

# Plumstead Manor/Negus School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100183
<b>Local Authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	376366
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Samantha Morgan-Price HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1860
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	528
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Frank Lerner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Sue Flanagan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14–15 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Old Mill Road London SE18 1QF
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<b>Age group</b>	11–19
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. Forty-six lessons were observed; which equalled the number of teachers seen. Meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body, staff, and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's records and analyses of lesson observations, the school improvement plan, attainment and achievement data, records of more vulnerable students, curriculum information and leaders' and managers' self-evaluations. The inspection team scrutinised 316 student, 96 staff and 277 parent and carer questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The achievement of students, especially the more able, those who require intensive school support and those in the care of the local authority, to determine whether teaching and assessment are sufficiently challenging and meeting their needs.
- The care, guidance and support for those students whose circumstances make them more vulnerable, especially students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in care.
- The quality of middle leaders and the steps that have been taken to improve teaching and assessment across the school particularly in weaker subjects.
- The overall effectiveness of the sixth form.

## Information about the school

The school is a larger-than-average secondary school. Approximately a third of students are of White British heritage and one fifth is Black African. The remainder are from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. The number of students who speak English as an additional language is around 40%; which is significantly higher than the national average. This demonstrates an increase since the last inspection. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally. The largest group of these have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There is designated special provision for around fifteen students who have moderate learning difficulties.

The school is currently based on two sites with an additional requirement for temporary accommodation, due to the 'Building Schools for the Future' programme. This will ultimately provide purpose-built premises that will house both the main school and the sixth form. At present, Negus, the school's sixth form is based in an unused school a mile from Plumstead Manor. The school gained Performing Arts College status in 2000, Humanities College status in 2004 and Applied Learning status in 2007.

**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

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Despite the extensive building work, school leaders have ensured that the school community knows it is 'business as usual'. The senior leaders have put good measures in place to ensure that middle leaders are more accountable for their subject's performance. There is a shared ethos to raise students' expectations of what they can achieve and attainment targets are challenging. This has resulted in an increased proportion of students achieving five GCSEs at A\* to C including English and mathematics and an increase in the proportion of students gaining A\* and A grades.

Students make good progress at Plumstead Manor as the school provides a good curriculum, good teaching and excellent, care, guidance and support. There are extensive transition arrangements with partner primary schools that enable students to move between schools in Year 7 extremely smoothly. Detailed tracking and support systems result in students receiving the right support to enable them to fully engage in their learning. The outstanding partnerships the school has forged with outside agencies, particularly for those students who are deemed to be the most vulnerable, effectively contribute to students' well-being. Students feel extremely safe at school and their attendance is above average. The school's specialisms contribute well to their experiences in the school, especially the performing arts which has contributed to the rise in attainment in English. The students make an excellent contribution to the school and the wider community. There is an effective mentoring programme that students speak highly of, and there are many opportunities for students to make a contribution to the school including sitting in on interview panels for senior and other staff appointments.

Students make good progress to achieve average standards at the end of Year 11. Students' progress in the sixth form is satisfactory although retention rates are not as good as they could be. The school has worked well to close the gap for particular groups of students who were not achieving as well as their peers. Students in care receive excellent support and are making progress that is equivalent to that of their peers. The achievement of those students requiring extensive school support and the more able is showing a marked improvement.

School leaders recognise that there is still more work to be done to enable more able students to make the progress they are capable of. Teaching in the main school provides a platform for students to make good progress, although it is not of the highest standard to enable all students to make the best progress. The use of

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assessment by teachers is improving and the quality of some marked work seen was excellent. There is still a proportion of teaching which is satisfactory. In the many good lessons observed, teachers planned well for students' learning and injected good pace and variety into lesson activities. In some lessons teachers did not provide appropriate stretch or challenge for the more-able students. The school recognises that not all lessons are providing appropriate opportunities for more able students to excel in their learning as the expectations of what students can achieve are sometimes too low.

