

# Quintin Kynaston School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	101149
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	307604
Inspection dates	10 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Asyia Kazmi (HMI)

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

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Type of School	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	1359
Sixth form	316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Patrick Lees
Headteacher	Ms Jo Shuter
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2004
School address	Marlborough Hill London NW8 0NL
Telephone number	020 7722 8141
Fax number	020 7586 8473

Age group	11-18
Inspection Date(s)	10 December 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspector and an Additional Inspector.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards; teaching and learning; students' personal development and well-being; aspects of leadership and management and the effectiveness of the sixth form.

Evidence was collected from: visits to lessons; national assessment data and the school's own records and analyses; observation of lessons and of the school at work; discussions with staff and students; and parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

Quintin Kynaston School is a larger than average, oversubscribed, mixed school. There are more boys than girls. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals, at nearly 50%, is well above the national average. Many students are resident in areas which are considered economically disadvantaged. Approximately 40% of students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities; this is well above average, as is the proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs. These are predominantly moderate learning difficulties and difficulties in the areas of behavioural, emotional or social development.

At 90%, the proportion of students from minority ethnic heritages is well above the national average. There is a very rich and diverse ethnic mix in the school which includes students from Bangladeshi, White British and other White groups, African and many other ethnic heritages. An appreciable number of students are from refugee or asylum seeker families. Approximately three quarters of the students speak English as an additional language and a fair number are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Predominant languages spoken by these students are Arabic, Albanian and Somali. The school has had specialist status as a Technology College since 2001 and has a Healthy School Award. It is also a full service extended school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Quintin Kynaston is an outstanding school and exceptionally well led by its inspirational headteacher. In this school, it is not just every child who matters but every staff member and every family. The school takes a very holistic view of students' development and works relentlessly to overcome barriers to learning. For some students the barriers are considerable.

The headteacher, with her senior leaders, sets very high expectations and ensures that they are realised through rigorous monitoring and support systems for students and staff. Her powerful, inclusive vision is shared by all staff and implemented very effectively by skilled senior leaders. Staff, students and parents value the headteacher highly. She embodies the personalised approach in the school and knows all students by name, sending every student handwritten birthday cards. Among students' comments to inspectors were, 'The headteacher is brilliant, she is always there and really believes in us, and she is our backbone.' It is to her and the senior leaders' credit that students' high achievement was sustained while the headteacher and deputy headteacher were supporting a local school experiencing difficulties. The personalised approach to students' well-being is complemented by well-established systems to ensure that all staff are held to account for students' achievement through robust evaluation of the school's work.

The achievement of students is outstanding. When compared to national rates, it is among the top 5% nationally and in English it is in the top 1% of schools. Students enter school with standards that are below average, although these are rising towards the national average for the current Year 7. By the end of Year 11, standards are above average overall, both for the percentage of students gaining five or more good GCSE passes and when English and mathematics are included. Furthermore, all students achieve at least five GCSE passes and nearly all achieve passes in English and mathematics. This signifies how inclusive the school is and how well the curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of students. Students with learning difficulties make exceptional progress because of good teaching combined with a very personalised support programme. For example, to ensure the very best provision for students with learning difficulties, staff embarked on a research programme with a local university to develop practice further. Those who are learning English as an additional language benefit from highly skilled support by additional staff in class, and some withdrawal sessions where teaching challenges students to make rapid progress. The impact of the school's specialism is evident in the standards that students reach and targets in the specialist subjects are consistently exceeded. The school's specialist status has played a key role in developing strong links with the business community, which provides students with excellent opportunities to develop their economic well-being.

Students make excellent progress with the good teaching they experience and also because they get extensive support and guidance from staff and develop very positive attitudes to learning. Although teaching overall is good, there is much that is outstanding. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and planning is meticulous. In English, it is exemplary. Marking is formative and helps students to improve. A few teachers are new to the profession and, as senior leaders note, need time to develop their practice. The school has very effective systems to ensure this happens. Students, in conjunction with their teachers, set their own targets and report on progress made at parent-teacher evenings.

Care, guidance and support for students are outstanding, and promote their excellent achievement and personal development. The work of support staff in school and through the extended school provision is integrated into the whole provision for students in a cohesive way. Curriculum leaders and directors of learning monitor progress regularly, as well as by means of the progress review meetings held by senior leaders. This is complemented by the weekly referrals meetings, held to look at students' development in a holistic way and to identify vulnerable students. These meetings are led by a deputy headteacher supported by directors of learning and involve representatives from a range of agencies. As a result of the highly meticulous analysis of progress, innovative and bespoke strategies are designed in order to meet the needs of students. Support for students is extensive and ranges from intensive support in the Learning Centre to mentoring by youth workers. Programmes have included support for White British learners as well as other ethnic groups. A programme is in place to address the needs of some disaffected girls, involving work to raise their self-esteem and self-awareness. An important feature of the support provided to students is the link between subject areas and support staff. For example, students withdrawn from lessons study the same topics as their classmates. All intervention is carefully evaluated, by students as well as staff, to check the impact it has on learning and raising achievement.

