

# Bristol Gateway School

Long Cross, Bristol, BS11 0QA

**Inspection dates** 24 April–25 April 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- Most students make expected progress from their individual starting points and are beginning to make up for past underachievement.
- Leaders and governors make sure that weaknesses in teaching are identified and followed up and, as a result, the quality of teaching has improved.
- There is more to be done to make sure that teachers provide good opportunities to extend students' thinking and learning.
- Not all students attend as frequently as they should.
- The curriculum has been extended well recently and more changes are planned for September so it is too soon to tell if the courses will lead to greater achievement.
- Senior leaders and governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the provision well but those with middle leadership responsibilities do not yet play a full part in school improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- Dramatic improvements in students' behaviour mean that learning generally proceeds uninterrupted.
- The high importance placed on students' academic achievement is complemented by good support for students' emotional well-being.
- Staff and students have managed the many changes and uncertainties over the past two years with a great deal of resilience and positivity.
- Senior leaders and governors have steered the school well on its journey out of special measures so that the staff are now in a good position to make further improvements.

## Information about this inspection

- Twelve part lessons and a total of 11 teachers were observed. One lesson was jointly observed with the leader of teaching and learning.
- Students' work across a range of subjects was scrutinised.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, senior staff, teachers and non-teaching staff, students, the Chair of the Governing Body and the local authority school improvement officer.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View survey to be analysed. Parents' and carers' responses to the school's most recent questionnaire were considered, together with a telephone message from a parent or carer.
- Nineteen responses from staff were received.
- Documents scrutinised include school improvement plans, curriculum plans, details of attendance and behaviour, assessment information, and policies and procedures for safeguarding students.

## Inspection team

Heather Yaxley, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alan Jones

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.*

### Information about this school

- This is a special school for students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Each student has a statement of special educational needs.
- Most students are from White British backgrounds, with approximately 10% from Asian or Asian British heritage, and 5% from Black or Black British backgrounds.
- The school receives pupil premium funding for almost all students, significantly more than nationally. This funding is additional money from the government for students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in care of the local authority and those from families in the armed services.
- Three students are educated off site by an alternative provider, Rocksteady.
- In January 2011, the school was placed in special measures because staff were failing to provide students with an acceptable standard of education. Subsequently, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors visited the school on five occasions to assess how well leaders were addressing the issues raised. The reports for these monitoring inspections are on the Ofsted website. This inspection is a full reinspection of the school.
- The school is linked with Woodstock School through a soft federation. Woodstock is a primary school for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, located a short distance away. The two schools share a governing body and plans are well advanced for the schools to become a single academy with a sponsor. The inspection of Woodstock School took place at the same time as the inspection of Bristol Gateway School and a separate report can be found on the Ofsted website.
- The headteacher has led the school since September 2012, initially in an interim capacity.
- The local authority retains financial responsibilities.

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

- Ensure teaching is good by:
  - being explicit with students about what will be learned, how the learning will build upon what they know already and how to show that they have been successful
  - planning and delivering lessons that explicitly help each student to achieve their individual learning and social targets
  - questioning students thoroughly about their understanding and expecting extended answers
  - giving students sufficient time to record their learning thoroughly and carefully, and use their written work to develop skills and understanding in subsequent lessons
  - strictly applying the marking policy.
- Ensure students make good progress from their individual starting points by:
  - setting up a programme to teach reading and spelling to all students
  - providing a good range of courses that will lead to nationally recognised qualifications
  - reducing absence so that all students access opportunities to achieve well.
- Develop the effectiveness of middle leaders so that they play a full part in ensuring that students make good academic progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Improvements in students' attendance and behaviour, the curriculum and teaching, and less staff absence have made a positive difference to students' achievement so that, since September, most students have made expected progress from their individual starting points in English, mathematics and science.
- There is some underachievement in science for older students, partly explained by a change in the curriculum, and support is in place to address this.
- The achievement of students with poor attendance is inevitably inadequate but for those with alternative arrangements off site and for those with individual timetables on site, increased participation and success in education clearly take place.
- A group of students who attend a short teaching session each day to improve their reading have made good progress in a short period of time. More generally, reading is not well developed because students do not read to adults frequently enough and there is no planned programme to teach reading and spelling to all students.
- Additional support funded by the pupil premium helps some students make accelerated progress, indicating that this money is appropriately focused on raising students' achievement.
- Students of all ages achieve particularly well in art. Some students already have a full GCSE, having taken the examination in Year 10, and are studying art at AS level. The artwork on display is of high quality and not only celebrates achievements in art but enhances the school environment. Art is the only subject where students are entered early for examinations and this works well to boost their achievements.
- Students achieve well in physical education (PE) and lessons are enjoyed by many. In addition to BTEC examinations, some students study for the Young Sports Leader Award and have ambitions to be PE teachers.
- The presentation of work has improved recently but not all students take enough care and too often too little is recorded in writing. Some students are very good at avoiding written work or not concentrating on the things that they should be focusing on.
- Year 11 students are on track to take Entry Level, full GCSE, BTEC or equivalent examinations in between five and eight subjects, and this is an improvement on last year. Similarly, with only one student yet to get a job or a place at college for September, current Year 11 students are better placed than those last year to continue their education or to find employment.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has improved steadily as a result of higher expectations and good training opportunities, as well as the determination and hard work of teachers and support staff, to the point that an increasing proportion of teaching is good.
- Teaching is not yet good overall because students do not always have enough opportunities to use what they have learned in a lesson or previously, or to improve their literacy skills.
- Teachers often tell students the learning objectives for a lesson but do not always explain what they mean in practice or question students thoroughly as the lesson progresses to check their understanding.
- Sometimes, teachers do not give students enough time to give detailed answers to questions or to consider their answers fully. Similarly, students do not have enough time to practise what they have learned or to record their work extensively enough. As a result, the work in students' books is often not a good enough record of what has been learned and is not useful as a reference for future learning or revision.
- Lesson plans routinely state students' individual targets and the intention to extend their

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development more generally but these do not get much attention in lessons.

