

Belvue School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101965
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	355100
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Mike Kell

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	12–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	124
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	22
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pat Read
Headteacher	Shelagh OShea
Date of previous school inspection	30 September 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 11 lessons, all taught by different teachers, and held meetings with members of staff, governors and students. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation such as assessment data, safeguarding records and school improvement planning. The 19 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by staff and students.

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

- the procedures for tracking and analysing students' progress and the use of this information
- how well the school meets the learning and personal needs of students with a wide range of learning needs and difficulties
- the systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's behaviour management strategies
- how effectively class teachers and subject teachers liaise to provide academic guidance that enables students to improve their standard of work.

Information about the school

Belvue is a bigger than average special school. There are twice as many boys as girls and all students have a statement of special educational needs. Three quarters of students have either moderate or severe learning difficulties. The remainder have behavioural, social and emotional difficulties or speech, language and communication needs. Although students with a White British heritage form the majority group, the school has on roll students from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. A minority of students speak English as an additional language, but very few are at an early stage of learning the language. Approximately half of students are known to be eligible for free school meals.

Students in each year are grouped by the severity of their learning needs, and hence their capabilities. There are three classes in Year 7 and two in each other year, including at post-16. Each teacher teaches English, mathematics, science and personal, social and health education to their class. Other subjects are taught by specialist staff.

The school has been accredited with a Sportsmark and Gold Artsmark as well as an Extended School award. It also has Healthy School status. An extensive modernisation and refurbishment programme of the accommodation, including some new build, has just been completed.

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

Belvue is a good school with good post-16 provision. ♦ There is a very high expectation that students will become confident communicators and competent at travelling independently. The school prepares its students well for living as independent a life as possible in adulthood. Much of this is made possible by the school's excellent partnerships with local organisations, such as colleges, and its eagerness to exploit community-based learning opportunities. Outstanding links with parents and carers enable targets and expectations to be shared and this contributes to the very impressive way in which the students mature as young people. Their behaviour and attitudes are exemplary.

Students make outstanding progress in other features of their personal development, too. They develop an excellent understanding of a healthy lifestyle and an outstanding awareness of how to remain safe. Attainment is low because of the nature of students' special educational needs, but all groups make good progress and achieve well during their time in the school. The school collects and analyses a vast amount of assessment information on different aspects of students' academic progress. However, the instruments for carrying out subsequent evaluations and for reporting whole-school findings are relatively unsophisticated. In addition, the school makes no attempt to develop an appreciation of how its students perform relative to those of similar capabilities in other schools.

Students benefit from an outstanding curriculum that provides a very wide array of learning opportunities. The quality of teaching and learning is good, being based on high expectations, excellent relationships and eager students. Each class teacher teaches all core subjects but they are not observed by the relevant curriculum coordinator other than for short periods of time. In addition, the coordinators have not been trained in carrying out detailed observations. Consequently, specialist subject input is limited, as is the opportunity to disseminate best practice in these key areas. The school provides a high level of care, guidance and support.

The school employs good procedures for monitoring its own performance. Priorities are generally appropriate to maintaining the school's development. A new middle management team has only just been established and so its members have had little time to make a significant impact. However, they, the experienced senior leaders and an effective governing body have a good capacity to develop the school further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Use collated and analysed assessment data more creatively and succinctly to:

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- develop simple reports that provide clear but detailed and comprehensive whole-school pictures of different aspects of students' progress
- measure the value that the school adds to students' learning by comparing their progress with that of similar students elsewhere
- Develop the leadership of teaching and learning by training curriculum coordinators to carry out lesson observations more rigorously and for longer, thereby disseminating best practice in their subject areas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Students' attainment is low when they enter the school and it remains low despite the good progress that they make in their learning. Although students present a wide range of learning needs, no group underperforms significantly when compared with others. For instance, the school's specialist teacher enables students who are at an early stage of learning English to make good progress through the guidance offered to staff and parents and carers. All students achieve well and acquire key literacy and numeracy skills at a good rate. In particular, they make especially good progress in using these skills in practical situations that help to prepare them for an independent lifestyle, such as communicating and using money in the Year 11 mini-enterprise coffee shop. At the end of their time in school, students perform well in the wide range of accredited subjects and courses that they follow. They transfer successfully into the post-16 department or, in some cases, colleges elsewhere.

Students make striking progress in their personal development, although attendance is average. They are willing participants in learning activities, be they question and answer sessions, practical activities or working in pairs or small groups. They are equally prepared to contribute to the running of the school, such as helping in the tuck shop or through their input on the student council. They make a strong contribution to the school and wider community. Students make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are well-mannered, polite, respectful and supportive of each other. This reflects the impact of the school's extremely good procedures for improving students' behaviour.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching enables students to learn at a good pace. Activities are generally well matched to students' capabilities as teachers use good assessment procedures to obtain accurate information about their prior achievements. Embedded routines and students' willingness to learn ensure that time is generally used efficiently. Teachers and learning support assistants are adept at including and involving all students, such as by using additional communication approaches or simply through praise and encouragement. However, on occasion, this support is given too quickly and this discourages independent learning. At other times, learning opportunities are missed when, for instance, activities do not always stretch the highest-attaining students, such as getting them to research information for themselves.