Students are exceptionally well involved in the life of the school. The contribution of students to their community is exemplary. As a parent reported, the opportunities provided by the school 'develop youngsters into young citizens'. Links with a sister school in Kenya develop international dimensions and facilitate exchange visits by students and staff. Examples of innovative practice include the training of students to observe lessons. Their focuses for observations have included gender balance in teachers' questioning and students who may not be participating actively in lessons. Following observations, students give helpful feedback to teachers. Subsequently, they share their findings with senior leaders, which informs further development. This is a testament to the confidence of teachers in the school and the excellent relationships evident between teachers and students. As students reported, 'everyone in this school is a learner, including the staff'. New staff members are encouraged to work in the youth club to get to know their students better. This has a beneficial impact on developing positive relationships.

This is a listening school and it is a responsive school. Parents and students feel they can go to senior leaders with suggestions, which will be acted on. Every member of the senior leadership team mentors students in the school. This means that all students have at least two formal opportunities during the school year to air their views with senior leaders. This is also an excellent tool for evaluation for senior leaders and informs developments. Community cohesion is outstanding; the school works extensively with families and the local community. It is a sign of the efforts of the school that its immediate local community is involved in the life of the school. Support for parents includes family learning programmes, literacy programmes, coffee mornings with senior leaders and a range of learning opportunities. During formal parent meetings, the school hosts a one-stop shop to enable parents to access multi-agency support.

This is a highly inclusive school; as one student noted, 'everyone is given a second chance here'. Exclusions are below the national average and well below the local authority average. Many students return to school after leaving and 'give back'. One student, now at university but working part time as a youth worker, reported that he does not see the school as a school but as a home. Parents and staff also reported on the 'family feel' of the school that enables students to flourish. Attitudes to learning are excellent and behaviour is good. Where poor behaviour impacts on learning, the student and the teacher, with a middle leader take part in a reconciliation process before the student can return to lessons. This ensures that there are clear expectations of behaviour and promotes improvement. Students feel safe in this school. There is little bullying and both students and parents report that if it occurs, it will be dealt with effectively.

Senior leaders have a very good understanding of the needs of students and of barriers to their achievement. A stretch programme is in place to ensure the achievement of higher-attaining students and to raise their aspirations. It is to the credit of all school staff that students are able to articulate very powerfully how they might have been lost to the system if the school had not supported them in returning to education and achievement. The school rightly prides itself in seeing the whole person and provides many opportunities for students to succeed. This was articulated powerfully by a student who had previously been excluded and is now applying to Oxford University. The feelings of the many parents is summed up in the comments of one, 'The school is totally committed to achievement and the student's own development as well-rounded individuals.'

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

Students' achievement in the sixth form is outstanding. Students' standards on entry to the sixth form are wide-ranging, but overall they are below average. By the time they leave, students attain standards which are average overall and rising steadily. The percentage of students gaining a pass grade at A-level was above average in 2008, at 100%. Furthermore, their achievement was among the top 10% in the country when measured against their starting points on entry into the sixth form. Higher-attaining students also achieved outstanding results. Students have excellent opportunities to study a wide range of academic and vocational subjects, which are complemented by an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities. The curriculum is inclusive and provides avenues for progression that meet the needs of all students. For example, students can study for AS qualifications over two years before progressing on to A-level courses.

As in the main school, systems to monitor progress and provide support for students are outstanding. Leadership in the sixth form is very focused on securing progress, and there are excellent tracking systems to provide early identification of underachievement. Targets for students are challenging and are monitored on a weekly basis and reviewed half-termly. Students learning English as an additional language benefit from a dedicated teacher in the sixth form to ensure that language barriers are overcome.

Opportunities to promote students' personal development are exceptional and include mentoring from university students and internships in well-known companies. Sixth form students drive and evaluate a range of initiatives across the school, and their work in developing student voice across the school is exemplary. This means students develop confidence and personal skills that are impressive. The vast majority of students complete their courses. Many students who embark on higher education are the first in their family to do so, and it is an impressive affirmation of the school's impact that all students in Year 13 progressed on to higher education.

## What the school should do to improve further

- In order to improve even further, senior leaders should continue to implement the school's development plan.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

**Annex A**

# Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19
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## Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

## Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

## Personal development and well-being

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

## The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

<sup>2</sup> IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

## Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Annex B

## Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

05 January 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Quintin Kynaston School, London, NW8 0NL

On behalf of Mr Gulab and myself, who visited your school recently, I would like to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us. We valued the discussions we had with you and I would like to take this opportunity to share our findings.

Yours is an outstanding school and you are right to be proud of it. Many of you, and your parents, told us how much you valued the support of all staff. The progress you make in your subjects is outstanding. When compared to national rates, your progress is among the best in the country. Particularly important is how many of you achieve five GCSE passes including English and mathematics. Staff in your school provide you with many opportunities to excel and this is seen in the wide range of clubs and activities you are involved in. Your involvement in the life of the school and in promoting improvement is particularly impressive. Your attendance is excellent and your behaviour is good and it is important that this is maintained by you. Also impressive is the high number of students who stay on in education in the sixth form, as well as after leaving the sixth form.

Your headteacher is exceptional. Your school is very well led and senior leaders are very aware of what needs to be done to ensure that your achievement remains excellent.

It was a pleasure to visit your school and I wish you and your school continued success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Asyia Kazmi  
Her Majesty's Inspector

