

# Broomhill Bank School

Broomhill Road, Rustall, Kent, TN3 0TB

## Inspection dates

3–4 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 achieve well. They make good progress, both in English and mathematics, because reading and numeracy skills are promoted systematically and effectively across the curriculum. All groups of students do equally well.
- Students make outstanding gains in their social and communication skills because staff are highly effective in their use of specialist resources.
- The sixth form is good. Students leave the school well prepared for the next steps in education and the wider world.
- Teaching is good, and some outstanding teaching was seen. Teachers often plan lessons which are interesting and exciting and enable students to learn quickly.
- Behaviour is good in and out of classrooms, and students feel safe. Attendance is improving.
- Leaders have a clear vision for the future and have high expectations. Actions taken have had a positive impact on teaching and achievement and the pace of change is accelerating.
- Governance is strong. Governors know the school well. They ask probing and challenging questions of leaders.
- The school provides good outreach support and expertise to local mainstream schools, which help their staff to develop their skills in providing for students with special educational needs.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. Students show care and respect for others and develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Information on how well students learn is not always used carefully to ensure work set for at the right level for students, to ensure maximum progress in all lessons.
- Middle leaders are not involved fully in improving all aspects of the quality of teaching.
- The amount of subjects offered at GCSE level needs to be increased.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 11 lessons and/or parts of lessons. Over two thirds were conducted jointly with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 19 online surveys of parents' and carers' opinions (Parent View). They also looked at the school's own surveys.
- Meetings were held with various members of staff, representatives from the governing body and the local authority. Telephone discussions were also held with three parents. The inspectors spoke to many students, met with a small group of them and looked at behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The sixth form was out on a trip on the morning of the second day of the inspection.
- Inspectors also looked at documentation about students' progress, teaching and planning. The school's documents on safeguarding were scrutinised, together with records of attendance and students' behaviour.
- The inspectors listened to students reading in lessons and looked at their work, both in lessons and in books from the previous year.
- Inspectors looked at a range of other evidence, including displays, the school's website and evidence representing the school's wider achievements beyond the classroom.

## Inspection team

Sonja Joseph, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrew Lyons

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- In this special school all students have a statement of special educational needs for severe communication and/or interaction needs (autistic spectrum disorder and/or severe specific language impairment. Significantly increasing numbers of students have additional behavioural, and emotional difficulties.
- Students enter the school at various starting points across all key stages. The size of student groupings varies from year to year.
- The majority of students are girls.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds other than White British is well below average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and children from service families. This figure varies year on year due to the varied starting points of students.
- There has been significant staff turnover since the previous inspection.
- The school uses a range of work placements, including in local hotels and businesses, as alternative provision to support students in Key Stage 4 and in the Further Education Department (the sixth form).

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

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - ensuring teachers consistently make good use of information about students set work that is set at the right level for them
  - ensuring the marking of students' work provides students with sufficient guidance on how to improve their work
  - ensuring that teachers direct teaching assistants well so that they know exactly how to challenge and support all students they work with, including the most able.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - making sure that middle leaders have more opportunities to check on the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of work, so that they are fully aware of strengths and weaknesses and use this knowledge to take action to bring about improvements
  - increasing the range of courses available at GCSE, particularly for the most able.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Nearly all students make good progress over time and some make outstanding progress in both English and mathematics. There is no difference in the achievement of different groups of students because of the good quality teaching and high level of care and support that they receive. This outcome reflects the school's effective work in ensuring every student has an equal opportunity to succeed.
- In 2013, almost all students gained qualifications across a wide range of subjects, including in English and mathematics, and some at GCSE with A\* to G grades appropriate to their individual levels of ability. For some students this represents excellent progress in relation to their low starting points.
- The increasing proportion of students gaining appropriate qualifications and work-related learning awards indicates a clear trend of improvement. However, the school recognises it needs to improve the range of courses available at GCSE level so that the needs of the most able students can be more precisely met.
- Students' personal development is excellent. Individualised programmes and highly effective specialist support from speech therapists and the pastoral team support more vulnerable students exceptionally well so they can learn well alongside their classmates.
- Progress in communicating, speaking and listening is especially strong because teachers are highly skilled in using consistently a wide range of communication aids and resources to support students' learning across all subjects.
- Students' reading and literacy skills are developed well. Expert and consistent teaching in phonics (the sounds that letters make) ensures the most able students read with fluency and are confident to break down words to help them tackle unfamiliar ones. Less able students use symbols to help them read text and, where appropriate, students use sign language to read simple phrases.
- Students in the sixth form Further Education Department achieve well and leave with qualifications and accreditations that reflect their levels of academic ability. They develop good self-help skills, for instance through learning how to make simple meals in the school café. The Further Education Department prepares them well for moving on, and most students go on to further education, training or specialist provision.
- Students on the autistic spectrum make similar good progress to other students because specialist teaching strategies and individual programmes reduce their levels of anxiety.
- Students from minority ethnic backgrounds receive appropriate help and support. As a result, their progress is similar to that of their classmates.
- Senior leaders regularly check on the progress of students who attend the various effective off-site settings. Currently, all students in alternative provisions are achieving equally as well as their classmates.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding achieve similarly to their classmates because of the small class sizes, individualised approaches to learning, and intensive interventions. These include support in reading and numeracy, developing 'emotional literacy' to help ensure good academic progress, and promoting students' personal and social development. Students eligible for pupil premium achieve GCSE grades in English and mathematics in line with those of other students.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The great majority of teaching observed during the inspection was good, and some outstanding teaching was seen. The school's own observations agreed with those of the inspectors and school records of lesson observations show good teaching over time.
- High-quality relationships and good support ensure that most lessons are calm and good

learning takes place without disruption. Students know what is expected of them and are keen to do well.