The well-planned and extensive curriculum provides a rich variety of learning opportunities. In-school provision is supplemented extremely well by local facilities, resources in the wider London area and annual residential visits. There are many learning opportunities available outside the school day, too. Almost half of students avail themselves of at least one after-school club, and a few attend a Saturday morning session and participate in holiday activities. Excellent partnerships with local schools enable a very small number of students, such as those with a particular talent in a subject, to have their curriculum needs met through inclusion in mainstream schools.

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Staff know learners extremely well and so they give tailored support and guidance to help students attain their goals. Students' transition into and out of school is managed very effectively. Parents and carers are unanimous in their view that their children are safe in school, and students confirm this with comments like, 'Adults help us when we need them. The premises are safe and secure.' Risk assessments and welfare practice are of a high standard. Incidents are reported, logged and pursued, but they are not always 'signed off' to show the outcomes of the actions that were taken.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The governing body plays its role well. It has overseen the implementation of good procedures for safeguarding students. The headteacher and senior colleagues have a very clear view about the school's purpose and strategic direction. They are ambitious in terms of providing opportunities for learners to develop and learn in an environment that acknowledges their emotional well-being. Ambition does not extend into a wider context by seeing how well the school matches up to similar ones elsewhere. Leaders do not compare students' performance with learners in other schools in order to see the value that it adds to their achievements.

Students' academic and pastoral growth are routinely monitored, assessed and recorded. Details are tracked, and analysed to check that neither individuals nor groups are being disadvantaged, reflecting leaders' outstanding commitment to equality of opportunity. Leaders do not, however, collate assessment information about individuals, such as improvements in their reading ages or phonic awareness, into a series of whole school pictures. They ensure that individuals' progress is well documented, but they do not draw together information from across the school into succinct and straightforward documents that report separately on each of the indicators of progress that they measure.

The excellent commitment to removing barriers to learning in school is echoed in the school's good contribution to promoting community cohesion. Leaders know their local community and the one formed by parents and carers, who may live some distance away. The school works diligently to involve both communities. Leaders monitor the quality of provision but core subject curriculum coordinators are not involved enough in supplying specialist advice to colleagues, the vast majority of whom teach these subjects to their classes. The coordinators carry out only partial observations, and they have not been trained to carry out this monitoring.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	2

Sixth form

Post-16 young people are prepared well for leaving school. They are well taught and they make good improvement in their learning and excellent progress in their personal development. An excellent curriculum that meets the interests and needs of this age group enables them to acquire and consolidate workplace skills through interesting activities and in a variety of situations. College links, work experience placements and mini-enterprises such as the tuck shop and glass work put students into situations in which they have to communicate. Opportunities afforded to them through activities like the Duke of Edinburgh's Award make an important contribution to promoting students' independence and confidence.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Although the number of questionnaires returned was low, they showed overwhelming support for the school. Without exception, parents and carers believe that their children

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are safe, enjoy school and that they are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle. The inspection team agrees with parents' and carers' positive views and understands the sentiments expressed through comments such as, 'So far the school has exceeded my expectation' and 'We have had so much help and support.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Belvue 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 19 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 124 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	11	58	8	42	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	58	8	42	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	9	47	10	53	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	37	8	42	2	11	2	11
The teaching is good at this school	8	42	8	42	1	5	2	11
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	47	9	47	0	0	1	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	47	10	53	0	0	0	0
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)	6	32	11	58	0	0	2	11
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	47	8	42	0	0	2	11
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	47	7	37	1	5	2	11
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	42	8	42	0	0	3	16
The school is led and managed effectively	11	58	6	32	0	0	2	11
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	58	8	42	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. 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.



1 October 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Belvue School, Northolt, UB5 6AG

Thank you for welcoming us into your school when we visited. You told us that Belvue is a good school. You were right. We agree with you. Lessons are enjoyable and so you make good progress in your work. The school gives you lots of other interesting things to do, too, such as studying in college, attending after-school clubs and going to stay away overnight each year. All of these things are very helpful in getting you ready to leave school. The staff take good care of you and keep you safe.

We were impressed with how much you grow up as young people. Your behaviour and the way that you treat each other and adults are excellent. You have a very good approach to learning new information. You know a great deal about how to stay safe and what you need to do to live a healthy life. It was good to see many of you helping by doing jobs around the school, such as by being on the school council or helping in the coffee shop.

The people in charge of your school do a good job. They are always trying to make things even better and we have given them some ideas. These include:

- checking to see whether you make more progress in your work than students in other schools that are similar to yours
- encouraging different teachers to watch more of your lessons.

Thank you once again and I hope that every one of you continues to go to school as much as you possibly can and that you carry on behaving very well.

Finally, I wish all of you every success in the future, especially if you are leaving school next summer.

Yours sincerely

Mike Kell

Lead inspector

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