

William Morris Sixth Form

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133545
Local Authority	Hammersmith And Fulham
Inspection number	341395
Inspection dates	3-4 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Gill Close HMI

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

Type of school	Other secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	16-19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	835
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jean-Michel Boehm
Principal	Kevin Gilmartin
Date of previous school inspection	22-23 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors spent the majority of time looking at learning. They visited 49 lessons and tutorials, and held meetings with governors, staff and students. They observed the school's work, and looked at records of students' attainment and progress, improvement planning, self-evaluation, lesson monitoring documents, policies and attendance figures. They also evaluated questionnaire responses from 250 students, 50 staff and 31 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the learning and progress of different groups of students and in key subjects, particularly those subjects in which performance was least strong in 2009
- changes in the curriculum since the previous inspection
- the effectiveness with which leaders at all levels monitor provision, evaluate and identify relative weaknesses and drive improvement, in particular in subject areas that have previously performed less well.

Information about the school

William Morris Sixth Form was established as the country's first 16 to 19 school and remains one of the few such schools. It is on a small site with limited accommodation. There are plans to increase the school's size and facilities. Half of its students come from six main feeder schools, the remainder from a very large area and over 100 schools. Almost all students are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Over half speak a first language other than English, with the most common being Somali and Arabic, and 25 are at an early stage of learning English. One tenth of the students have special educational needs and/or disabilities, with the main area being moderate learning difficulties. More students than average have a statement of special educational needs. One student out of every five is eligible for free school meals.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

William Morris Sixth Form is an outstanding school. It successfully supports students with a wide range of previous qualifications to make outstanding progress and move on to higher education, further education or employment. Although the school is oversubscribed, it maintains its broad entry policy because of its exceptional commitment to equality of opportunity. The highly inclusive ethos welcomes students across the full range of attainment, from those with high examination results to others who have previously been less successful at school, have special educational needs and/or disabilities or are at early stages of learning English. The school enables them to achieve exceptionally well, sometimes through taking one or two years to complete lower level courses prior to moving on to more advanced ones.

Central to the school's success is its outstanding care. Staff build strong relationships with every student, founded firmly on mutual respect. Students feel extremely safe and get on very well with each other in a calm atmosphere of racial harmony. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are exceptionally committed to the school community. The extent of their enjoyment is conveyed in these typical comments: 'School is great. I love it so, so much. It has changed my life in such a positive way' and 'It's a wonderful place to be, the teachers really care.'

Outstanding advice and guidance help students develop a clear sense of direction and take responsibility for their own learning. The broad range of academic and vocational courses is adapted each year to meet their needs and provide well-tailored pathways to their future careers. Extremely well-focused partnerships have been formed to provide customised support, such as for transfer from school or to higher education, to enrich the curriculum and to support vulnerable students.

Parents have great confidence in the school. They praise the 'genuine interest in helping each child do their best' and feel that, 'students are taken seriously and seen as individuals with different needs and expectations.'

It is the combination of good teaching with study support, electronic learning resources and thorough tracking of each student's progress that leads to outstanding achievement. Nevertheless, the school has rightly identified the need for its data system to enable more readily available analyses of a wide range of achievements of groups of students and the impact of its actions. It has plans for new data systems to be in place shortly. Teaching quality varies, with some that is outstanding, much that is good, and instances where it is weaker.

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The principal and senior leaders inspire a drive for inclusive excellence. The exceptionally dedicated staff share the school's clear vision and high expectations for every student to achieve academically and personally. They work extremely well together, analysing students' achievements very carefully and accurately, then making consequent changes in provision. They feel highly valued and proud to work at the school. Students' continued outstanding performance, the accuracy of self-evaluation and the effective impact of the relentless focus at all levels on improving areas of relative weakness demonstrate an outstanding capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and analysis of data, enhancing its accessibility, consistency and timeliness, in order to:
 - enable a more robust analysis of the progress and achievements of groups of students
 - better monitor and evaluate the impact of initiatives
 - drive improvements more effectively in the quality of teaching.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Achievement is outstanding. Students learn extremely well in many lessons because of the quality of teaching and their conscientious approach to work, which the school has successfully developed. They try hard and concentrate throughout. Even where teaching is not as strong, students' progress is outstanding because each subject area also provides individual help in study support sessions. Students choose to attend or are directed to these additional sessions if they find a piece of work difficult. Careful tracking of performance is followed up by tutors so that anyone falling behind is supported, and electronic resources help students catch up work missed or not fully understood. The exceptional care and support for each student ensure that all groups make outstanding progress. Students for whom English is an additional language, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make similar progress to their peers.

The progress students make is very high at A level and significantly above average at AS level. It has remained strong since the last inspection and is consistently outstanding in some subjects. This has enabled students to receive offers of places at prestigious universities including Oxford and Cambridge. The school's data show that current students are making at least good progress in the few courses that performed less well last year. It also indicates outstanding progress on level 2 vocational courses. Many students experience success with GCSE courses but the school rightly evaluates them as an area for improvement, particularly in mathematics, and has introduced a numeracy qualification that some have already achieved. Students join the sixth form with a wide range of attainment. Although this is below average overall, they reach average standards at A level. Three quarters of the A-level students go on to higher education.

