

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School

Donegal Street, Islington, London, N1 9QG

Inspection dates 16–17 December 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is uncompromising in her determination to improve the life chances of every single girl in the school. Her high expectations for students, staff and parents and carers are evident in her work in the school and across the community.
- The headteacher is wholeheartedly supported by highly committed senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and governors. They know the school well and work hard to maintain the highest standards of students' achievement and teaching.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding. They are extremely proud of their school and this is confirmed through their excellent conduct, consideration and courtesy. Attendance rates are high as they enjoy attending. Disruptions in lessons are minimal.
- Students feel very safe in school and have an exceptionally well-developed sense of right and wrong. They enjoy learning and this has a strong impact on the progress they make in their learning over time.
- The range of subjects taught is broad, balanced and finely matched to students' interests and aspirations. There is a strong focus on promoting literacy and encouraging reading. Numeracy skills are supported well in science and geography.
- An extensive, rich programme of activities out of school time contributes considerably to students' understanding and appreciation of local, national and international communities.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extraordinarily well. As a result, they are thoroughly prepared for life outside and beyond the school, especially in terms of appreciating life in modern Britain.
- Teaching is typically outstanding. Teachers have very high expectations for their students and their learning. Positive and supportive relationships are a very strong feature of teaching. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and a very good awareness of examination requirements. Teaching takes account of the extensive knowledge, understanding and awareness staff have of their students.
- Students make excellent progress from their starting points and they achieve outstandingly well. The vast majority of students achieve above-average standards in a range of subjects at GCSE, including English, mathematics and languages.
- Disadvantaged students, disabled students and those with special educational needs make excellent progress and achieve highly because they are well known to staff. Targeted funding is used very effectively to provide additional support for these students.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 36 lessons, including 23 joint observations with senior leaders. They attended assemblies and tutorials, and undertook shorter classroom visits focusing on progress and literacy.
- They looked carefully at a range of students' work in English, mathematics and science, focusing on students' achievement and assessment including the quality of marking.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and other staff. The lead inspector held discussions with members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of students across the school. Discussions also took place with students informally in lessons and during break times.
- They analysed documents, including policies, self-evaluation, plans for improvement, safeguarding documentation, records of lesson observations and anonymised records on staff performance.
- Inspectors also looked at records of incidents and files showing the support provided for students who are most in need.
- The views of 93 parents and carers from the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account as well as from the school's own survey of parents and carers.
- Inspectors also received 46 questionnaires completed by members of staff.

