

Bartley Green School A Specialist Technology and Sports College

Adams Hill, , Birmingham, B32 3QJ

Inspection dates 7–8 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
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.

- All groups of students achieve outstandingly, particularly those for whom the pupil premium provides additional funding. They enjoy their lessons and show a great eagerness to learn.
- All teaching is never less than good and is often outstanding. Teachers know their students very well, having high expectations of what they can achieve and promoting their independence. They plan tasks and learning resources that provide the right level of difficulty to meet the needs of all abilities.
- The quality of questioning is highly effective in all subjects, so that students are challenged to think deeply about their learning. Written marking is not always as effective.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary both in lessons and around the school. They are polite and respectful to each other and to adults. Students say how safe they feel as a result of the support adults provide and the speed with which any problems are sorted out.
- The inspirational headteacher has surrounded herself with a highly effective senior team. They, together with the governing body, have ensured that raising students' achievement and ensuring their well-being are at the heart of all they do.
- Procedures to ensure that the quality of teaching constantly improves and is of a consistently high quality are exceptionally effective.
- The school shows an outstanding capacity to sustain the high quality of provision achieved, and to improve further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 41 lessons, many of which were seen together with the school’s senior leaders. They also made a number of further short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with students, governors and staff, including subject leaders.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at policies, the school’s own assessment of its strengths and weaknesses and its development planning, records of lesson monitoring, information about students’ progress, safeguarding documents, and samples of students’ work.
- The views of 67 parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account, together with the school’s own survey of parents’ views. Inspectors also took account of 61 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Additional Inspector

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Full report

Information about this school

- Bartley Green School converted to become an academy school on 1 April 2011. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- The school is a specialist technology and sports college.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school has specially resourced provision for 22 students with a statement of special educational needs, particularly in speech, communication and language. These students are fully integrated into mainstream classes.
- The Owl Centre provides support for students identified as at risk as they transfer from Year 6 to Year 7 and promotes good behaviour and learning skills across the curriculum.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic heritages is average. Very few students speak English as an additional language.
- Almost 60% of students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals. This is well above the national average.
- Seven students attend a variety of full- and part-time alternative courses provided at Bournville College.
- The school meets the current government floor standards for secondary schools, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school was one of the first in the country to be designated a Teaching School. The headteacher is a National Leader of Education and the school is a National Support School.
- Over the past two years there has been much staffing disruption, particularly in mathematics and English, including in the leadership of English. In addition, a number of experienced teachers moved on to promotion at the end of the last academic year and were replaced by seven newly qualified teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Use existing outstanding practice to move more teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that written marking always provides students with opportunities to respond to advice by practising skills, correcting mistakes or undertaking a new challenge.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students typically enter the school with well-below average standards in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. They make excellent progress and in 2012 the proportion of Year 11 students gaining five GCSE subject grades A* to C including English and mathematics rose to above average. In 2013 almost all students gained five higher GCSE grades, although the proportion gaining both English and mathematics fell very slightly as a result of the staffing disruption during this year in those subjects.
- The proportion of students gaining the highest GCSE grades has tripled over the past two years and the proportion of students achieving higher passes in English Baccalaureate subjects has impressively risen to above national levels. Current assessments indicate that attainment is predicted to rise further by the end of the current academic year.
- The attainment of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium has been well above that achieved by this group nationally in English and mathematics, although within school in 2013 they were half a grade behind their classmates. Those of highest ability attain well and over half of those who achieved the highest GCSE grades in 2013 were from this group. There remained, however, a slight gap in the proportion of eligible students making or exceeding nationally expected progress compared with others in the school. The school's current data for Years 7 to 11 show that the gap is rapidly closing for all ability levels and at the end of the current academic year is predicted to be closed in both English and mathematics.
- Pupil premium funding is used highly effectively on a wide range of strategies that focus on promoting study skills and providing the financial support to ensure that those facing challenging circumstances are fully included in enrichment activities, such as taking instrumental lessons. Well-focused support is provided to promote good behaviour and attendance and to raise the aspirations of this group, including through strong university and college links.
- Lesson observations during the inspection confirm that students' have very positive attitudes to learning and are making at least good progress in all year groups and across subjects. Students from all ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, are making similarly impressive rates of progress.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs, including those in the special resource unit, are expertly supported and their progress is rigorously tracked. As a result, they are currently making similarly outstanding progress to that of other students. Those with a statement of special educational needs, including those with speech, language and communication in the resource unit, make better progress than this group nationally.
- Year 7 catch-up funding enables those with low literacy and numeracy skills to benefit from small-group and individual support, including through the Owl Centre. This support is resulting in rapid progress for this group. Well-established strategies are in place to help to accelerate students' reading. A variety of expertly delivered catch-up courses are provided for the weakest readers, establishing a systematic approach and providing effective support throughout Key Stage 3 and beyond.
- Accelerated reading groups in Year 10 continue to promote a love of reading and students speak with enthusiasm about their current reading books. For example, in a lower-ability Year 10 class, students showed great enjoyment and in-depth knowledge of their set text, confidently and fluently reading with expression and discussing the features of the main characters.