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Students' excellent behaviour reflects their strong moral and social principles. Students are confident that any concerns about behaviour are dealt with effectively and fairly. They develop a keen sense of responsibility by leading enrichment activities, interviewing prospective staff and participating in school council activities, such as asking local residents about their views of the school. They raise money for their partner school in Uganda, and some students visit it each year to help out. They say that their views are respected and acted upon. Students are active in taking responsibility for their health. They understand well, factors affecting it but want further health promotion opportunities in school. A large group participate in the annual fun run in Hyde Park and/or a physical activity as part of the enrichment programme. Although some contributed to the decisions to provide healthier food at lunchtime, others do not find it sufficiently appealing. Attendance has risen but remains average. Absence and lateness affect some students' learning and hamper their future success. Despite this, students' very secure understanding of future opportunities, prepares them well for their future economic well-being, as does the excellent support for vulnerable students, for example with money management.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

In most lessons, there is a calm, purposeful atmosphere. Teachers use their good knowledge of the subject and their students to plan work thoroughly and match it to students' needs. Excellent relationships enable students to collaborate well and ask for help. New technology is used effectively to explain ideas and maintain an efficient pace. In the best lessons, teachers challenge all students and develop their independence through involvement in a variety of group and individual activities, monitoring everyone's progress throughout and adapting their interventions accordingly. Where lessons are satisfactory, work is not matched closely enough to individual needs or teachers spend too long directing students rather than

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questioning them to develop and check understanding. Such teaching has contributed to the relatively weak progress in mathematics GCSE. Nevertheless, students' very positive attitudes to work contribute substantially to their learning, even on occasions when teaching is satisfactory.

The school provides an imaginative range of advanced academic and vocational courses leading to several different qualifications in each subject area. In addition, there are foundation and levels 1 and 2 courses including many GCSE subjects and a choice of BTEC options. These are used extremely well to give students a second chance that prepares them for work or moving on to advanced level courses. Evaluation and innovation each year have increased the access to study support and electronic materials, and modified courses flexibly to meet each student's needs more closely within the constraints imposed by the small site. Learning mentors provide very effective support for academic and personal development, particularly for students on one-year courses. Students at the early stages of learning English receive excellent support within and outside lessons that is matched carefully to their individual needs. This includes helping them to develop the technical language for the subjects they are studying and contributes greatly to their outstanding progress.

Excellent advice and guidance from the time of their application interview help students set high aspirations and make well-informed decisions that prepare them effectively for their career paths. The school works closely with partner agencies to provide outstanding care for vulnerable students that meets their well-being and academic needs and enables them to complete their courses successfully. Concerted efforts to increase attendance and punctuality have led to some improvement, although the school recognises that the procedures need tightening.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The annual evaluation and planning cycle accurately identifies areas for development and leads to focused actions that are delivered thoroughly. As a consequence, the curriculum and students' performance have improved, particularly in areas of previous weakness. Comprehensive monitoring of teaching is linked to professional development that has spread good practice but not always been targeted well enough to ensure consistently good or better teaching. Governors know the school well and ensure students are safe, but do not have robust systems for dealing with policies. Following changes in the leadership of the governing body and its

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committees, governors are working together effectively to extend their collection of views and increase the challenge they provide. Good quality training ensures that all staff are well versed in safeguarding procedures and that risk assessments are thorough.

As a result of the staff's determined work to promote equality of opportunity, there is little variation between the performance and participation of different groups, and no discrimination. The school acts very quickly and successfully with new students to bring them together across their wide range of ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds, and raise their understanding of community cohesion beyond the locality. However, there is room for sharper analysis of the impact of its planned actions locally and more widely, and of the results of its steps to promote equality. The school continues to increase the involvement of parents and carers, for example through providing Somali and Arabic translation at parents' evenings and working with ex-students and a home/school liaison officer.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
Taking into account: Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

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Views of parents and carers

Parents are extremely happy with the school. The vast majority of respondents agree with all the statements on the questionnaire. A few disagree that the school helps them to support their child's learning. Inspectors find that the school uses a good range of ways to address this and is continuing to develop them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at William Morris Sixth Form 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 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 835 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	14	45	16	52	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	14	45	16	52	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	14	45	15	48	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	42	17	55	0	0	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	14	45	16	52	0	0	1	3
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	14	45	12	39	4	13	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	19	19	61	2	6	2	6
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)	12	39	16	52	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	13	42	15	48	1	3	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	42	13	42	2	6	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	29	16	52	1	3	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	17	55	13	42	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	18	58	12	39	1	3	0	0

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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



8 February 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of William Morris Sixth Form

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school and for telling us about it.

We found that it is outstanding. You make excellent progress on the courses you study. You told us that the teachers really care. We agree that the exceptionally good way that staff look after and support you helps everyone do well, including those of you who start off with low grades or little English. Staff give you excellent advice and guidance so you become more independent and achieve high goals that prepare you very well for the next step in your careers. Your hard work and the good teaching also contribute to your success. Some of the teaching is outstanding, but there are occasions when it does not meet your needs or develop your independence enough, so we have asked the school to improve these aspects.

You enjoy being at the school very much. There is an exceptionally calm atmosphere of racial harmony with a high degree of respect between staff and students. You get on very well with each other and behave outstandingly well. You told us that you feel extremely safe. Some of you are absent or late, which can hold back your progress. You are keen to be healthy but some of you told us you wanted more healthy opportunities in school and did not like the lunches.

The large range of courses is modified each year so that it matches your needs and interests extremely well, even though the site is small. The principal and the staff work together exceptionally successfully to improve the school and track how every one of you is getting on. They plan to make their data systems more consistent and we agree this is an important priority.

I wish you every success at school and in helping it to improve. You can play your part by continuing to work hard, attending regularly and being on time.

Yours sincerely

Gill Close
Her Majesty's Inspector

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