

Buxton School

Cann Hall Road, London, E11 3NN

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Students' achievement is good. Their progress has improved since the previous inspection and is now good throughout the school.
- As the result of the good support they receive, disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve well.
- Those students eligible for support through pupil premium funding also achieve well, as do those who speak English as an additional language.
- The quality of teaching is good, and sometimes of high quality. Leaders check its quality regularly to be sure that students are learning as well as possible.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Students are polite and courteous. They respect each other and have good relationships with staff, so that the school is a calm and orderly place where students feel safe.
- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now at least average across the school.
- Children make a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes, where teaching is good.
- Leaders, managers and governors are fully committed to making sure that the school provides a good quality of education. They know the strengths of the school as well as what needs to be done to improve the school further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, students are not set work at the right level of difficulty. They are not always able to use their own initiative and make choices in their learning.
- Students are not always provided with time in lessons to respond to teachers' written comments and improve their work as a result.
- Students' progress in mathematics at Key Stage 4 is not as rapid as that in English.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 48 parts of lessons. Some observations were carried out jointly with the executive headteacher, headteachers and members of the senior leadership team.
- In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons, attended an assembly, observed behaviour at lunchtime and at breaks, spoke to students, listened to younger pupils read and scrutinised their work.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, some heads of department and subject coordinators, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and groups of students.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's own self-evaluation, assessment data from the monitoring of pupils' progress, improvement plans and minutes from meetings of the governing body. School policies and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance, together with the school's safeguarding procedures, were also evaluated.
- Inspectors took into account of 42 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), several letters from parents and 65 questionnaires completed by staff, as well as the school's own parental and student surveys.

Inspection team

Christine Mayle, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Gutmann	Additional Inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Additional Inspector
Clifford Walker	Additional Inspector
Veronica Young	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized school of similar type.
- It is part of The Buxton School Learning Trust in partnership with The University of East London, Waltham Forest local authority and the National Health Service, together with the Jenny Hammond Primary School and Acacia Nursery.
- The school has a specialism in science.
- Since the previous inspection the school has undergone significant changes in staffing, predominantly the appointment of a new executive headteacher in January 2012. There are also separate heads of school for the primary and secondary age groups.
- The school has a specialist resource provision for 12 pupils with speech, language and communication needs.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is significantly higher than average, as is the proportion for whom English is an additional language.
- An above average number of pupils joins or leaves the school from Reception to Year 11.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for those eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those with a parent in the armed services) is well above average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its students.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - making sure that all teachers set work at the right level of difficulty and challenge for all students
 - providing more opportunities for students to use their initiative and make choices in their learning
 - giving students time in lessons to read and respond to teachers' written feedback.
- Accelerate students' progress in mathematics at Key Stage 4, so that it is at least as good as that in English, by planning activities that encourage students to apply their mathematical learning across a range of topics and subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Since the previous inspection, improvements in teaching and the way subjects are planned throughout the school have led to students making good progress from when they enter in Nursery to when they leave in Year 11.
- Many children enter the school with skills well below those expected for their age. All children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes as they are taught well and given interesting activities to take part in.
- Although pupils enter Year 1 with levels of attainment that are below average, they quickly acquire knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in reading, writing and numeracy. They make good progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 to reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 6.
- The school's robust assessment information shows that pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to meet or exceed average standards. This was confirmed in the lessons observed and in pupils' books.
- The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is well planned so that pupils acquire good reading skills. Pupils enjoy reading and are happy talking about the books they have read.
- While below average, attainment at the end of Year 11 shows a rising trend over the last three years. However, last year, mathematics results were weaker than those in English. This year the school entered Year 11 students early for GCSE mathematics and the results have risen sharply. Together with the continuing rise in English performance, this shows good progress.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make at least the same and often better progress than their peers. Students in the specialist resource base, with speech, language and communication needs, also make good progress and achieve as well as other pupils in the school with disabilities and special educational needs.
- Those students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding make better progress than their peers in school. By end of Year 6 and Year 11 the gap between their average point scores in English and mathematics and those of students not eligible for the pupil premium funding nationally is narrowing.
- There are no significant differences in the achievement of students from different ethnic groups. The achievement of students with English as an additional language, many of whom join the school part way through the year, is very good. The support they receive helps them to quickly develop their communication skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- Since the appointment of the new executive headteacher the school has focused on improving the quality of teaching so it is now good and sometimes outstanding. As they want their students to be successful learners, staff have made good use of support and training to make their teaching better.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, use questioning effectively and regularly check that students understand what they are doing. They also build positive relationships with students that increase students' self-esteem. Students say they enjoy school and appreciate the help they receive. Support staff make a good contribution to students' learning and progress.
- Where teaching is most effective, students are fully engaged in creative and practical learning activities that stretch them. Timed activities keep students focused on their work and they learn at a rapid rate. For example, in a science lesson, students learnt about plant and animal cells. A combination of timed written tasks, students researching information for themselves, the teacher's quick-fire questioning, a quiz and practical work, all helped students to learn at the right pace for them. The work was interesting and engaged the students, so they made