- Students with more challenging behaviour make good progress because teachers and support staff are consistent in their use of the appropriate strategies to help them. Students with autism benefit from very effective use of symbols and pictures and well-established class routines.
- Communication skills are promoted well, with teachers making highly effective use of specialist resources to meet each student's individual needs. Teachers and other adults work closely with speech and language therapists to give, when appropriate, extra support and guidance to students throughout all lessons.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught well within a range of lessons. In an excellent Key Stage 4 food technology lesson, students used all these skills exceptionally well as they read instructions, weighed ingredients and recorded 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.
- Where teaching is outstanding, teachers use detailed information about what each student knows, understands and can do to plan lessons, so each individual student's needs are precisely met. Particular attention in these lessons is given to developing students' communication skills by providing lots of sensory experiences and practical activities.
- In a highly effective Key Stage 3 religious education lesson, sensory materials and communication aids were used exceptionally well by the teacher to develop students' understanding of the story of visit of the three kings in the account of the nativity. Each student was motivated to participate in an activity, which was fully adapted to their individual interests, so that all remained on task and made excellent progress in their learning.
- On occasions, not all students make the best progress possible because not all teachers use assessment information well enough to set work at the right level, particularly for the most able. Teaching assistants are not always sufficiently well directed by the class teacher to challenge and support the needs of all students they work with.
- There are some excellent examples of the marking of students' work. In the best practice, students are given clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work and reach the next level. However marking does not always show students what they need to do better.

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

- The behaviour of students is good. During the inspection, there were some examples of excellent behaviour when students were openly supportive, caring and helping each other to learn, without prompts from any adult. However, behaviour is not yet outstanding because occasionally, when teaching is not as challenging as it could be, students' attention wanders.
- Students get on very well with each other and show respect for other students and adults. Although students sometimes find it hard to behave well, this never interrupts the learning in lessons because teachers and support staff are highly skilled in knowing exactly what to do to ensure learning is continuous. Students can explain clearly how their behaviour affects learning. As one said, 'I am learning more now because teachers talk things through.'
- Staff show students courtesy and respect and students reciprocate. Those who met with the inspectors painted a very positive picture of a school where they feel safe and happy. This is a view endorsed by parents.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe, well cared for and supported at school. They know what to do to stay safe, including when using computers. Bullying is rare, but students understand some of the different forms it can take and what to do if it should ever happen.
- Students who have emotional or behavioural difficulties are enabled to cope with the conventions of school life because staff know their students well and are alert to any problems that arise. The pastoral team is proactive in working with families and ensuring that barriers to

learning are kept to a minimum.

- Students' independence and sense of responsibility are promoted well throughout the school. Post-16 students enjoy opportunities to demonstrate their independence through attending work placements in the school café and making goods to sell locally.
- Parents are supportive of the school, and in discussions spoke highly about the staff. Parents relate the many strategies staff have shared with them, for example to encourage good behaviour, develop communication or simply be there for them to talk to.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. Together with senior leaders, including governors, she has been extremely effective in sustaining the quality of teaching and students' achievement across the school despite significant changes in staff.
- Staff are mostly effective in ensuring that every student has the best opportunity to succeed. There are excellent relationships at all levels and staff try to ensure that every student is treated fairly and that there is no discrimination. The local authority has supported the school well in its drive for improvement, checking the accuracy of school judgements on teaching, and giving advice and support to teachers.
- The senior leaders have an accurate view of how well the school is doing. The new tracking systems are a great improvement and are yielding very useful information so senior leaders can check whether any group of students is underachieving. Senior leaders know there are some improvements needed in the quality of teaching and learning. They fully recognise that some middle leaders do not evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning in their areas frequently enough, to ensure all groups of students make rapid gains in their learning.
- The school has good systems to check on teachers' work. Teachers have targets to bring about improvements, which are linked to rates of students' progress. Teachers feel well supported and are given additional help to improve their teaching and to fulfil their roles if necessary.
- The curriculum, including that of the sixth form, offers a good balance of academic, practical and vocational subjects and high-quality personal learning programmes. However, the school fully recognises that it needs to review its curriculum further to meet the needs of its most able students more precisely through offering a wider range of GCSE courses.
- Opportunities for students to take part in exciting outdoor activities, residential trips and artistic and musical activities encourage students to take risks in supportive situations. These opportunities promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. This ensures students are well prepared for further education or the world of work.
- The school works highly effectively with local schools through its outreach service to support mainstream students' learning and communication needs. Schools regard highly the service it provides.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The highly effective Chair leads an improving and confident governing body, which challenges senior leaders. Governors undertake appropriate training to support them in their roles. They recognise the importance of high-quality teaching and how it might be improved. The governing body holds the school to account for the way in which teachers' performance is rewarded. Governors check the work of the headteacher and the performance of other staff, which is helping them to make decisions about how well they are working, any action that needs to be taken, training opportunities needed and any pay awards. They have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They ensure that the school is a safe place in which to work and learn. Governors are diligent in making sure the school's finances are balanced and check the impact of pupil premium and catch-up funding for Year 7. Current funding is being used to provide extra support to ensure that all students make the best possible progress in English, mathematics and communication skills.

## 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>	119026
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	426646

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>	Foundation Special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	92
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	26
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Holder
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Leitch
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01892 510440
<b>Fax number</b>	01892 502460
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