and guidance they receive.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The school is totally committed to the well-being of every student and has made good progress since the last inspection.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and robust, and leaders are extremely clear about what needs to be done to continue to improve, and are passionate about making the school even better.
- Information about students' progress and their attainment is used most effectively to hold all staff to account for students' achievement.
- The leadership of teaching is of very high quality. Records of what is seen in lessons are sharply scrutinised to ensure that teachers receive the right training and support to help them improve their practice.
- Feedback to teachers on their performance in the classroom is perceptive and direct. Staff are

proud to work at the school because they recognise how much it has improved since the last inspection. They acknowledge the impact of the headteacher's leadership, and staff morale is high.

- The school's system for performance management is rigorous, and ensures that any pay rises and promotions are clearly linked to successful teaching.
  - The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is characterised by the wide range of opportunities from which students benefit, including courses provided by local colleges. The school ensures that every student follows an individual programme which prepares them extremely well for further education and employment.
  - The curriculum and other aspects of school life, such as assemblies, promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. For example, students in English lessons showed a real sense of awe and wonder as they learned about the joys and suffering experienced by mountaineers in *Touching the Void*.
  - Almost all parents and carers express strong support and approval of all aspects of the school's work.
  - Safeguarding meets statutory requirements. All the arrangements that the school makes for securing students' safety are exceptionally thorough.
  - The local authority link adviser knows the school very well, and provides it with good support.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body provides challenge and support to school leaders, and is well aware of the quality of teaching. Members of the governing body are very clear indeed about the link between students' achievement, the quality of teaching, and how the school rewards good teachers and tackles underperformance. Governors hold leaders firmly to account in ensuring that targets for staff are closely matched to the school's development priorities. They have a clear understanding of the school's performance in comparison with other schools nationally. Governors also fully understand the value of using the views of parents and carers, and other stakeholders to influence their planning. Governors regularly review their own practice and update their skills in order to ensure that they are effective in their role. They make sure that the school makes good use of the resources available to it, including the additional pupil premium money.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102783
<b>Local authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	400571

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

<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>	1,436
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sharon Higgins
<b>Head teacher</b>	John Bradshaw
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9–10 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0207 4740231
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