outstanding progress.

- Students' work is marked regularly and teachers' written comments help students to understand where they have been successful and what they need to do next to make their work better. Sometimes, students respond to the written comments that teachers make on their work but this is not yet consistent across the whole school or between subjects as students are not always given the time to consider this feedback.
- Occasionally, students are not given enough opportunities to use their own initiative and learn on their own. Where teaching is less effective, work is not set at the right level of difficulty and there are missed chances for students to apply their learning, particularly in mathematics, in a variety of situations.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes activities are well planned and involve a range of resources that excite children in their learning. Children are encouraged to develop their use of language and number through play. Adult-led activities give all children targeted support and, as a result, they learn well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Between lessons, students' safe and mature attitudes in sometimes crowded corridors and outdoor spaces reflect their sense of responsibility and respect for others very well.
- A strong feature of the school is the way in which students get on well together. Students of all ages, from a range of backgrounds and cultures, are well supported, settle in quickly and make friends. They are polite, well mannered and courteous.
- Attendance rates have improved since the last inspection. These are now average for primary students and above average for older students. Exclusions have fallen rapidly. This reflects the extended work the school does with families and the local community. Parents and carers are welcome in the school and the feedback from them indicates that they hold the school in high regard. For example, one parent wrote, 'I feel extremely lucky to have my son attending Buxton, a mainstream school where all his special needs are catered for and it's a place he loves to come to.'
- Students are keen to learn and this helps them to concentrate in lessons and make good progress. They do not always have the confidence to take risks in their learning and push it forward for themselves as they are not consistently given the opportunity to make choices.
- Students say they feel safe and understand the various forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and that related to prejudice. They know what to do should such incidents occur and they are confident that the adults will sort these out quickly and effectively.
- Students respond very well to the range of responsibilities they take on, such as prefect duties, raising monies for charity, and being part of the school council or the junior leadership team.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher provides uncompromising leadership. She is passionate about teaching and is determined for all students to succeed. She is well supported by her senior leadership team, who share her commitment to improve all aspects of the school's performance.
- Well-developed systems are in place for leaders at all levels to check on the quality of the school's work. These are clearly linked to the targets set for teachers, their pay and career progression. Training is matched closely to teachers' needs.
- Improvement planning correctly identifies the priorities for the school. The drive to improve teaching and achievement since the last inspection has been effective so that both are now good. The school's own evaluation of its performance is accurate.
- Students were entered early for mathematics for the first time this year and the results show a

significant improvement in their attainment and progress. However, students are not allowed to drop the subject if their examination grade is lower than the school's target for them. Students also take IGCSE English early and this is having a similar effect. The school is keeping their early entry policy under review.

- Students across the school benefit from a wide range of activities that engage their interest. The school offers students a good range of subject choices at Key Stage 4. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well through subjects and the activities provided. Displays around the school provide good evidence of the varied work students do in this area.
- Equality of opportunity permeates throughout the school and discrimination is tackled robustly. The school uses its pupil premium funding effectively to provide a range of extra adult support for eligible students. As a result, they are making better than expected progress.
- All statutory requirements are met relating to safeguarding.
- The local authority has provided effective support for the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the school's performance, the quality of teaching, performance management systems and pay progression. They know what is done to reward good teachers and to tackle underperformance. They hold leaders to account by asking challenging questions on all aspects of the school's work. The financial budget is managed well. Governors have a good understanding of how the pupil premium money is used to support eligible students and know that these students are making good progress. They are fully supportive of the executive headteacher and staff in their drive to raise 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

Unique reference number	103080
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	404853

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Durning
Headteacher	Kath Wheeler
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 May 2013
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