

Belvue School

Rowdell Road, Northolt, Middlesex, UB5 6AG

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Due to effective and innovative leadership, this is a good and improving school. All aspects have become stronger since the previous inspection.
- All groups of students achieve well due to good teaching, a broad range of interesting activities and excellent relationships.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Students enjoy school greatly, feel safe and are extremely engaged in their learning.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Students have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They show care and respect for others and develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- The sixth form is good. Individual needs and preferences are catered for well. Students choose and build their own individual timetable from a wide choice of options.
- Leaders and managers know the school well and are quick to address any areas of relative weakness which they identify. This makes a strong contribution to students' well-being and achievement.
- Governors support and challenge the school well, especially in terms of finance. Along with other school leaders, they have raised substantial amounts of money to improve the school grounds.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching over time is not yet outstanding because staff do not always adapt their expectations or explanations finely enough to ensure that achievement is excellent.
- Achievement in science, especially from girls and those most able, is slower than in English or mathematics, because breadth and resources are less well developed.
- Leaders' monitoring of some aspects of the school is not always sufficiently detailed to ensure that these are all consistently effective.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 17 sessions of students' learning, including a whole-school assembly and tutor group sessions. These were taught by 15 teachers and one higher level teaching assistant. Sixteen of these observations were joint visits with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with students, governors, an officer from the local authority, senior and middle managers and staff.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View questionnaire for a report to be available. The inspector received the views of parents and carers through the school's summary of 105 responses to a very recent school survey.
- The inspectors received the views of staff, through 45 responses to the inspection questionnaire and discussions, as well as views of students, through informal discussions in and out of lessons.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on students' current and recent progress, students' work, the school's development plan, planning and monitoring documents, documents relating to safeguarding, and records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jo Curd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kate Robertson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- All the students have statement of special educational needs. These are predominantly moderate learning difficulties or severe learning difficulties. About a quarter has autistic spectrum disorders. There are more boys than girls.
- About two thirds of the students are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding. This is additional funding for some groups of students, in this case those who are looked after or who are known to be eligible for free school meals. This proportion is much higher than in most other schools.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is proportionately higher than in most other secondary schools.
- About three quarters of the students, a high proportion, are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups being of Pakistani or African heritage. Almost half the students have English as an additional language. This is also much higher than in most other schools.
- Some students in Key Stages 4 and 5 spend some time at college or in work experience, including Horsenden Farm. They are all registered full time at Belvue School.
- A small number of students from mainstream schools spend a few days each week at Belvue. These students are all registered at their mainstream school.
- Students do not take any national examinations prior to Year 11.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all staff finely adapt their explanations and expectations to meet the needs of all students in all lessons.
- Raise achievement in science, especially for girls and any students who are most able, by fully extending opportunities and purchasing all necessary resources.
- Increase the frequency and detail of monitoring to make sure that all aspects of the school are as effective as possible. Look at current provision even more frequently and carefully to ensure that everything in place is consistently as effective as possible.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All groups of students achieve well, due to good teaching and students' excellent attitudes and engagement. Progress in English and mathematics is particularly good. Progress in science is slower. Leaders are well aware of this and have already begun to implement plans to address the situation. They have appointed a new specialist teacher but have not yet finalised opportunities or purchased all necessary resources.
- Given their starting points, students achieve well in a wide range of national qualifications and accreditations. Leaders carefully ensure that these are suitable and relevant for all students and effectively help their progress to Year 11, the sixth form and beyond.
- Most able students achieve well because staff have high expectations and effectively challenge and extend students' learning. Students who are able to, take and secure GCSEs in English and mathematics. Their achievement in science has been slower, especially for girls, because this subject is at a relatively early stage of development.
- Students with more profound difficulties progress well because staff support them sensitively, skilfully and use a range of specialist resources and means of communication. These students, along with all others, also benefit greatly from the skills and advice of other professionals, including speech and language, occupational health and nursing specialists.
- Students who have English as an additional language achieve well, especially in reading, because support is good and because activities are very visual and practical.
- Students in the sixth form achieve well because courses are tailored to individual interests and needs and because teaching is good. Leaders pay close attention to progression and ensure that courses in the sixth form build on those which students have previously studied. When they leave, most students go on to college. No students leave without going on to education, training or employment.
- Students who attend from other schools achieve well, because activities are well matched to their needs and they are challenged by staff and other students who are working at similar levels to them.
- Students who attend college and work experience, including the farm, progress well because these visits broaden their experiences and help them see the relevance of basic skills in practical situations.
- All groups of students, including those known to be eligible for Year 7 catch-up or pupil premium funding, achieve well because staff assess and meet individual needs effectively. Significant differences in the starting points and needs of individual students mean that the progress and attainment of different groups vary over time and between cohorts. Pupil premium funding is used well in a range of ways, including contributions to special events and the cost of the school's family worker. These all really help students known to be eligible for the funding.

