



# Mossbourne Community Academy

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 134693  
**Inspection number** 296195  
**Inspection dates** 26–27 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Carmen Rodney HMI

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

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|--|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Academy                  | <b>Academy address</b>  | Downs Park Road     |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Non-maintained           |                         | Hackney             |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11–16                    |                         | E5 8NP              |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                    | <b>Telephone number</b> | 020 8525 5200       |
| <b>Number on roll (academy)</b>            | 620                      | <b>Fax number</b>       | 020 8525 5222       |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body       | <b>Chair</b>            | Clive Bourne        |
|  |                          | <b>Principal</b>        | Sir Michael Wilshaw |
| <b>Date of previous academy inspection</b> | Not previously inspected |                         |                     |

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| <b>Age group</b> | <b>Inspection dates</b> | <b>Inspection number</b> |
| 11–16            | 26–27 September 2006    | 296195                   |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the academy

Mossbourne Community Academy opened in September 2004 in an imposing building. The academy specialises in information and communication technology (ICT) and has excellent technologically advanced facilities and resources in all areas of its work. There are currently three year groups: Years 7, 8 and 9. Over the next two academic years, there will eventually be 900 pupils. Planning is underway to develop a joint sixth form with other schools and colleges in the local authority (LA). The academy's standing in the local community has increased within a short time and as a result, it is heavily over-subscribed with approximately four applicants for each place. In spite of this, the academy reflects a comprehensive intake drawn from the locality. The pupil population reflects the diverse multi-racial community. Four-fifths of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, over two-fifths have a first language that is not English and 14 are at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average as is the proportion that has learning difficulties or disabilities, of which 30 have a statement of special educational need. The academy has a stable staff and high pupil stability.

## Key for inspection grades

|         |              |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  |
| Grade 2 | Good         |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   |

## Overall effectiveness of the academy

### Grade: 1

Mossbourne Community Academy is an outstanding school because it achieves its mission statement which is to: '...play an essential role in developing educational excellence in Hackney...by offering high quality, inclusive and innovative teaching and learning...and raise aspirations, expectations and educational achievements of all members of the community'. Within a very short time, it has demonstrated that it is changing the lives of pupils for the better.

The pupils, parents, staff, governors and the community are rightly proud of the academy. The high number of responses to the inspection questionnaire reflects parents' overwhelmingly positive support for the academy, as does the strong parents' association. The following comment from a parent, typical of many, demonstrates how much they value the academy: 'It is an outstanding school with a dynamic leadership that provides a disciplined but caring environment for its pupils...it values diversity and allows its children to thrive academically and socially...'. Notwithstanding these positive responses, the academy recognises that more needs to be done to engage with all parents.

Pupils enter the academy with literacy and numeracy skills that are below average. All pupils make rapid progress from this low base and each year the academy has successfully sustained the high academic attainment of all pupils. Standards in lessons and from the detailed and reliable assessment information confirm that pupils exceed expectations for their age group. The demanding targets set for Year 9 pupils should place this first cohort in at least the top 25% of schools nationally for attainment at the end of Key Stage 3.

The pupils' very rapid progress is based on the excellent curriculum, outstanding teaching and the highly structured systems that are in place. The well organised transition programmes establish expectations of what incoming Year 6 pupils can achieve when they join the academy. The assessment system is excellent. The analysis of data ensures outstanding support for identified groups of pupils, such as those with learning difficulties and disabilities and black boys. Teachers are meticulous in their use of data to drive up standards; regular testing is designed to stretch the pupils, track their achievements and take remedial action to support those at risk of underachieving. Consequently, pupils such as black boys who are otherwise liable to underachieve, make exceptionally good progress. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating pupils' work are robust.

The quality of care, guidance and support is superb. Dedicated groups of people, including mentors, teachers, support staff and governors, make a significant contribution to pupils' outstanding personal and academic development. However, although the pupils make positive contributions to the school community and there are opportunities for them to take responsibilities, these aspects of the academy's work are less well developed. The ethos for learning, building self esteem and confidence as well as fostering positive relationships enables the pupils to thrive and succeed. For instance, Year 8 pupils have successfully demonstrated the 'can do' culture

by entering and winning debating competitions against older students from selective schools.