Inspection team

Paul Metcalf, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector
Venetia Mayman	Additional Inspector
Veronica Young	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than average sized 11–16 girls' inner-city comprehensive school. The large majority of students are from Bangladeshi and African heritages. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups, and those who speak English as an additional language, is well above average. Across the school there are 59 different ethnic groups and 55 different languages spoken.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. This additional government funding is used to support students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority. The proportion of students eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of students with special educational needs is above the national average. A very small number of students are educated elsewhere at the City & Islington College, at New River College and Hackney City Farm.
- The headteacher has been recognised as a National Leader of Education and the school works cooperatively with other schools in the local authority to support improvement.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching and learning across the school by ensuring greater consistency in the quality of teachers' marking and encouraging all students to respond to guidance on how to improve.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's leadership is exceptional. She is uncompromising in the high expectations which she has for the school and the achievements of students. With the proficient support of senior leaders, middle leaders and governors, she has established a culture of high commitment and purpose. The school is determined that all students realise their full potential and leave the school ambitious and confident about their future. Disadvantaged students are particularly well supported.
- Students and staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the headteacher and school leaders. They are proud to be associated with the school and appreciative of the many and varied opportunities which the school gives them. Students and staff feel valued with large numbers commenting on how they feel both supported and challenged to help them to improve their practice.
- Middle leaders have a comprehensive understanding of what they need to do to improve further, such as reducing the variability in assessment. They are well supported in their role through training, including external training from the school's business partners.
- The school has a very good understanding of its strengths and the few areas that may need to improve further. In spite of the many successes, there is no evidence of complacency. Planning confirms the school's commitment to ongoing improvements.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well. Students are free from discrimination and harassment. Diversity is recognised and celebrated. Students from a variety of different backgrounds interact harmoniously, make excellent progress, hold high aspirations and proceed confidently to higher education, training or employment.
- There is a commitment to improve the quality of teaching and learning further by harnessing the expertise of staff and sharing outstanding practice. The school has robust systems for reviewing the performance of teachers, to tackle underperformance and to reward those who teach effectively and whose students achieve well.
- The range of subjects is carefully matched to students' interests and abilities. It provides very well for individual needs and is immensely successful in raising aspirations and broadening horizons. Extra-curricular and enrichment activities contribute considerably to students outstanding achievements with opportunities ranging from theatre and museum visits to meeting with the wife of the President of the United States.
- All students have access to high-quality advice and guidance, including career guidance supporting decisions regarding the next stages in their lives. The quality of advice helps students set high aspirations. There is excellent monitoring and support for students who are most in need as well as those attending alternative provision.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is exceptional. Students are supportive and protective towards each other. Relationships are harmonious and students develop their understanding of other faiths very well. Students' are well prepared for their responsibilities and life in modern Britain.
- Students' social skills and physical well-being are extremely well supported. Students are sensitive to the needs of others irrespective of their background, beliefs and ethnicity. Opportunities to participate in art, dance, drama, music and sport contribute considerably to their creative and cultural understanding.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Leaders ensure that students are kept safe through effective recruitment and child protection procedures. All staff are committed to students' safety, security, welfare and well-being.
- There is a positive relationship between the school and the local authority. The school is already sharing its outstanding practice with a range of partners. The headteacher and senior leaders are actively engaged in supporting improvement elsewhere, including partner primary schools and training for middle leaders.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is outstanding. Governors are highly trained, informed and dedicated members of the community. They bring a range of extremely useful skills and experience to their role.
 - They fully support the school's leaders in their constant drive for improvement and give a strong lead in setting the direction for the school. The balance of challenge and support is entirely appropriate in supporting senior leaders, while holding them to account for the school's continued improvements.
 - Governors have a clear understanding the school's strengths and areas for development because they visit the school, observe lessons and communicate with staff, students and parents and carers on a regular basis.
 - They have a secure understanding of performance information. They know how examination results

- compare with national averages and understand how much progress students make.
- Governors ensure that teachers' pay rises are linked to the achievement of their students and the whole-school targets set for them.
 - Governors know how pupil premium funding is used effectively to help disadvantaged students to close the gap between their achievement and that of other students.
 - Governors ensure that both students and staff are kept safe and that safeguarding procedures are robust. They are ambitious and want the very best for all students.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Attitudes to learning and the behaviour of students are exemplary. They respond extremely positively to their teachers and take a full and active part in their learning. Students arrive promptly to lessons and continue working to the very end of the lesson.
- Behaviour around school at break and lunchtimes, and when moving from lesson to lesson, is calm, disciplined and orderly. Students confirm that the exceptional behaviour seen during the inspection was typical of behaviour over time. Students who are educated elsewhere also behave well.
- Students are extremely considerate, polite and well mannered. They show considerable respect for each other and for the adults in the school. Reported incidents of bullying and racism are low. Students fully understand the consequences of their behaviour.
- Students say they feel extremely well supported by the school. As a result, exclusions are rare and repeat exclusions are very unusual. Rates of exclusion are well below the average for secondary schools and for the different groups represented in the school.
- The school takes rigorous steps to tackle any drops in attendance. As a result, all groups of students, including the disadvantaged, those with special educational needs and different ethnic groups, have very high rates of attendance. Students arrive very promptly to school and to lessons.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. All students have an exceptionally clear understanding of how to keep safe, including when using social media. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers responding to the online survey said their child was safe, happy and well cared for.
- Students are well aware of the different types of bullying, including cyber, racist and homophobic bullying. They reported that incidents of bullying are extremely rare and that they knew who to talk to if they ever felt unsafe.
- Students and staff were well educated about gender-specific harm, such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage and sexual exploitation, with clear procedures in place to support students should this be necessary.
- All adults working in school have had appropriate safeguarding training. Safeguarding procedures are clear and well documented, including procedures for those students who are educated off site.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding across a wide range of subjects and all years. Over time, the quality of teaching has been particularly high in English, mathematics and languages. This has led to outstanding levels of progress in lessons and high levels of performance in external examinations.
- Teachers routinely have very high expectations of students, and this leads to exceptional levels of progress for all students but notably, among disadvantaged and disabled students as well as those who have special educational needs.
- Teachers command the respect of their students. Their excellent subject knowledge makes learning interesting so that students are engaged and immersed in their learning. Teachers use their knowledge well to support, adapt and accelerate learning for individual students.
- Teaching develops students' self-confidence in their ability to learn. Students are actively encouraged to share their learning with others. Questioning is used well. Teachers monitor students' responses in lessons and adapt their approach accordingly.
- There is a strong focus on developing literacy skills across the school. Students, across the range of different ethnic groups, read frequently and enthusiastically in a wide range of contexts. Numeracy skills are being developed, especially in science and geography, but the focus on numeracy is not yet as

