

Bournemouth School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	137452
Local Authority	N/A
Inspection number	378770
Inspection dates	13–14 September 2011
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	1082
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Burrows
Headteacher	Dorian Lewis
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
School address	East Way Bournemouth Dorset BH8 9PY
Telephone number	01202 512609
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Age group	11–18
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. They observed 40 lessons taught by 39 teachers and held meetings with students, staff and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at its policies, records, assessments and questionnaires from students, staff and 332 parents and carers.

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

- Has the school's monitoring ensured more consistently good teaching and greater variety of teaching strategies?
- How effective is the governing body in offering robust challenges to the school?
- Does the curriculum offer a broad variety of experiences to students?

Information about the school

Bournemouth School is a larger than average boys' secondary school. It became an academy on 1 September 2011 and made some changes to its senior management team at this time. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. There is a smaller-than-average percentage of students from minority ethnic groups and most speak English as their first language. The school has a well below average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

2

Main findings

Bournemouth School is outstanding. Students' achievement is excellent; students make consistently good progress and attainment is high. Almost all aspects of students' personal development are outstanding, particularly in the way they contribute to school life and to the wider community. Students regard their school very favourably and delight in opportunities such as participating in house activities. For example, students from each house select a charity and choose the best ways to glean funds, raising thousands of pounds annually. The sixth form is fully integrated into the main school and is very popular with students, whose achievement is also outstanding.

Teaching is good and typified by strong collaboration between skilled teachers and enthusiastic boys. Most teaching is lively and good resources help make most lessons interesting and enjoyable. Good behaviour means there are few unnecessary interruptions but, in a few lessons the pace is rather slow and teaching does not fully engage students. Improving assessment provides useful information, and effective action in response to assessment information, led by heads of houses, ensures very few students fall behind. Exceptional care means each student is very well known to many staff and arrangements for transfer into and out of the school are exceptionally thorough, ensuring a smooth transition for most students. The curriculum is outstanding. The school gives equality of opportunity a high priority; this ensures that there is negligible unevenness in the performance of different groups of students. There are numerous opportunities for students to make the best use of their talents whether in the arts, on the sports field or elsewhere.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. The move to an academy has seen few changes except a revision of the senior leadership team. The headteacher, senior leaders and managers have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They embed ambition well and lead the drive for improvement. Accurate self-evaluation feeds into clear, focused plans for the future. However, the very recent re-organisation of leadership and management means that, while improvements are now underway, the full impact of the changes has not yet been felt. For example, some inconsistencies remain in teaching, partly because the monitoring of teaching and learning is not always rigorous. Good management systems mean that the school runs smoothly.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By April 2012, ensure all lessons are good or better by:
 - developing more rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning
 - eliminating any remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and marking of students' work
 - ensuring all lessons fully engage students and proceed at a good pace.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Students make good progress from above average starting points and by the end of Year 11 attainment is high. The school addresses minor fluctuations in students' progress as they occur, ensuring a consistent performance between subjects. Attainment in the key subjects of English and mathematics is high. Students are keen to do well and enjoy school. In lessons, they apply themselves closely to their studies and work quickly; they are enthusiastic to learn, even when occasional lessons are less stimulating. This promotes good progress. An outstanding English lesson typified the approach taken by many students. The session was run at a terrific pace and students strove to complete the brief introductory activities, growing in confidence as they explored techniques used to express opinions in a journalistic style. Confident teaching fully engaged all students. The offer of incentives to encourage students to argue with conviction quickly broke down their reserve, developing their eloquence in arguing their case and promoting excellent learning.

The school is attentive to the small number of students who face barriers to learning, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provides powerful support. It carefully tailors the curriculum to each student's requirements and provides appropriate additional resources. This ensures a consistency in progress. Given their starting points, the achievement of all groups of students is outstanding.

Students behave maturely and considerately towards one another and staff. Their behaviour in lessons promotes good learning. However, students occasionally lose focus where lessons are too teacher-led and they are not sufficiently challenged by the lesson's pace. Attendance is high. Students know the factors that promote safety and act on them, promoting the school as a very safe environment. Students, parents and carers all report the school is a safe place. Students fully understand the factors that promote a healthy lifestyle and many act positively to improve their physical well-being. Participation rates in extra-curricular sporting activities are very high and many students appreciate the healthy lunches.