There have been improvements in many subjects that were significantly underperforming in 2010 and many strong initiatives have been introduced to secure better teaching. A few middle leaders are yet to effectively scrutinise the quality of teaching to bring about a decrease in the proportion of satisfactory lessons. The school knows where its attention needs to be focused as self-evaluation is in the main accurate and monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes of the action points have improved. This enables the school to demonstrate a good capacity to improve. The school is working hard to increase parental/carer involvement in the running of the school; however, some parents and carers do not feel that their suggestions or concerns are taken into account. School leaders know that students' achievement in some subjects including science is not good enough and that courses that some students have been guided to take in the sixth form have not led to ultimate success or enabled them to stay on their original programme of study.

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

- Raise attainment across all key stages, especially in science by:
  - ensuring all middle leaders effectively support improvements by monitoring lessons to ensure satisfactory teaching is raised to good or outstanding.
  - making sure teachers increase the level of expectation of what all students are capable of to provide effective opportunities for more-able students to excel in their learning.
- Improve students' achievement and retention rates in the sixth form by:
  - ensuring that the guidance to all students prior to them starting in the sixth form takes fully into account their capabilities and prior attainment
  - effectively monitoring students' attainment.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Students enter the school in Year 7 with levels of attainment that are below average. The good progress they make enables them to achieve average standards in their GCSEs in Year 11. More-able students are being monitored to ensure that the improvements made in their achievement in 2011 are built upon in 2012. The

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extensive support for students in care enables them to make outstanding progress. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve as well as their peers. Students who speak English as an additional language make good progress in their learning. In most lessons students are motivated and engaged by their learning activities. The opportunities provided for them to work independently were well used. Many students know their levels of attainment and their ability to self-evaluate their performance was quite developed in some lessons. Peer discussions are developing students’ skills of oracy and working in a team.

Students’ attendance is above average and they behave well. They understand what factors constitute a healthy lifestyle but some are reluctant to pursue this in practice. For example, there are many opportunities to maintain a healthy diet at school, but some choose not to. The school has begun to increase its promotion of healthy eating to improve this situation. There is a strong sense of community in the school and students respect and celebrate being part of a diverse school community. They also appreciate the opportunities to attend the many cultural events that the school organises. Students have good opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across subjects, although opportunities to develop skills in information and communication technology are not as strong. There are increasing opportunities for students to organise enterprise activities which they welcome.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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## How effective is the provision?

In the majority of lessons seen, the effective use of assessment by teachers enabled them to make good adjustments to learning activities to quicken the pace of students’ progress. Some good use of questioning techniques provided students with extensive opportunities to assess and develop their own learning. However, when teachers asked closed questions it resulted in limited responses by students which did not enable them to improve or accelerate their learning. The good contribution of learning support assistants in lessons enabled students who are struggling or requiring more intensive support to make good progress. Some teachers’ marking of work was excellent and provided clear explanations of how well students had performed, the National Curriculum level achieved and precise next steps in order for students to improve their performance. Not all marked work seen was of this quality.

The curriculum provides imaginative and effective opportunities for students to learn well. Good pathways are provided at the end of Key Stage 3 that target students’ needs. The wide selection of enrichment activities ranging from dance clubs, rock bands, yoga to homework clubs provide well for students’ interests. There is increasing provision for more-able students.

The school offers a wide range of facilities and resources which help students develop and thrive extremely well. For students who are part of the designated provision, focused care related to their needs enables them to flourish and develop the skills they need to learn effectively. Students who speak English as an additional language are effectively supported through a range of strategies that enable them to make good progress.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Despite the extensive building work, students’ attainment at Plumstead Manor has risen and above average attendance has been maintained. The headteacher and her leadership team are embedding an ethos of high expectations and are more robustly monitoring and scrutinising the work of departments to ensure the culture of continuous improvement is embedded. Senior leaders have undertaken a clear evaluation of how to improve the quality of teaching. The work on increasing the number of outstanding lessons has had a good impact. However, the impact of the

