

Brentside High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101939
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	355099
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Christine Raeside HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1296
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Catherine Smith
Headteacher	Mr Arwel Jones
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2008
School address	Greenford Avenue Hanwell London W7 1JJ
Telephone number	02085759162
Fax number	02088332100
Email address	info@brentsidehigh.ealing.sch.uk

Age group	11–18
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2011
Inspection number	355099

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The team observed 44 lessons taught by 43 teachers, six of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked closely at its analysis of student progress and attainment. Meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body, parents and carers, staff and a headteacher working in partnership with the school. Inspectors scrutinised the school development plan, policies, reports from the School Improvement Partner and records of school improvement work. They considered responses to questionnaires by 209 parents and carers, 227 students and 79 staff.

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

- The effectiveness and sustainability of strategies to raise attainment and improve rates of progress for all students, with a particular focus on science.
- The impact of steps taken since the last inspection to raise standards of achievement and improve the curriculum in the sixth form.
- The effectiveness of leaders at all levels in driving improvement in teaching, learning and students' outcomes.
- The quality of learning and progress for students of above-average ability, especially girls.

Information about the school

Brentside High School is a larger-than-average, mixed comprehensive school serving a culturally and socially diverse community in Ealing. The very large majority of students are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost two thirds speak English as an additional language and around a third are refugees or asylum seekers. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is approximately double the national average, about one third of the school. A slightly higher-than-average proportion of students is identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A higher-than-average proportion has a statement of special educational needs. The school has held specialist status in the visual arts since September 2001 and in applied learning since September 2009. It holds a number of awards, including Investors in People, Artsmark Gold and Chartermark, and very recently received an upgrade to its International School status.

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

Brentside High School is a good school, which lives up to its vision of high expectations for all, with 'no exceptions, no excuses'. Equality of opportunity sits at the heart of that ambition and is demonstrated through the consistently good progress made by all groups of students. Care, guidance and support for students are exceptional. One parent was keen to stress 'the dedication to pupil welfare that these teachers display'. Students say that they feel extremely safe at school and their parents and carers agree overwhelmingly. Incidents of bullying or racism are rare and students are confident that any concerns will be dealt with effectively. They are supported extremely well by a range of adults, including 'Safe workers', whose support for students and families has led to high attendance and lower-than-average rates of persistent absence. The school closely monitors the progress, attendance and wellbeing of students who arrive during the school year, including those who are acquiring English as an additional language. Specially targeted programmes ensure that they settle quickly and that their learning is supported and accelerated.

The extremely diverse school community is harmonious and cohesive. Students have a sophisticated understanding of religious and cultural differences and are keen to understand and celebrate one another's beliefs and values. The school's outward-looking culture has resulted in highly productive partnerships which enhance students' educational experiences and support their good progress. Through the visual arts specialism, the students have presented work in prestigious London galleries and developed links with schools overseas, such as in Egypt and Nepal. Visits and exchanges between Brentside and a local special school have developed further students' capacity to reflect on and understand others' needs.

The unrelenting focus on student care has combined with good teaching to raise overall levels of attainment so that they are now above average. Students' good progress in mathematics and exceptional progress in English is not yet matched in science, where attainment has been persistently below national averages in recent years. That low profile, however, masks a rising trend in GCSE results, set to improve this year. Well-founded predictions and results achieved already indicate that science is developing well under effective new leadership.

Teaching seen during the inspection was good and occasionally outstanding. Detailed assessment information is used effectively in the best lessons to plan activities that secure good progress for all students. Where teaching is no more than satisfactory, it is often because teaching has not taken sufficient account of that information and the same task is sometimes set for all, to limited effect. Although students receive some excellent feedback on their work, both verbally and in marking, this is variable. Marking is sometimes sparse or does not provide useful advice for improvement.

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

The outstanding care and guidance experienced by students at Brentside continues into the sixth form, which has improved since the last inspection and is now good. There is a strong focus on inclusion, with all students being encouraged to stay in education and guided onto appropriate courses. Last year, all Brentside students made successful transitions into further education or employment.

