

# Bournemouth School for Girls

Castle Gate Close, Castle Lane West, Bournemouth, BH8 9UJ

**Inspection dates** 10–11 October 2012

|                                |                          |          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Not previously inspected |          |
| This inspection:               | <b>Outstanding</b>       | <b>1</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          | Outstanding              | 1        |
| Quality of teaching            | Outstanding              | 1        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | Outstanding              | 1        |
| Leadership and management      | Outstanding              | 1        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- There is an unstinting pursuit for excellence led by the headteacher and the governing body and supported by all staff.
- Achievement is outstanding in all years, including the sixth form. All groups of students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, make outstanding progress.
- Students' well-being and personal development are fostered exceptionally well. In this exciting environment personal success, endeavour, creativity and enterprise are promoted strongly.
- Students are motivated, inspired and enthused by an outstanding quality of teaching. In some lessons, techniques to check students' progress are not as well developed as they could be: students do not consistently receive specific and precise advice on how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. The school is safe and students' behaviour is exemplary.
- Self-evaluation is outstanding, as is the leadership of teaching and learning and the provision for the staff's professional training.
- An outstanding curriculum offers extensive opportunities for enrichment. The multitude of extra-curricular activities is highly popular with the students.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well, contributing greatly to the students' successes.
- The outstanding sixth form is characterised by high achievement, high recruitment and retention and by a set of highly articulate and determined young women.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 36 lessons each involving a different teacher. A range of lessons were jointly observed with senior members of staff.
- Meetings were held with five different groups of students, members of the school’s governing body, the local authority and a wide variety of staff, including senior and middle managers, and various other staff.
- Inspectors took account of 141 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Fifty-two responses to the staff questionnaire were also taken into consideration.
- Inspectors scrutinised examples of students’ past and present work and looked at various documents. These included the school’s self-evaluation and planning, arrangements for staff professional training, information on students’ progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Bill Stoneham, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Roger Fenwick

Additional inspector

Marion Hobbs

Additional inspector

Pat O’Shea

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Bournemouth School for Girls is a larger-than-average 11 to 18 girls' selective school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well below average. The proportion of students on the school action plus programme or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. The proportion of students eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding) is well below the national average.
- Most students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are well below national averages.
- Bournemouth School for Girls converted to become an academy school on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011. When its predecessor school, Bournemouth School for Girls, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall. The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching even further by spreading the strong practice for checking students' progress that exists in some areas of the school across every subject by ensuring that:
  - students always know how well they are doing and that they receive specific and precise advice on how to improve further.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Students enter the school with attainment levels above national averages. By the end of Year 11, the attainment of all students is very high in comparison with national averages. Their achievements are outstanding.
- All groups of students make rapid and sustained improvements. The proportions of students meeting and exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics are high compared to national figures. Though results are very high in national terms, the school continues to improve, evident by the continued upward trend of GCSE results over the last three years.
- The learning and progress of groups of students, particularly those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs, those whose first language is not English and those for whom the pupil premium provides support, are similarly outstanding. This demonstrates the school's success in tackling discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all its students.
- Students are highly enthusiastic and motivated learners. They engage well in their lessons and work with commendable enthusiasm, interest and endeavour. Their own expectations about what they can do and achieve are high. Parents are extremely positive about the progress that their children make at the school.
- Students' achievements in the sixth form are outstanding. The proportion gaining A\* to B grades is well above the national average. The students' outstanding achievements can be linked to the high quality of advice they are given about their sixth form options and the quality of the monitoring procedures that are in place to secure such excellent outcomes.
- The success rates enjoyed by this outstanding school are high in comparison to national averages. Students are prepared very well for the next stage in their education, training or employment. Provision ranges from high-quality careers advice to support in gaining entrance to all the top universities, including Oxbridge.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The effect of teaching over time in all years, but especially in the sixth form, is outstanding. Such high-quality practice enables all, including disabled students, those who have special educational needs, those who have a first language other than English and those supported through the pupil premium, to make outstanding progress.
- Teachers have high expectations for their students, which encourages them to achieve and progress well in lessons and over time. Outstanding teaching is supported by teachers' strong subject knowledge and their awareness of their students' needs.
- Lessons are invariably carefully planned and structured, thereby enabling the students to extend their knowledge and understanding rapidly. Lessons are frequently fun, proceed at a rapid pace and succeed in meeting needs extremely well.
- The teaching of reading, writing, presentation and mathematical skills is outstanding. In many lessons students showed an ability to read detailed texts and then analyse them successfully by highlighting essential points. Year 12 economics students, for example, analysed market share data with confidence. In English lessons, students read texts with considerable accuracy but really impress with the quality of their oral and written answers. In many subjects, students are confident and articulate. They are able to express their ideas with commendable assurance.
- The way work is checked in some subjects is detailed and effective and students are offered clear and concise feedback on what they have done well and how further improvements might be secured. Although such outstanding practice was seen in physical education, art and psychology, it is not uniformly spread across all subjects. While marking is invariably done regularly, students are not always given specific and precise advice on what they have done well and where improvements can be made.
- In all years and in all subjects across the curriculum, students make rapid progress because they are taught by highly competent and committed teachers. Much teaching, across all

subjects, is of the highest quality. This means that students are regularly exposed to teaching that is challenging, exciting and inspirational. Exposure to such outstanding practice contributes significantly to the outstanding progress made over time.