The principal's visionary and astute leadership has created an academy where pupils who might otherwise fail can achieve beyond all expectations. The apparent ease with which the academy is led and managed conceals the sharp minds behind the rigorous planning, the very effective teamwork among all staff and the painstaking approach that goes into ensuring consistency in delivering a high quality education. The exceptionally strong senior and middle management teams articulate the academy's vision very well. The strong discipline and consistent practices enable the academy to fulfil its mission.

The academy knows well its strengths and areas for development; inspectors agree with the academy's accurate self-evaluation of its work. Governors are well informed; they are rigorous in challenging and monitoring the academy and carry out their statutory duties very well. This forward thinking school works closely with the National College for Leadership and takes a leading role in training and assessing future school leaders. Under the principal's outstanding leadership, Mossbourne Community Academy has made an outstanding start and has excellent capacity to sustain its development.

### **What the academy should do to improve further**

- Seek to consult parents further and involve them all in the academy's work
- Strengthen the opportunities for pupils to become more involved in the academy and the wider community.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

The pupils' progress and attainment are outstanding. The academy does not yet have national tests or examination results with which to compare standards and achievement. However, the pupils make rapid progress and are achieving standards above those typically seen nationally.

The pupils enter the academy with broadly below average attainment. The academy has developed and uses a rigorous and sophisticated tracking system very effectively to establish pupils' prior learning and set high academic targets at pupil, department and whole-school levels. The data is monitored weekly, revised on a termly basis and shared with parents. Careful analysis of the data, combined with the teacher's professional judgements is used to inform a comprehensive range of intervention strategies. The strategies are designed to nurture each pupil's academic and personal development. Exceptionally good programmes of support are provided; for example, for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, for the gifted and talented pupils, for those learning English as an additional language or with specific literacy and numeracy needs. As a result, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at risk of underachieving, such as African-Caribbean boys, make progress in line with their peers.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

The friendly, positive attitudes and outstanding behaviour of the pupils are a real strength of the academy. Pupils have a clear sense of social responsibility, seen in the courtesy which they show to each other and to visitors, and a culture which respects other people, the academy and its environment. Pupils say that they enjoy attending the academy. At 96%, attendance is well above the national average for secondary schools.

Pupils are encouraged and enabled to eat healthily and adopt healthy lifestyles. There are appropriately robust procedures to ensure the pupils' safety and well-being. Pupils feel they can trust and approach the adults to discuss any problems they may have.

Pupils seize opportunities to take responsibility; for example, as librarians or ambassadors for the academy when guiding visitors around the site. They have raised considerable amounts of money for charities and their high level of participation in communal activities is helping them to achieve very well, and become well-rounded individuals. However, the academy recognises that the school council is not well established and pupils are not as involved in wider community work or in making decisions about their academy. The academy upholds its ethos of recognising pupils' heritage through assemblies, displays and the curriculum. They make exceptionally good progress in acquiring the basic skills and developing personal qualities which prepare them for adult life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers are innovative and use a wide range of approaches to capture pupils' attention. They meet the needs of the wide range of pupil ability because there is attention to detail. The teachers continuously seek to improve their practice to ensure that pupils benefit from the highly developed technological resources. Internal and published research findings, as well as consultation with pupils, are used to constantly review and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers use practical approaches such as role play, games, modelling and innovative use of the interactive white board to engage pupils in their learning. The recently launched 'virtual learning environment' is being used to break down the classroom barriers as pupils can access their work and progress records at any time. As a result, the pupils are motivated to work diligently; their behaviour is exemplary and they acknowledge that ICT helps them to learn.

The rapid progress that pupils make in their work is linked to the strong culture of learning that underpins the academy's mission. Each lesson begins with the pledge: 'Throughout this lesson, I aspire to maintain an inquiring mind, a calm disposition and an attentive ear so that in this class, and all classes, I can fulfil my true potential'. This

mantra reflects pupils' ambitions and creates unity of purpose for the lesson. The teachers are passionate about teaching and believe that the pupils can succeed. Lessons move at a fast pace and take into account the varying needs of each pupil. For example, resources and activities are carefully tailored to every pupil in the Year 7 nurture group. Teachers promote equal opportunities well; they summarise lessons effectively and identify what pupils know, understand and can do. Marking is constructive and involves pupils evaluating their work. The unrelenting challenge and the high level of support, combined with the pupils' positive attitudes, ensure that all pupils are able to make rapid progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is exceptional. It is broad and balanced and has been carefully tailored to meet the needs and interests of pupils. It is carefully conceived and flexible and provides pupils with access to a very broad range of subjects and enrichment activities. For example, there are opportunities for them to take a GCSE in their mother tongue, study Latin and business studies. Plans for developing the Key Stage 4 curriculum are good. ICT is used extensively and effectively in all subjects. Pupils are encouraged to become responsible independent learners and the ICT resources are heavily used outside of lesson times by pupils wanting to develop their skills and expertise.