The headteacher has developed a climate in which, as one head of department put it, 'every decision is made for the benefit of the students, with no compromise'. He and his senior team have established a culture of high expectations, mutual respect and success. They have tackled key areas for development identified at the last inspection effectively. Their evaluation of what the school needs to do to improve further is accurate. Plans for the next phase of development are underway and appropriately focused on driving student achievement even further. The capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment and rates of progress in science so that at least they match those in English and mathematics.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching, by:
 - ensuring that lesson planning builds on what teachers know about students' abilities and progress so that activities are tailored to meet individual needs
 - improving the quality of feedback, including through marking and effective questioning, so that students know how to improve their work
 - disseminating the excellent practice that, in some departments, is driving outstanding progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students apply themselves well to their learning and respond with enthusiasm to opportunities to express their ideas and opinions. An overwhelming majority of those responding to inspection questionnaires stated that they enjoy school and learn a lot in lessons. That is evident in their positive attitudes and eagerness to do well. They speak confidently about their levels, grades and targets and enjoy challenging themselves and one another to improve. This is especially notable in English lessons, where students are confident about their progress. The students think carefully about how to improve their answers and support one another, for example with tricky spelling or vocabulary. In 2010, progress for all groups of students in English and for most in mathematics was outstanding.

From starting points that are lower than average, students made good or outstanding progress overall, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Any exception is acted upon quickly. For example, in 2010, higher-ability students, especially girls, made less-good progress than their peers. This group is on track to do significantly better this year.

Students' good behaviour contributes well to their learning. The students are polite, welcoming and courteous. They appreciate the modern school building and movement around the site is calm and orderly. Most parents and carers feel that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour and the vast majority of students agree.

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

Strategies to manage challenging behaviour are understood well by students and staff; exclusion rates have fallen and are now low. Students know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and a large proportion takes part in after-school activities such as sport. They show a heightened awareness of wider health-related issues and appreciate specialist input from outside speakers in this area, for example at the Year 11 Health Fair. They are involved extensively in the school and the wider community, such as through the local Youth Parliament or by taking on school council or prefect roles. The school is now a hub for the BBC School Report initiative, having successfully broadcast reports for three consecutive years. The well-developed sense of responsibility and maturity that results from these experiences equips Brentside students well for the next stage in their education or the world of work. Those work-related skills are underpinned effectively by their above-average attainment in English and mathematics and their high attendance.

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	2
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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

The best lessons are characterised by excellent relationships between students and staff and a shared commitment to learning. Students know exactly how well they are doing and how to improve. They are eager to answer questions and unafraid to take risks, irrespective of their ability. Teachers stimulate that eagerness with targeted questioning and by clearly explaining the differences in demand from one level or grade to the next. That is supported by feedback in books, which is not only encouraging, but also points

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

clearly to the next steps for improvement. Those features are not consistent in satisfactory lessons, where opportunities for students to reflect on their learning are limited. Teaching in these lessons can be teacher dominated and learning passive.

The curriculum is well planned and adapted to meet the full range of students' needs. Specialist status in the arts has been used effectively to enrich provision. Students who speak English as an additional language are encouraged to take GCSEs in their first languages and do so successfully. Careers guidance and enterprise initiatives are well delivered through specialist applied learning days. Where assessment and tracking indicate potential underachievement, the school intervenes with targeted support, such as the Year 11 GCSE residential. A large proportion of students takes GCSEs in modern foreign languages and the school is developing its offer in the humanities. An appropriately demanding option is developing for more able students, including the study of individual sciences.

Keenly focused support for individual needs is a strength of the school. Personalised support programmes are implemented for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities on transfer from primary school. The 'inclusion panel' monitors the achievement of potentially vulnerable students closely, such as looked-after children or Travellers. The school can point to striking examples of impact, such as providing support through serious medical challenges to secure high achievement.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, along with his senior team, has successfully established a vision of success for every student at Brentside and a climate in which this can be achieved. Some highly effective middle leaders are improving performance within their departments and working together to raise achievement across all subject areas. There are clear systems for the evaluation of teaching and learning, although these are occasionally over-generous in their application. Extensive data on the performance of different groups are interrogated well and used to increase progress and attainment. This has been highly successful in English and is developing well elsewhere.

The governing body meets its statutory duties effectively and provides a range of expertise to support the school, for example in health and safety, financial management and human resources. It has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provides challenge through visits to departments and lesson observations. It seeks the views of parents and carers, both formally and informally, for example by maintaining a presence at parents' evenings or by conducting surveys. The school involves parents and

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

carers successfully in their children's education, including through termly Year 7 mathematics sessions, designed to 'raise interest, engagement and attainment'. 'Safe workers' conduct home visits to support high attendance and to maintain constructive links with families experiencing challenging circumstances.