- Not all teaching makes a strong enough contribution to improving students' literacy skills. Students are often asked to read a few sentences and do so with confidence even when they find it difficult but they rarely read from their own work or at sufficient length. Staff accept written work that is of poor quality for content and presentation. When responding to students' spoken contribution, staff accept single-word answers too readily.
- The marking policy is a good one but is not put into practice routinely.
- Staff have good subject knowledge and this helps to give clear information to students, extend their understanding and keep them interested.
- Management of students' behaviour is good and lessons generally proceed without incident. The focus on learning by staff and students is now firmly established. Good support from the behaviour team when inappropriate behaviour occurs means that the students concerned are usually able to return quickly to class and get on with the work, and others are not distracted.

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

### **require improvement**

- Students' behaviour has improved significantly, particularly since September 2012. This is because staff have steadily improved the quality of teaching and the curriculum alongside the quality of behaviour management.
- The behaviour and safety of students is not yet good because, although improving, attendance is low and exclusions sometimes too high.
- Arrangements to reintegrate students following exclusion, use of alternative provision, personal timetables for those finding it difficult to manage their behaviour alongside their class group and pastoral support to students' families all help to reduce exclusions and improve attendance.
- There is still some way to go to make sure that all students attend each day but the right things are in place and the attendance of younger students is closest to the national average.
- Students have good opportunities to learn how to stay safe within school and within the community. This includes safe use of the internet and social networks, as well as accepting that bullying of any kind is wrong. Students value the good relationships that they have with staff and turn to them for advice and support in times of trouble or when they are worried.
- Consistently high expectations and consistent application of agreed rewards and consequences is well understood and generally respected by students of all ages.
- Students now take good care of the school environment and are active in making suggestions and decisions for further improvements.
- Staff now supervise students less intensively than before because more students manage their own behaviour for more of the time. In class, support is now focused on learning rather than behaviour because students prefer to be rewarded for getting on with their work rather than having to make up the work and any time that is lost.

### **The leadership and management**

### **require improvement**

- Since requiring special measures, there have been many changes in leadership responsibilities and this has sometimes slowed development. Some leaders are new to their posts or have new responsibilities and the impact of their work is only just beginning to bear fruit.
- The curriculum has vastly improved from a very low standard. Some courses are new and there is still more to do to make sure that students get a good range of subjects to study. Some good work has been done to provide a small group of students with alternative arrangements on and off site.
- Pastoral support gives students good opportunities to be ready and willing to learn. Regular

checks of students' academic progress make sure that underachievement of individuals and groups is identified and actions taken to make up for any gaps in learning. Consideration of students' individual learning and social targets is not well developed in lessons.

- Staff follow up any inappropriate language about ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender or social background quickly and rigorously.
  - The headteacher gives strong leadership and has high expectations for conduct and commitment from staff and students, which are well understood and respected.
  - The assistant headteacher for attendance and behaviour looks for creative solutions to improve these aspects relentlessly so that more students are now in school more often.
  - The special educational needs coordinator, leader for teaching and learning and the assessment leader are either new to their posts or are appropriately taking on greater responsibilities. They get appropriate support and increasingly take a leading role.
  - Greater responsibility by middle leaders as well as tutors now taking greater initiative for the well-being of students in their group mean that senior leaders are starting to have more time to do their own work.
  - The headteacher and governors are very clear that staff underperformance is unacceptable. The management of staff performance ensures that staff fulfil the responsibilities of the posts that they are paid for and that progressing to additional salary points is appropriate. Managing staff performance has improved the quality of teaching and reduced staff absence, and staff are confident in a bright future for the school.
  - A lot of good work has taken place to improve relationships with parents and carers. More parents and carers now attend school events and the school's questionnaires show that they feel comfortable to approach staff about any concerns.
  - The tactical withdrawal of intensive support by the local authority since November is appropriate, allowing senior staff and governors to be in control of staff development.
  - A significant sum of money gained by the local authority from the National College of School Leadership is being used wisely to pay for collaborative work with The Springfields Academy in Wiltshire. The work is helping to develop middle leadership responsibilities and teaching.
  - The local authority recently supported the work of the school assessment leader well, with procedures and systems to track students' progress now firmly established.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body has diligently assessed the quality of its work over the past two years and, as a result of the changes made, now challenges staff's work and students' performance effectively. The school improvement committee focuses well on the quality of teaching and assessment, and is knowledgeable about the extent to which these things improve students' achievement. Governors know what they want for the students and are active in checking these things are part of the plans for becoming an academy. Arrangements to safeguard students are in order. Although not responsible for the budget, governors are clear about how the money is spent on staffing, and how pupil premium funding is allocated and monitored.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	132239
<b>Local authority</b>	City of Bristol
<b>Inspection number</b>	399952

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	68
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Forrest
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kaye Palmer-Greene
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12–13 January 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 3772275
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