

Beaverwood School for Girls

Beaverwood Road, Chislehurst, Kent, BR76HE

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The number of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics improved significantly in 2012, and is above the national average. This is good achievement given the students' below average starting points.
- The development of students' literacy and numeracy skills is good. Most students make at least good progress, particularly in literacy.
- Teaching is predominantly good and some is outstanding.
- Students behave well, enjoy school and feel safe. Older students in particular have positive attitudes and value what the school has to offer. Exclusions are well-below average.
- The headteacher and senior staff provide ambitious leadership informed by a thorough knowledge of students' starting points and progress. As a result, achievement and teaching are improving and students are well prepared for the next stage of their lives.
- The governors know the school well. They are clear about its strengths and where it needs to improve. They hold staff to account for the quality of the school's performance.
- The sixth form is good. The great majority of students go directly into employment, education and training with a good proportion achieving university places. New entrants to the sixth form say they appreciate the good learning environment.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a small number of lessons teachers do too much and do not teach students to work by themselves. Some more able learners are not sufficiently challenged.
- A small group of younger students are not taught to read well enough. A few less and more able students are not doing as well as they do could in mathematics.
- Written advice from teachers does not always result in students understanding what they need to do to improve.
- Although attendance has recently improved, it is below average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 lessons. A number of lessons were jointly observed with senior members of staff. Inspectors also observed tutor times and assemblies for different groups of students.
- Discussions were held with four different groups of students, the Chair and another member of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, the schools external adviser, and a wide range of staff including the headteacher, senior staff and middle leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the views of the 70 parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire, the 439 responses to the school's own questionnaire to parents, and the 29 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors observed the school's work including listening to a group of students read, and they looked at a number of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation and the development plan, information on students' progress, and records and policies relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. They scrutinised examples of students' work.

Inspection team

Venetia Mayman, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Heather Leatt	Additional Inspector
David Wolfson	Additional Inspector
Jacqueline Jenkins	Additional Inspector
Babrul Matin	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than the average-sized secondary school. There are some boys in the sixth form.
- Students come from a range of ethnic backgrounds with the majority being of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is average. This group is made up of those known to be eligible for free school meals, and a few who are in the care of the local authority. There are no children of service families.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is slightly above average, and those supported through the school action plus programme or a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- A very small number of Key Stage 4 students receive part of their education off-site in the local authority's respite provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations of students' attainment and progress.
- The school has International School Status, is a specialist Humanities College and the lead school in the Bromley Schools Collegiate which provides initial teacher training. The headteacher is a Local Leader in Education. During the course of the inspection she was invited to become a National Leader in Education.
- The school converted to academy status on 1 March 2011. When the previous school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so as to raise achievement by:
 - ensuring teachers talk less in lessons and provide students with more opportunities to work on their own and with others
 - ensuring higher attaining students are challenged with demanding questions and tasks particularly in English, mathematics and science
 - making sure teachers consistently provide written advice to students in their marking and students are clear what they need to do to improve
 - ensuring a small minority of readers in Year 7 receive teaching that matches their need to understand the connection between sounds and letters so that they improve quickly
 - ensuring a few less and more able students are suitably supported and challenged in mathematics.
- Improve attendance to at least the national average by:
 - building further on the good strategies currently employed in working with parents and carers
 - developing the system of rewards to successfully encourage persistent absentees to attend school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- This is a good and improving school. Achievement overall is good. The students currently in Key Stage 3 and 4 who entered with average attainment make good progress. Standards overall in English are above average and in mathematics just above with an improving proportion in each subject gaining grade C or more at GCSE. Standards are above average in science, art and design, communication studies, drama, English literature, French and religious studies. Standards in business studies are below average and the school has changed the course to ensure that students do well in future.
- The progress of disabled students, those with special educational needs and those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable is improving. A very small group of Year 7 students with weak reading skills on entry need more help to improve quickly. Some less able students do not make expected progress in mathematics. Progress for this group in both subjects is beginning to improve and the school has plans to use additional funding for Year 7 pupils to make sure this happens.
- The gap between the attainment of students eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority and other students is smaller than average. These students gained one third of a GCSE grade more than average in 2012 in both English and mathematics. After one term in Year 11 students in these two groups are already attaining at this level. The school has good strategies in place, including additional staffing, to help them make further progress before they take their GCSE examinations.
- The school enters some students for GCSE English and mathematics in Year 10. This has had a positive impact on the proportions gaining a C grade and others, boosted by success, have been re-entered to gain a higher grade.
- A below average proportion are gaining A* and A grades in GCSE English, science and mathematics. This situation is improving in English but a few more able are not always challenged as much as they might be especially in mathematics.
- The very small number of Key Stage 4 students who study off-site make good progress. Arrangements to check on their achievement, attendance and punctuality are good.
- The majority of parents and carers who responded to the online inspection questionnaire believe that their children make at least good progress. Inspection evidence supports this view.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good. Retention, success and progress rates have improved steadily. Most students take AS and A levels with a small proportion taking vocational qualifications.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good with an increasing proportion of outstanding lessons. Evidence from lesson observations and from looking at the quality of students' work shows that this has helped them to achieve well.
- In almost every lesson students work with enjoyment and purpose. Teachers have a detailed knowledge of their students' attainment and progress. In outstanding lessons this information is used very effectively to challenge all levels of ability. This was evident in a Year 10 history lesson where rapid progress was stimulated by carefully judged questions, opportunities to develop different skills and a rigorous focus on literacy. In a Year 11 poetry lesson, students worked in pairs to discuss the features of a poem and quickly understood how to write appropriately for their target GCSE grade. Students report that teaching in English is good and inspectors agree. The best teaching in mathematics is stimulating but teachers do not all use the same approaches especially in ensuring the more able achieve as well as they could.
- Where teaching is good, but not outstanding, teachers sometimes talk too much during lessons. Questioning is effective but not always probing. This approach does not challenge able learners