The quality of teaching is good

- Inspection observations, accurate school monitoring, students' work and discussions all show that teaching over time is good. An increasing proportion is outstanding, but a small proportion over time requires improvement. Reasons for this vary between lessons, but are generally because staff do not vary expectations of, and explanations for, individual students quite well enough to ensure that achievement is consistently outstanding.
- Staff have good subject knowledge. They frequently review and refine their practice through discussion and training. This includes a weekly review of Teachers' Standards and open discussion of how to implement these. Occasionally, teaching is slightly less effective because staff do not always vary their approaches or expectations to individual students sufficiently well. For example, occasionally, they do too much for students or do not allow sufficient time for the students to process information.

- Teachers plan and prepare interesting lessons. These include engaging and open-ended practical activities which are suitable for all. Students with the most complex difficulties made excellent progress in one lesson, where they picked pumpkins which they had grown and then designed faces on them to make lanterns in readiness for Halloween. Students displayed high levels of choice and initiative and successfully used their literacy skills to create and order a story about the task using words and symbols.
- Staff have high expectations for all the students. The most able students in Years 10 and 11 were successfully challenged to explore moral issues, write at length and use extensive vocabulary through their study of a contemporary story. This effectively helped both their progress and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Staff group students effectively within and between classes, including those who spend part of their week at other schools or colleges. For example, students are moved between classes of different abilities according to their needs and are given different tasks within classes to ensure that they all achieve well. This successfully drives equal opportunities and breaks down discrimination of all.
- Phonics (the sounds letters make) is taught well. Staff assess all students' understanding and knowledge of these carefully and provide additional help and support wherever necessary. Students, who are able to, enjoy reading and achieve well in this.
- Reading, writing, communicating and mathematics are taught well within a range of lessons. In an effective Key Stage 4 science class, students used all these skills well as they read and followed a numerical table in order to mix different quantities of sand, concrete and gravel to make cement. They were all fully engaged in this task, working extremely well on their own and cooperatively with others and were extremely proud of their results.
- Students in the sixth form are taught well. Many of their activities are highly practical and related to the world of work. These help their achievement and independence, successfully helping to prepare them for later life and learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students develop excellent attitudes to each other and to learning. They continue to work and try hard even when the effectiveness of teaching slightly dips.
- There have been very notable improvements in the behaviour and attitudes of several students. Parents and carers report how much their children have developed, how keen they are to come to school and how well they are achieving. Some students have had unsuccessful starts elsewhere and are now keen to attend, work hard and behave extremely well.
- Inappropriate behaviour is now rare because relationships are excellent, activities are very suitable and engaging and because staff know students very well and manage situations before outbursts occur. Relationships throughout the school are warm and friendly. Students have a range of adults, including the school's family worker, with whom they can discuss and work through any concerns they may have.
- Students, parents, carers and staff are all very positive about safety. Students feel safe because they have their friends and teachers to support them. In strong partnership with other agencies, leaders ensure students increase their awareness, safety and independence out of school. For example, they learn to travel safely, whether walking or taking buses and trains.
- Students have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including its verbal, cyber and physical forms. They understand how unacceptable bullying and various forms of derogatory language are. They say that bullying rarely, if ever, happens in school and know how to keep themselves and others safe, for example saying stop and telling adults immediately.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. Students take part in a very wide range of inspiring activities in lessons, clubs and special events, which help their confidence, self-esteem and skills for later life. These include 'night school', an evening of activities such as an assault course, cooking, a bonfire after school on a dark winter's evening and making short films which they show at a nearby cinema in the spring.