Teachers in all subjects encourage students to read out loud and promote the technical vocabulary for the subject.

- The students following alternative courses achieve well as a result of the well-matched support and high-quality care they receive.
- The large majority of students are entered for mathematics GCSE during Year 10. This is effectively enabling those who attain higher grades to further their mathematical skills during Year 11.
- Students greatly enjoy their learning and are keen to do well. They receive constant encouragement from adults, including teaching assistants, which increases self-confidence and fosters very positive attitudes to learning. Students commented that, 'The school helps us achieve our goals' and 'Teachers go out of their way to ensure you have the best possible future when you leave.'

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- During the inspection, all teaching seen was at least good and almost half was outstanding. Robust monitoring of teaching by senior leaders shows that this is typically the case and students told inspectors how much they appreciate the support that their teachers provide. Consequently, their progress and achievement are outstanding.
- Teachers know their students very well and tasks are well matched to students' individual learning needs. Teachers have very high expectations of what each student can achieve and resources are very well prepared, often promoting students' independence by enabling them to research information for themselves. For example, in a Year 8 French lesson, where the teaching was outstanding, students were totally immersed in the language as the whole lesson was conducted in French. A range of resources was provided to enable them to confidently respond in French to their teacher's questioning. As a result of these high expectations, these Year 8 students were working at GCSE level.
- All teachers are experts in supporting disabled students and those who have special educational needs through the advice and support of the special resource-unit staff. This enables the students in the special unit to be fully integrated into mainstream classes. For example, in a Year 10 English lesson observed, the teacher gently supported his students to build their confidence so that they were quickly drawn into the discussion and showed delight in their achievement. Here it was evident that excellent progress had been made over time as a result of consistently outstanding teaching. All teachers effectively promote literacy and numeracy skills through their subjects.
- Teaching assistants are a real strength of the provision. They deliver outstanding support for slower readers, support within the classroom and in small groups.
- Most teachers use questioning very skilfully to promote students' thinking, challenging students to justify their response and to provide examples to explain their responses. In many lessons observed, in-depth discussions ensued from these question sessions, as students were encouraged to add their own ideas or give another point of view.
- From Year 7 onwards, students respond to the outstanding teaching by showing an exceptional understanding of how they will be assessed, enabling them to make perceptive comments about

their own and each other's work and to identify how they could develop it further. They do this confidently and very effectively.