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Students are proud and committed to their school and make a very strong contribution, both as leaders and participants, to many activities and events. They lead and perform in assemblies and other presentations where they share and celebrate their experiences. Older students take numerous leadership roles, for example, acting as sports leaders or as mentors to new Year 7 students. There is a strong tradition of raising money for local and national charities; these activities are entirely run by students. Many act as ambassadors for the school locally, for example working at the local junior school and with the older people. Students are highly skilled in literacy, numeracy and modern technologies and apply these skills throughout their school life, providing an excellent preparation for the next phase of their education.

The school’s curriculum, ethos and expectations promote students’ outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is very harmonious and students resolve disagreements amicably, show very good insights into their own and different cultures and are always ready to reflect on their own and others’ experiences. Numerous trips provide good opportunities to experience and learn about different cultures.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	1
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	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum is very well organised and provides an outstanding range of opportunities that contribute to students’ well-being and academic development. It is fully adapted to meet students’ needs and builds very well on prior learning; this is

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

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

especially useful in easing students’ transition from their primary schools. The excellent personal, social and health education programme contributes strongly to students’ personal development. Students appreciate the vast range of enrichment opportunities, including a wide variety of sports, from the popular to the esoteric, and a very well-attended combined cadet force. Many visits and numerous visitors make a considerable contribution to broadening students’ horizons.

Teachers and students work closely to ensure lessons are successful and classrooms are typically calm and purposeful, enhanced by students’ great enthusiasm for learning. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge; this helps them inspire and challenge students. Resources are of high quality and well chosen to motivate students’ interest and involvement. Teachers’ questioning is often incisive and develops students’ thinking, often enabling them to see matters in a new light. The pace of lessons is generally good and teachers plan varied activities and expect students to meet deadlines. However, sometimes teachers talk for too long and do not involve the boys sufficiently in active learning and these sessions can lead to a lack of full engagement. Occasionally, a lack of set time constraints in which to complete work slows the pace of learning.

Assessment is improving. Regular test results feed into central records that are accessible to all staff, enabling progress to be easily plotted so students whose achievement is faltering are quickly identified and tackled. Most students have a good idea of their attainment levels and targets for the future but the quality of marking of their work, while occasionally excellent, is inconsistent and does not always provide helpful information.

The school has an ethos of celebrating success and its commitment to students’ care, guidance and support makes an important contribution to excellent achievement and high attendance. Students are almost unanimous that they feel safe and well cared for, reporting that they all have at least one key adult to turn to if experiencing problems. Precisely targeted advice and support help students make the best choices for the future and to select from the many opportunities the school offers. The developing house system, reported by one teacher as ‘the heart and soul of the school’, is increasingly effective in identifying difficulties facing students, and tutors act to ensure difficulties do not become too burdensome.

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The new leadership team shares an ambition to improve and communicates high expectations. It successfully promotes high attainment and first-rate equality of opportunity for all students. Recently revised line management arrangements ensure all staff are fully accountable for the performance of students. The school is rich in assessment data and this is organised to be accessible to staff and so significant trends are readily apparent. This recent development has improved support and guidance for students, both in their academic and personal development. Leaders and managers use assessment data perceptively to identify priorities and to plan for the future. Improvement plans are clear and relevant and correctly have a strong focus on tackling weaknesses in teaching; however, this initiative is at an early stage and has had only limited impact on learning. The way leaders and managers monitor teaching and learning varies and, in the case of middle managers, sometimes lacks rigour; the school is aware of this issue and is addressing inconsistencies.

The recently restructured governing body is becoming more involved in evaluating and challenging the school, analysing assessment information and relating it to development plans. Departmental presentations and reports from student groups, such as the school council, keep members in touch with recent developments. Parents' and carers' views are regularly considered and the safeguarding work of the governing body is well planned and managed. The school meets all safeguarding requirements and staff are fully trained in child protection. Regular reviews and thorough risk assessment ensure the school complies with requirements. The school works well with other agencies, such as the fire service, to minimise risks to students.