The Year 7 nurture group provides exceptionally good support for pupils who have very low prior attainment. The academy provides a 27 hour teaching week, and makes very good use of additional lessons and activities at the end of each day to enrich the curriculum. The extended academy day, including the Saturday school, provides extensive opportunities for teachers to use a flexible curriculum to remedy any shortcomings in pupils' grasp of literacy and numeracy and to extend those who are gifted and talented. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good and is delivered through other subjects. Careful mapping and planned curriculum days are designed to ensure that pupils receive their full curriculum entitlement.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The quality of care is outstanding. The weekly monitoring of pupils' progress against their agreed targets ensures very careful guidance and support is provided for each of them. A successful tradition of academic review days has been established with very good attendance by parents. The support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is of the highest quality and contributes to their progress. The procedures for child protection and health and safety issues are exceptionally good and are systematically implemented.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The principal's decisive approach to assigning major management responsibilities to the senior team ensures that the academy is able to sustain its high level of achievement. Robust accountability at all levels is underpinned by rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

The senior leadership inspires a dedicated team of staff, pupils and parents. Leadership and management at all levels ensure the academy runs very smoothly and the momentum for change and expansion continues efficiently. All staff enforce the academy's inclusive ethos in all of their work. Across the academy, a high priority is given to professional development and performance management with advanced skills teachers and middle managers working strategically to support teachers and spread some exceptionally good practice both in and beyond the academy. The new site and building presented many challenges in the first year of opening but the academy did not allow this to hinder its progress. Planning for future development is also outstanding.

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## Inspection judgements

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | <b>Academy Overall</b> |
|---|------------------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b> | 1  |
| How well does the academy work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?   | 1  |
| The effectiveness of the academy's self-evaluation   | 1  |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | 1  |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection   | NA |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How well do learners achieve?</b>   | 1 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 1 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 1 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 1 |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                           | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 1 |
| The attendance of learners  | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

### The quality of provision

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>          | 1 |
| <b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b> | 1 |
| <b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>   | 1 |

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1   |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets   | 1   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 1   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 1   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 1   |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?  | Yes |
| Does this academy require special measures?  | No  |
| Does this academy require a notice to improve?   | No  |

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

A number of you were able to recall the first visit my colleagues and I made to your academy in October 2005. At the time, we were impressed with your work. On this visit we were enthralled by your progress and behaviour. Thank you for taking part in the inspection by being such excellent ambassadors for your academy.

Your academy is very special. It has achieved the highest grade that can be awarded to a school; it is outstanding because it gives you a first class education. You told us that you are proud of your academy and we recognise why you and your parents feel so strongly about everything that it provides.

All of you are able to make exceptionally good progress because the quality of teaching is outstanding and you are determined to prove to everyone that you are all 'winners'. One of the Year 7 pupils told us that the lessons were 'fun and exciting' and we agree. Your behaviour and attitudes are exemplary and we like the mature and sensible way in which you respond to the daily challenges that teachers throw at you. You told us that you feel safe and secure in the academy and you also recognise that your teachers extend their watchful eyes over you even when you leave the school. You make very good use of the ICT equipment and so many of you use it with great mastery to do your work. We recognise that you have some responsibilities but we agree with you that you should have more and that the academy needs to involve you more in making decisions. We have also asked the academy to ensure that all parents feel they are consulted about developments.

The principal and governors are determined to ensure that all of you excel in your work. They are making the right decisions to make sure that this happens. As a result of the school's extraordinary achievements, your academy is well known nationally and locally. Make sure you to continue co-operating well with your teachers especially when you are given more responsibilities.

We wish you and your academy every success.

Yours sincerely

Carmen Rodney H M Inspector