

# Easthampstead Park Community School

Ringmead, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 8FS

**Inspection dates** 20–21 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not yet strong enough to lead to good or better achievement.
- Although actions taken to improve teaching since the last inspection have had an impact, more work is needed.
- Inconsistencies in attainment and progress remain between subjects and groups.
- Behaviour is calm and orderly around school and in most lessons, but in some lessons disruption to learning still exists.
- Strategies to develop basic literacy skills are not cohesive or coherent enough, so their impact is variable.
- Sometimes work is not demanding enough for students.
- Not all students are convinced that the school prevents and tackles bullying as well as it could.
- Some school leaders do not have immediate command of data about performance, so its use to drive improvement is limited or delayed.

### The school has the following strengths

- The sixth form is good. Retention rates are strong and students make good progress from lower-than-average starting points.
- Achievement in mathematics has improved significantly because focused leadership in this area has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching.
- School leaders are tackling weaknesses more robustly and with greater success than in the past.
- The progress of disabled students or those with special educational needs is improving.
- Elements of the best teaching can be seen in all years and subjects because school leaders have become more successful at spreading the impact of what works well.
- Systems to track achievement are stronger than at the time of the last inspection. They have underpinned intervention to secure success.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 37 part lessons, eight jointly with senior staff. They also undertook learning walks focusing on the quality of marking, behaviour and the sixth form, again partly accompanied by senior staff.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff, students, parents and carers, representatives of the governing body and of the local authority. They also held a telephone discussion with leaders of college provision attended by students.
- The inspection team scrutinised school documentation including self-evaluation, improvement planning and the governing body minutes.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 43 parents and carers who had responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, by the end of the inspection and 55 staff who returned inspection questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Christine Raeside, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jennifer Barker	Additional inspector
Una Maria Stevens	Additional inspector
David Webster	Additional inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.*

### Information about this school

- Easthampstead Park Community school is a smaller-than-average secondary school, with a specialism in sport.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is broadly average, at around 13%.
- A slightly higher-than-average proportion of students, about 10%, are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- About three quarters of students are White British; the remaining 25% are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds; a small proportion speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (extra money provided to schools by the government) is lower than average.
- Some students in Years 10 and 11 attend courses at Bracknell and Wokingham College.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that achievement is at least good in all subject areas by ensuring that teachers:
  - match tasks and activities consistently well to students' starting points and learning needs, including strategies designed to develop reading and writing skills
  - increase their expectations of students' capabilities and work rate throughout lessons, so that the pace of learning is brisk
  - develop students' ability to articulate their learning, both orally and in writing, through skilled and targeted questioning and through regular, high-quality written feedback
  - make links between assessment criteria and learning activities explicit, so that students can see exactly how to take the next steps in their learning
  - work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that homework is appropriately challenging and promotes independent study
  - are able to manage classroom behaviour consistently well, so that any remaining disruption to learning is eradicated.
- Rigorously monitor and evaluate the school's strategies to tackle and prevent all forms of bullying, including through wider consultation with students, so that all students, their parents and carers are entirely confident that any issues will be resolved effectively.
- Coordinate the development of literacy skills into a robust and coherent strategy across all year groups and subjects.

- Ensure that leaders at all levels are equally well focused on the analysis of performance, so that they make a consistently strong contribution to improving the quality of teaching and raising levels of achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students' attainment in GCSE examinations is below that of their peers nationally but has been rising in line with national averages over time. In 2012, results in mathematics improved considerably and were close to average but English results dipped. Consequently, the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSEs at grade C or higher, including in English and mathematics, at 45%, did not maintain the level of improvement seen each year since the previous inspection. Overall GCSE performance, without the inclusion of English and mathematics rose in 2012 to its highest ever level.
- Achievement in lessons is variable. It is consistently good in sixth form lessons. In lower years, there is evidence of good and outstanding achievement but it is less consistent because the quality of teaching is more variable.
- In English the proportion of students making the expected progress, which has been broadly average over time, dipped in 2012, especially for middle-ability students. Conversely, in mathematics the proportion making expected progress increased from all starting points, reversing previously low achievement.
- Students known to be eligible for support from the pupil premium have in the past achieved less well than their peers but this is changing. In Year 8, for example, progress measures for this cohort outstrip those for non-eligible students.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is improving as a result of stronger leadership and more effective targeted provision in lessons. Teaching assistants are having a positive impact by supporting learning without allowing students to become over reliant on their help.
- A range of strategies supports the development of literacy skills, which are low on entry to the school. Specific programmes are showing some gains, for example, in raising the reading ages of a significant proportion of students in Year 7. There is some good evidence in individual lessons of teachers tackling literacy development, for example, through structured pair and group talk and targeted questioning. However, the whole school strategy is not clear enough.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The impact of strategies to develop teachers' skills and make lessons more interactive, engaging and stimulating can clearly be seen in the best lessons.
- Relationships between students and teachers are often highly positive. In the best lessons this combines with sustained challenge to make learning businesslike and productive. Sometimes, however, what is perceived as a positive ethos is in reality a relaxation of pace and momentum, so progress slows.
- There are excellent examples of targeted and probing questioning but still too many that is open to all or too accepting of basic level responses.
- Good and outstanding teaching makes a significant contribution towards the

development of students' basic literacy skills; by planning for effective oral communication; by modelling and supporting the writing process; and by attending to technical aspects of written English through marking and feedback.