The school is committed highly to developing partnerships which will enhance the educational experience of Brentside students. Reciprocal arrangements with other schools have been used to develop specialist expertise, such as mathematics enrichment for Year 10. Brentside offers leadership expertise to others, such as support through the national Gaining Ground initiative, described by a partner headteacher as a highly effective collaboration. The deputy headteacher has been invited to present on a national platform on exemplary practice in school management systems. The systems are used, amongst other things, to scrutinise equality of opportunity closely and to tackle with alacrity any emerging gaps in achievement between different groups of students. Students understand that their school is committed exceptionally to community cohesion and are involved widely in initiatives within and beyond the school to maintain this. The school has clear policies and strategies for the safeguarding of all members of the school community. They are quality assured and reviewed regularly through the effective management of child protection. Designated senior staff ensure that there are appropriate levels of security and that recommended safer recruitment practice is followed.

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	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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

Numbers in the highly inclusive sixth form are increasing steadily and retention rates have improved as the curriculum is matched more appropriately to students' needs. Teaching is good. Students are encouraged to evaluate its quality and senior leaders have encouraged staff to be more risk-taking and innovative in their practice as a result. The curriculum

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

provides a balance of 'pathways' to reflect different needs and is routinely evaluated. Feedback from students has influenced its design, for example through the introduction of popular courses such as psychology, applied science and the expanded health and social care programme. Progress for the majority of students is now good or outstanding, although there remains some variation between courses.

In mathematics, 'bridging the gap' sessions prepare Year 11 students for the transition to AS and A levels. Students in Years 12 and 13 receive challenging targets, against which their performance is monitored closely. There are good systems for regular feedback to students and their parents and carers, with early intervention where concerns are raised. A range of outside institutions, such as investment banks, are used well to provide information, advice and guidance on progress into higher education or employment. The growing Brentside Alumni enables former students to share their experiences and help to raise aspirations. Sixth-formers provide support to younger students, for example as peer mentors. They willingly take on leadership roles, such as in the Junior Leadership Group, or through their involvement in action groups to support good behaviour or to raise funds for charity.

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

An average proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. Almost all are happy overall with their children's experience at school, agree that they are safe and that they enjoy school, views that are consistent with the inspection findings. Several made specific reference to supportive staff and the very caring environment, one commenting on how their son had 'exceeded expectations and had great fun in the process'. A very small minority did not agree that the school deals well with unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brentside High 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 209 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1296 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	36	128	61	4	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	83	40	122	58	2	1	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	79	38	118	56	12	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	33	136	65	5	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	68	33	129	62	8	4	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	65	31	116	56	26	12	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	21	133	64	28	13	1	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)	59	28	128	61	7	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	24	139	67	12	6	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	28	116	56	19	9	9	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	21	128	61	18	9	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	63	30	133	64	7	3	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	89	43	114	55	3	1	2	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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">■ 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.



17 June 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Brentside High School, London W7 1JJ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us during the recent inspection of your school. You told us that you feel extremely safe at school. We agree that your staff work very hard to make your school an exceptionally safe and caring place, which is committed to the success of every individual ('no exceptions, no excuses'). That shows in your examination results, which are improving every year. You make good progress overall and mostly outstanding in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Results have been less good in science, although they are improving, and we have asked your senior teachers to maintain a strong focus on this subject.

We were particularly impressed with how well you all get on with one another and show great respect for one another's languages, religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds. That is a strength of your school and is supported by the range of experiences beyond school you can participate in. The specialism helps to expand your horizons; some of you have taken work to galleries usually only frequented by professional artists.

The staff monitor your progress and well-being closely so that no one falls behind and take great care to help you get the best out of your chosen courses. The good sixth form is an example of this. Sixth-formers who spoke to us showed great commitment to their ongoing education and some of you hardly seem to leave the building, you work so late!

You show great support for one another's learning. We saw examples of students discussing and assessing each other's work respectfully and constructively. We think that your lessons are best when they are planned to challenge you and make all of you think about, discuss and participate fully in the learning and so we have asked the school leaders to make sure more lessons are like this. We have also asked them to make sure you get good-quality feedback from all teachers, especially through marking, which was mixed in quality. You can help by continuing to strive for excellent results.

Yours sincerely

Christine Raeside

Her Majesty's Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.