sufficiently.

- Most work is marked regularly and often provides useful feedback. Students know their target grades and levels but a minority do not understand well enough what they needed to do to improve. Methods of giving written feedback vary within and between departments.
- Disabled students, those who have special educational needs and students who have difficulty with English and mathematics have extra help, both in class and in separate groups. Students eligible for the pupil premium have opportunities for individual tuition and additional support, which is improving the progress of this group in English and mathematics. A small number of Year 7 students are not benefitting sufficiently from the right help to read better. The majority of parents consider teaching is good.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. In good or better lessons planning is managed to help individuals make progress in their skills and understanding. Questions are searching and students gain greater independence in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Students show respect towards adults and each other. They generally cooperate with staff and work well together. Many are highly motivated by an effective rewards system. Some younger students say that they dislike the fact that a small number of their peers disrupt their learning although inspectors saw no poor behaviour. The vast majority of older pupils behave exceptionally well.
- All students report feeling safe in school. They are well informed about bullying and cyber-bullying. They say that if bullying was a problem, they would know where to get it stopped. The student peer mentors are popular and effective. In tutor time, assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons, good opportunities are taken to help students learn to keep themselves safe. Year 11 students reported positively on a day given over to sex and relationships education.
- Exclusions are well below average including the exclusion of students whose circumstances make them more vulnerable.
- The majority of parents, carers and staff agree that the school manages behaviour well and that their children are kept safe.
- Sixth formers set a good example and take opportunities to contribute to community and fund-raising events such as Comic Relief. Those joining the school say they appreciate the calm environment and that this helps them make progress. They benefit from an interesting programme of tutorials and assemblies which help them think about the wider world.
- Attendance is below average, particularly for those receiving pupil premium funding and some with special educational needs. However, rates have started to improve as a result of arrangements for working with families with students do not attend regularly enough.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is effectively led by the headteacher and the senior leadership team. Leaders at all levels consistently communicate high expectations. This is reflected in good standards overall and a high proportion of leavers engaged in work, training or taking university courses after leaving the school. The majority of parents and carers think the school is well led.
- Leaders have a thorough and meticulous knowledge of the progress of individuals. This has resulted in above average standards in English overall, just above average standards in mathematics and a reducing gap between the attainment of students eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority and other students in English and mathematics. Effective action has led to improvements in the progress of more able students in English and

the good progress of pupils with special educational needs. Leaders recognise that further improvements are needed for a few weak readers and for a few less and more able in mathematics.

- Checks on teaching are well organised and lead to improvement. Training for staff is a particular strength. Any poor performance is addressed and teachers receive salary increases which match the success of their work. Staff morale is generally high. Almost all responses to the staff questionnaire were positive.
 - The curriculum matches students' needs and is kept under review. It provides good opportunities to build on literacy skills in different subjects. The curriculum in the sixth form reflects the needs of the students, the strengths of the school and the available alternatives in the local area.
 - The impressive breadth of experiences available to students makes a strong contribution to their spiritual, social, moral and cultural education. This is evident in lessons and in the wide range of cultural activities and visits, such to one to Auschwitz, following visits to the school by Holocaust survivors. Such experiences make the school's effective in challenging discrimination, ensuring equality of opportunity for all and fostering good relationships within and beyond the school community.
 - The school works very successfully with external agencies, businesses and other education providers to ensure that the best opportunities are available to students.
 - Arrangements for safeguarding are thorough and effective.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors hold leaders to account and have a good knowledge of priorities for improvement. They have high aspirations and bring enthusiasm and challenge in examining student outcomes, including examination performance. They are introducing good systems to gain a direct understanding of the quality of teaching by making links with individual departments. Through training and the support of an external adviser, they ensure the headteacher's performance management focuses on areas that need to improve and check on decisions about teachers' movements up the salary scale on the basis of good teaching. They check the finances closely and know about how the pupil premium is spent and that it is closing gaps in attainment in English and mathematics. They are aware of the recent availability of the Year 7 'catch up' premium and the need to use it to improve literacy and mathematics for those for who it is intended.
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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

Unique reference number	136457
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	403669

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1322
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Ransley
Headteacher	Karen Raven
Date of previous school inspection	NA
Telephone number	02083 003156
Fax number	0208 3003251
Email address	office@beaverwood.co.uk

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