The school is committed to working in partnership and has an impressive range of links with other schools, colleges and universities. For example, the school has taken a lead role in collaborative planning with other institutions for an integrated sixth form. Partnership activities provide excellent value for money, benefiting students in ways the school could not otherwise provide. For example, links with another school have led to a number of joint musical events. The school critically evaluates its contribution to community cohesion and acts on its findings. For instance, language days give Year 6 pupils taster experiences of modern Chinese, German and French cultures before joining Bournemouth School. A range of international links provides mainly linguistic experiences for some students but the school is aware it has too few links with schools in contrasting parts of the United Kingdom.

Good relationships with parents and carers are based on effective systems of communication, including through electronic media. Plans are in place to enable parents and carers to access the ongoing assessment records of their sons. Regular surveys canvass parents' and carers' views and the school acts on these. A very large majority agree that the school takes note of their concerns and keeps them well informed.

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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	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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Sixth form

The school places students' personal responsibility as a keystone for success in the sixth form and this is highly valued by students. They speak enthusiastically about the range of responsibilities offered to them as prefects and school leaders. They are also fully responsive to the school's expectation that they take responsibility for their time and learning and personally initiate action should they fall behind. Attainment is well above average by the end of the sixth form and students make excellent progress in both their academic and personal development. Almost all students who complete Year 12 continue into Year 13.

Teaching is consistently good and lessons are sometimes outstanding. Relationships between teachers and students are very positive. Regular assessment leads to the effective tracking of progress, accessible to tutors and students alike, enabling any issues that pose barriers to progress to be addressed promptly and effectively. The numerous high-quality enrichment activities are greatly valued by students and many are much enthused by the many sporting and other opportunities available. The entry system to the sixth form actively engages students, parents and carers in evaluating and selecting their future courses in relation to their successes in Year 11.

The leaders of the sixth form provide a strong team. They actively monitor students identified as at risk of underachieving and act decisively. Close liaison between subject teams and pastoral staff is a significant strength in providing care for students. Strong links with partner schools, colleges and universities encourage students to look outwards and plan sensibly for the future.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
Taking into account:	1
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

Views of parents and carers

A higher-than-average proportion of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. Most responses are very favourable. Almost all feel the school keeps their son safe and are happy with their son’s experience at the school. A very large majority regard good teaching and students’ preparation for the future as strengths. A few parents and carers are dissatisfied over the quality of support for their sons’ learning and the way the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has good methods to gather and respond to parents’ and carers’ views and provides excellent support for all students’ learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bournemouth 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 332 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1082 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	146	44	166	50	15	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	137	41	170	51	8	2	1	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	104	31	179	54	19	6	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	140	42	141	42	13	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	142	43	148	45	11	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	78	23	167	50	47	14	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	78	23	199	60	26	8	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)	112	34	172	52	9	3	1	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	127	38	157	47	16	5	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	121	36	156	47	21	6	4	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	84	25	163	49	25	8	7	2
The school is led and managed effectively	137	41	144	43	18	5	4	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	164	49	140	42	7	2	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	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).

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.



14 September 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Bournemouth School, Bournemouth, BH8 9PY

Thank you very much for your courtesy when we visited the school recently. All of the inspectors enjoyed meeting you and appreciate your honest expression of views. Given your very positive views of the school evident in our discussions and the inspection survey, I am sure it will be of little surprise to many of you that we found the school to be outstanding.

There are numerous strengths to report. Academically, you reach high levels of attainment and you make good progress in your time at school. Teaching is good and you benefit from a broad curriculum, much enhanced by numerous enrichment activities outside the usual school day. Good behaviour and your enthusiasm to learn enhance your good learning. We hope that your love of learning continues. The excellent care you receive ensures your outstanding personal development. The inspectors were particularly impressed with your enthusiasm for participating in all aspects of school life and the capable way you take on responsibilities. The sixth form is highly regarded and also provides an outstanding education.

The revised leadership and management team of the new academy knows the school well and is acting to make improvements, but it is early days. We have asked the school to:

- check up on teaching more thoroughly so that there is greater consistency of practice
- ensure lessons fully engage students and proceed at a good pace.

Once again, many thanks for your kind welcome. It was a pleasure meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan
Lead inspector

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