- Although the marking of students' work usually provides clear targets for development, a small minority of teachers miss opportunities to enable students to respond to advice, by practising skills, correcting mistakes or being set an additional challenge.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Standards of behaviour throughout the school are exceptional. Students regard the school as a safe-haven where 'street culture is left at the gate'. The atmosphere is calm and in all lessons warm relationships are evident between adults and students.
- Students show enthusiasm for their learning and are attentive and engaged in all lessons across the school, responding very quickly to instructions and showing a determination to do well. They are polite and courteous to adults, confidently offering to show the way to inspectors or explaining what they were learning in lessons.
- Students told inspectors that they feel very safe. They have a clear understanding of bullying and the different forms it can take, including a good understanding of e-safety. They say that there is zero tolerance for racist or homophobic bullying and that adults support them very well if they are troubled in any way. One student told an inspector that, 'You don't have to worry about anything.' All spoke of how quickly any problems were addressed. They also value the counselling offered if they should be suffering long-term effects of problems that face them.
- They enjoy taking responsible roles, for example, through the school council, or acting as peer mentors supporting younger students and the wider community. The school council ensures that, 'Everyone's voice is heard.' They take an active role in promoting behaviour and safety, for example, to suggest ways parking can be improved outside the school.
- The school's leaders provide excellent support for students and their families facing challenging circumstances and to promote good attendance and punctuality. As a result, persistent absence rates are declining. Good attendance is promoted at every opportunity. Great care is taken to ensure that those on alternative courses attend well and their well-being is closely and frequently checked.
- Leaders ensure that the very high standards of behaviour are maintained. Incidents are comprehensively logged and exclusions are declining. The school shows compassion and great care in dealing with each individual's needs, in the strong belief that students achievement is at the heart of everything they do.
- Parent, student and staff surveys are unreservedly positive about both behaviour and safety. Students understand the importance of good attitudes to learning and communicating confidently and politely when they move to their next steps in learning.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is highly effective in promoting the achievement and well-being of all students and delights in their successes. She has surrounded herself by an exceptionally strong team who, together with the wider team of staff, share her vision and ambition for the school's continued improvement of teaching and achievement.

- Leaders, including subject leaders, monitor the quality of teaching closely. Outstanding support and training is provided through the teaching-school provision to ensure that all teaching is at least good and that good teachers improve their practice further to become outstanding. The effectiveness of this support is shown by the fact that all newly qualified teachers were observed delivering lessons where the teaching was good or outstanding, after only eight weeks in the profession. Senior leaders do not give up on teachers whose practice is not yet outstanding, but take endless trouble to mentor, coach and support. Rigorous management of staff performance is well established and salary progression is only possible if targets for students' achievement are fully met.
- The school knows itself extremely well. School self-evaluation is detailed and analysis of performance data on students' attainment and progress exemplary, including detailed analysis of the performance of different groups of students. Appropriate priorities are identified for improvement, strongly focusing on raising the aspirations and achievement of all groups of students. There is a strong capacity for further improvement in this school where equality of opportunity is successfully promoted and discrimination eliminated.
- The strong leaders of subjects and year groups, including those responsible for students' well-being and behaviour, value the support of their line managers. There are regular meetings that have helped them to establish clear and consistent procedures across the school and to drive improvement. All staff questioned commented on the high quality of training that supports their professional development.
- The courses that students follow are highly appropriate because they promote the high achievement of students of all abilities and support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Over the past few years, the school has recognised the need to move away from BTEC to GCSE courses because these better meets the needs of students and increases their opportunity to take English Baccalaureate subjects. This transition has been highly successful. Alternative vocational courses, such as mechanics, have ensured that students' learning needs are met. The school's specialism in sport promotes teamwork across the school and in the wider community, while that in technology enriches students' learning across all subjects.
- A wide variety of enrichment activities, including a strong emphasis on music and sport, are highly popular with students, ensuring that the school is a hub of activity for the community. Independent careers guidance is highly valued by students enabling them to make realistic and informed choices about their next steps. As a result, there are no students who are not in education, employment or training when they leave school
- The school provides many opportunities to involve parents in the education of their children. The school website and newsletters provide detailed information and telephone calls and frequent text messages keep parents informed. Owl Centre courses and home visits engage parents at an early stage to ease the transition to secondary school. Parents and carers, through a variety of surveys, express a high degree of satisfaction with all aspects of the school's work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are highly effective, using their wide range of skills and expertise to challenge and support the school. The governing body is well organised so that every aspect of the school's work is scrutinised. Governors undertake additional training in order to further develop their effectiveness and are able to compare the school's performance with that of schools nationally. They understand what the quality of teaching is and have ensured that effective performance management procedures are in place and that staff remuneration is

determined by students' achievement. Safeguarding procedures and practice are exemplary. Governors are fully aware of the impact of pupil premium funding on raising the achievement of this group of students.

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	136589
Inspection number	427215

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	900
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pam Zaccheo
Headteacher	Chris Owen
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
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