- Where teaching requires improvement it is often because teachers' planning does not take full account of students' starting points, so tasks are not well matched to their needs. For example, students in an English lesson were enthused by visual images and a topic which allowed for creative responses. However, for some their writing did not extend much beyond their 'Level 4' starting points because they did not have a clear enough understanding of what 'Level 5' would look like.
- Teachers understand the potential impact of assessment information in helping students make good progress. The best use of the school's 'podium' marking and target-setting strategy gives specific developmental and encouraging information to students about how to improve. It requires improvement, however, where it is simply affirmative, attends only to surface features, or repeats criticism of unresolved errors.
- There is some good use of assessment criteria or examination requirements to support students in challenging themselves to make progress independently. In a mathematics lesson, students were able to give specific examples of what they needed to do to get to the next level. No two were the same. They explained that they could do this with certainty because they had benefited from helpful marking, baseline assessment and a personal tracker to monitor their own progress.
- In lessons where assessment criteria is taught discretely, for too long or without a model, their impact is lost because the link between the expected outcome and the task blurs.
- Homework is too variable in quantity and quality. Planners are not well used and the opportunity to enable parents and carers to support their child's learning is too often lost.
- In better lessons, teachers promote reflection effectively. In an English lesson, students empathised instantly with a writer about what it felt like to acquire a new language. Their learning was deeper and stronger because the teacher used her own bilingualism to demonstrate how it felt not to understand.
- In the sixth form, teaching is good because the best elements of teaching seen elsewhere combine more consistently: high expectations, skilful questioning, and opportunities to develop independence are widespread and linked to good-quality feedback arising from effective tracking systems.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- Since the last inspection, senior leaders have tackled instances of poor behaviour in lessons or around school and their concerted and consistent approach has brought about significant improvement.
- Exclusions, including internal sanctions, have risen as a result of more consistent application of school policy. School leaders keep a close analysis of emerging patterns and are aware of the need to ensure that this is used to reduce exclusion in the longer term.
- Students say that interruptions to their learning are rarer than in the past but do still exist. Parents and carers, along with school staff, are generally positive about behaviour but also indicated through inspection questionnaires that it requires

further improvement to be consistently good.

- Students' understanding and perceptions of bullying are variable; most are confident that the school will deal quickly and effectively with any issues but this confidence is not universal. They report tolerance of 'banter' which could potentially be damaging and want teachers to be universally and consistently intolerant of this.
- While the majority of parents and carers agreed that the school's stance on bullying is effective, some do not know. Others took the trouble to approach or write to the inspection team to praise the school for what they saw as excellent transition from primary to secondary school and for the outstanding support of the peer mentoring programme.
- The school is rightly proud of its 'Pride and Respect' agenda, instigated through collaboration between students and school leaders, including governors. It has repeatedly received awards for its anti-bullying work, such as the 'Diana Award'.
- Despite some considerable strengths in this area, inspectors agree with students who felt that the impact is not wide and deep enough as long as some students still express a lack of confidence about how bullying is tackled and prevented on a day-to-day basis.
- Attendance is now broadly average and improving, with persistent absence below average and dropping. School leaders monitor absence by groups, although its analysis is not always sharp enough. Attendance in the sixth form is high.

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- Senior leaders, governors and the local authority share a realistic view of the school's performance. They have brought about some significant improvements since the last inspection, such as in provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs and achievement in mathematics.
- The headteacher has effectively built trust and confidence during a period of turbulence and uncertainty, which has enabled senior leaders and the governing body to challenge underperformance and drive improvement in key areas.
- The establishment of good or better teaching is at the heart of school leaders' work. The management of performance, links to professional development and the routine monitoring of the quality of teaching have all strengthened. School leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching in jointly observed lessons concurred with inspectors'.
- Leadership and management require improvement, however, because they have not yet succeeded in bringing about standards of achievement or teaching that are consistently and evenly good or better across the school.
- Middle leaders understand their accountability for improvement, although some feel constrained by the need to address wider aspects of learning, such as basic literacy, alongside their specialist curriculum.
- A range of strategies to accelerate the development of literacy skills has rightly been made a priority, although its impact is variable because it lacks coherence as a whole-school initiative.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. It has expanded to provide some alternative provision for older students, such as work-

related learning at the local further education college, or the 'Skill Force' initiative. In the sixth form, an appropriate balance of A, AS level and applied courses is promoting good achievement.

- The school's promotion of the moral, social, cultural and spiritual aspects of learning is widespread and enlivens the curriculum. A sixth form student has directed a play about the dangers of drink driving – 'Too much punch for Judy'; the sports specialism has been used extensively to underpin the drive for improvement using the Olympic values or to frame assessment practice around 'podium' success.
  - The local authority has provided effective support to the school in tackling areas of weakness and in developing a keener understanding of how to drive teaching and achievement forward. External reports from other partners have been robust and challenging. They are used increasingly well by senior leaders, including the governing body, to hold the school to account.
  - Student achievement tracking and data analysis have continued to improve so that senior leaders are now well equipped to evaluate the school's performance and drive improvement, including the promotion of equal opportunities. There is still some variation in the alacrity with which this information is analysed and fed back into improvement planning.
  - Pupil premium is now more effectively targeted following initial budgetary constraints. It supports intervention programmes and the work of a dedicated Pupil Premium Coordinator.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - presents sustained challenge to the headteacher and senior team and keeps fully abreast of strengths, weaknesses and developments, on a strict 'no surprises' basis
    - has managed the budget through a turbulent period including taking difficult decisions with regard to staffing, such that a tight savings plan is now on course to be met
    - meets statutory requirements, including those relating to safeguarding and the promotion of equalities.
-

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110071
<b>Local authority</b>	Bracknell Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	385851

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	900
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	144
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bob Riddaway
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gordon Cunningham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–9 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01344 304567
<b>Fax number</b>	01344 867862
<b>Email address</b>	office@epschool.org

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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](mailto: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 information 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'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