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work to decrease the level of satisfactory teaching is yet to be realised. The members of the governing body, particularly the Chair, have maintained a good level of challenge and are monitoring the school’s work. School leaders are regularly asked pertinent questions regarding the school’s performance. There are robust systems to secure the safeguarding and well-being of students in the school. There has been success in narrowing the gap between all groups that were underperforming and there is a continued drive to tackle discrimination; the school demonstrates that it promotes equality of opportunity well. Many successful strategies have ensured that students work extremely well together and celebrate the cultural and ethnic diversity in the school. Partnerships that promote cohesion in the local and wider community are working well and have enabled the school to work with many community organisations.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Sixth form

The school’s focus and priority have been to maintain an inclusive sixth form. Many students enter Negus with GCSE grades that are significantly lower than those seen nationally. They make satisfactory progress to achieve levels of attainment which are low. Up until 2011, the vast majority of students were guided to take programmes of AS and A levels, as aspirations for these students are high. For some, the challenge was too great which resulted in a significant proportion of students leaving after AS or having to re-take elements of their programme. The vast majority of students who leave Negus progress to education, training or employment. Students behave well and are keen to take on the numerous roles of responsibility available to them.

Many new and positive measures have been implemented by the new head of the sixth form to improve students’ achievement. These include raising the entry

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qualification requirements and reviewing the quality of teaching and initial advice and guidance. The quality of teaching is improving and the vast majority of lessons seen were good or outstanding. However, due to the legacy of satisfactory achievement this improvement is yet to have an impact on students’ rates of progress. The curriculum is broad and varied and there are good opportunities for students to take vocational qualifications. The quality of guidance has significantly improved. The much-improved counselling is now enabling students to make more informed and realistic choices as to their most appropriate programme of study.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	3
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

## Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are of the view that their child enjoys school and is kept safe there. Most parents and carers are happy with their child’s experience at school. A few parents and carers were not in agreement that the school informs them of their child’s progress or takes account of their suggestions. The inspection team did find that the school has many structures in place to keep parents and carers informed of their child’s progress, although the school recognises that more work needs to be undertaken to elicit the views of parents and carers more regularly.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Plumstead Manor/Negus 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 277 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1860 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	114	41	151	55	9	3	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	97	35	161	58	13	5	1	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	87	31	131	47	38	14	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	87	31	149	54	21	8	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	86	31	162	58	15	5	15	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	70	25	161	58	30	11	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	52	19	168	61	39	14	4	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	63	23	164	59	18	6	1	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	72	26	157	57	30	11	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	21	159	57	28	10	14	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	16	153	55	33	12	9	3
The school is led and managed effectively	69	25	170	61	16	6	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	106	38	146	53	15	5	3	1

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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 school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</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.**



14 October 2011

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Plumstead Manor/Negus School, London SE18 1QF**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking to some of you and hearing your views. The inspection team were particularly impressed with your confident and articulate responses to our questions. We judge your school to be good in most respects. The school provides you with excellent care, guidance and support, particularly for those of you requiring more intensive school support and those who are in care. You feel the school provides you with a very safe environment. You make good progress in your learning to achieve standards in your GCSEs which are average. The good quality of teaching and a curriculum that provides good pathways for you in Years 10 and 11 contribute well to your achievement. Although students in the sixth form achieve well below average standards in their AS- and A-level examinations, they make satisfactory progress. We know that you enjoy attending school and your attendance is above average. We judge your behaviour to be good.

The headteacher and senior managers lead and manage the school well. Managers have clear plans of how they want to improve the work of the school to make it even better. The inspection team has asked the school to:

- Raise your attainment across all key stages, especially in science by:
  - ensuring all heads of department effectively support improvements and monitor the quality of your lessons to ensure satisfactory teaching is raised to good or outstanding
  - making sure teachers increase the level of expectation of what you are capable of, to provide effective opportunities for those who are more able to excel in your learning.
  
- Improve your achievement and retention rates in the sixth form by:
  - ensuring that the guidance you receive prior to you starting in the sixth form takes fully into account your capabilities and prior attainment
  - effectively monitoring your levels of attainment.

Yours sincerely

Samantha Morgan-Price  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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