widespread as literacy.

- Teaching assistants are clear about their role and knowledgeable about their students. They are deployed well and are highly effective in supporting disabled students and those who have special educational needs, as well as those who are learning English as an additional language.
- Quality homework is set regularly and students complete it to a very high standard. Teaching across the school prepares students effectively for the next stage in their education. All students have very high aspirations for their future.
- Feedback from teachers' marking and assessment is very good. Marking is regular and, in the majority of lessons, used carefully to plan lessons and provide appropriate intervention. It is a major factor in students' rapid progress and effectively supports their awareness of how well they are doing.
- The best assessment reinforces what has already been learned, deepens students' understanding and stretches their thinking. It encourages students' response and engagement although this is not yet consistent across the school.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Over the last three years the proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C GCSE grades, including English and mathematics, has been above the national average and rising at a rate faster than found nationally. The proportion of students attaining the English Baccalaureate has remained consistently above national figures. Teaching caters very effectively for the wide range of students and those who speak English as an additional language so they too make excellent progress.
- Attainment on entry to the school is significantly below national averages. As a result, the progress that students make, regardless of background, across their subjects, including English and mathematics, is significantly above national averages. The number of students who made more-than-expected progress in English and mathematics remains particularly impressive and well above the national figures.
- The most able students achieve their challenging targets and are supported effectively by 'aspiration programmes' to ensure that they take advantage of their talents and choose routes that allow them entry to further and higher education.
- The progress made by the large numbers of students taking languages has been significantly above national averages for the past three years. The school has rigorously and successfully addressed some past variable progress in science and humanities.
- The school does enter students early for examinations because school leaders believe this experience is beneficial and motivating for students. Pass rates are invariably high and students are supported to re-enter if and when necessary.
- Disadvantaged students achieve well. In 2014 in English, disadvantaged students attained similar grades to other students nationally. In mathematics they attained about a half of a grade lower than other students. Disadvantaged students made better progress in English and mathematics than other students nationally. Gaps in performance are small and reducing.
- Students eligible for support through the Year 7 catch-up funding make steady progress, because the school uses this funding wisely to help develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. This prepares them very well for their future studies. Students who attend off-site provision make good progress over time.
- Students who are disabled or who have special educational needs are very well supported. As a result of the very strong provision made for these students' individual needs, they achieve well. Their progress is significantly above the national average and the national average for the group.
- Evidence gathered during the inspection, and the school's robust checks on students' progress, confirm that all are continuing to make outstanding progress from their respective starting points. There is no difference in the performance of different ethnic groups. Early entry results confirm improvements across all subjects, especially science and geography.

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	100457
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	449418

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	823
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jill McLaughlin
Headteacher	Jo Dibb
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 September 2008
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