- Students all benefit hugely from being part of a tutor group which is made up of students of different ages and different abilities. The groups provide additional support for younger or less able students, and opportunities for older or more able ones to be 'like an older brother' to others. This helps all students, including those in sixth form and those who only come to the school for part of the week, to get to know others across the school, breaking down discrimination and helping form excellent relationships throughout.
- Students enjoy school greatly and, as a result, attendance has risen and is now in line with mainstream secondary schools. It continues to rise. Students are part of one of three houses, who compete for the best attendance each week. They all cheered loudly when the headteacher announced that attendance figures for the three houses in the week prior to the inspection were 96%, 97% and 99.5%.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers, including those in the sixth form, have successfully driven improvements in the environment, opportunities for learning, assessments, teaching and achievement since the last inspection. They have addressed all areas for development raised at the previous inspection. The role and impact of leaders at all levels have improved since the previous inspection even though monitoring is not always sufficiently detailed to ensure that provision throughout the school is consistently effective.
- The headteacher provides a positive and effective role model. She is extremely supportive to staff and students. The 45 questionnaires from staff were unanimously positive about all aspects investigated. One member of support staff expressed the views of others when they said, 'I have worked at five different schools previous to this and I have never felt as valued and supported as I have here. As a result of strong leadership, the staff are happy to do extra. As a school we are focused on the students. Amazing.'
- Leaders at all levels monitor and know the school well. Their self-evaluation is highly accurate and used well to implement new initiatives and extend opportunities for all. In their eagerness to expand provision, they occasionally miss fine details of what is already in place and do not always ensure that current provision is consistently effective. For example, while they know that there are signs and symbols for communication in each classroom, they have not checked that these are displayed in places which are easily visible and accessible to all.
- Leaders and managers provide some excellent opportunities for students' learning and use additional funding including pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding well. These are often bespoke to individual needs and interests and focus on developing students' academic and overall development. Opportunities for science, particularly for more able students, are at an earlier stage. However, leaders have already identified this, have acted to improve provision and are moving ahead with plans to ensure that achievement here improves.
- Leaders manage the performance of all staff effectively. Teachers reflect on the standards of their work each week and only those who meet the required standards resulting in positive results for students are able to move up the salary scale.
- Staff at all levels work well with families, including those who are traditionally harder to reach. The full-time family support worker, along with other leaders, plays an integral role in this, effectively supporting students and families. The parents of one student expressed the views of most when they said, 'Our son moved to Belvue and has improved in every area. For the first time we feel supported. The school and headteacher are simply wonderful.'
- The local authority knows the school well and appreciates all that it offers to its students and families. The school improvement partner has contributed effectively to school development through training and conducting shared observations, to strengthen and hone leadership skills.

■ The governance of the school:

Governance is good. Governors support and challenge the school well. Along with other leaders, they have been very vigilant in using and raising considerable amounts of money to develop the outdoor area. Plans and work on this so far indicate that it will be a highly effective area

for learning, fitness and the well-being of all. Governors meet all their statutory duties, including those for safeguarding, even though some fine details could be checked and monitored more carefully. They receive training and know the school, including data on the quality of teaching and data on students' achievements and how these relate to those in other schools well through visits and reports. Each governor is linked to a different area of the school, which they get to know and inform other governors about. They have an accurate view of the school, even though a few are slightly over positive about its current effectiveness. They are fully involved in school improvement, building on strengths and tackling any underperformance. They know how pupil premium funding is used and are pleased with the positive impact this has on achievement and well-being. They have secure structures for rewarding staff, overseeing the performance and salary of the headteacher, as well as other staff, and manage these well.

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	101965
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	425481

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pat Reid
Headteacher	Shelagh O'Shea
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 September 2010
Telephone number	0208 845 5766
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