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

- The students' behaviour is nothing short of exemplary. They are considerate, courteous and polite and, as a result, the school is calm and welcoming.
- Students are proud of their school and its work. They cherish the many and varied opportunities they have to take responsibility. Sixth form students, for example, act as tremendous mentors and role models for younger students.
- Parents, staff and the students themselves are highly positive about the quality of behaviour. Incidents of misbehaviour are rare and are handled quickly, properly and effectively. Students have considerable confidence in the staff and trust them to help if any problems arise.
- Students told the inspection team that incidents of bullying based on name-calling, racism or homophobia, for example, are extremely rare. They showed detailed understanding of the pernicious effects of bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- The thoughtfully planned curriculum ensures that students of all ages, including those in the sixth form, are encouraged to lead safe and healthy lives. Work is undertaken on a variety of themes and covers the adverse effects of drugs and alcohol, for example, as well as looking at topics such as safe driving.
- Attendance figures are consistently above the national average and incidents of persistent absence are rare. Students arrive punctually to school and to lessons. Their exemplary behaviour is reflected in the very low figures for short-term exclusions.
- Students commented that the school is happy and harmonious. A positive atmosphere permeates the school. This is because of the mutual respect that exists between students themselves and between staff and students. Many students commented that the house system is successful in bringing together students from different year groups, helping the school to function cohesively.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The clear and visionary leadership from the headteacher, ably supported by his strong senior leaders and a team of loyal staff, has led to high standards being maintained and even improved.
- As the Chair of the Governing Body stated: 'Our aim is to provide an outstanding education so that when they leave us our students will go on to set the world alight.' In all years, and especially the sixth form, students are provided with outstanding and memorable opportunities to learn, to be creative and to be enterprising. They are thoroughly prepared for the next steps in their lives and can aim high with confidence.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths, but can also identify where improvements are needed. Any identified shortcomings are addressed robustly and with determination.
- Self-evaluation is detailed and of a high quality. There is a strong focus on continually improving teaching and learning and to provide all staff with good training to enhance their professional effectiveness even further. Arrangements for the performance management of staff are rigorous and highly effective and have a direct impact on students' achievement.
- A detailed and carefully planned curriculum meets the students' needs extremely well. It is broad and balanced. The sheer volume of extra-curricular activities ensures that the interests and talents of every individual are met. In sport, students compete at county and national level. Involvement in drama and music is considerable and of an impressively high standard. Other interest groups abound, including sixth form students editing a superb science

magazine, yet there are social options for activities as diverse as Zumba and even belly-dancing.

- The school engages well with parents. A very large majority of parental responses signalled great satisfaction with the school. Parents agree that this is an outstanding school that is led and managed extraordinarily well.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Regular assemblies promote spiritual and moral understanding well. The curriculum develops spirituality and challenges the students to consider moral, social and cultural issues, often in great detail. International exchanges, including a successful partnership with a school in Kenya, raise awareness further and prepare the students for life beyond school well.
- The school enjoys productive relationships with the local authority. They work well together for the students' benefit. The school and local authority have also worked effectively, in association with other partners, to establish another secondary academy in Bournemouth.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are thorough and meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The experienced and knowledgeable governing body effectively undertakes its statutory duties. Governors know that their school is special, but they are far from complacent. They are highly supportive of the headteacher and all his staff, but they are highly resolute in holding the school to account. Governors have an excellent understanding of the link between performance management and the salary structure and ensure that finances, including pupil premium, are used well to have the best possible impact on students' achievement. Governors are justifiably proud of the school and especially its students. Their planning to ensure continued success is detailed and thorough. Under their stewardship, there is unlikely to be any slippage in standards.

## 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> | 136996 |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | N/A    |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 403686 |

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

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                         | Grammar (selective)           |
| <b>School category</b>                        | Foundation                    |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                    | 11–18                         |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                       | Girls                         |
| <b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>     | Girls                         |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>    | 1,115                         |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b> | 304                           |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                  | The governing body            |
| <b>Chair</b>                                  | Noel Spreadbury MBE           |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                            | Alistair Brien                |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>     | 17 April 2008                 |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                       | 01202 526289                  |
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