

Broad Oak Sports College

Hazel Avenue, Bury, Lancashire, BL9 7QT

Inspection dates 26–27 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	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 continues to improve overall. Their attainment in examinations has risen markedly.
- Teaching is good and ensures positive outcomes for students. Teachers are keen for students to do well and have high expectations and aspirations for all.
- Students with special educational needs achieve well. The extra support they receive is very effective and is promoting more rapid progress in their learning.
- Students' attendance has risen and is now average; the number of exclusions and students who are persistently absent have reduced dramatically.
- Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively. Students are looked after well and they say they feel safe in school.
- Students who receive additional support through the pupil premium are making accelerated progress as a direct result of the extra funding, so that any gaps between their achievement and that of their peers are closing over time.
- Students are exceptionally courteous, smartly dressed and come to school equipped and ready for work. They are keen to learn and highly engaged in their studies.
- Leaders have raised standards across the school and brought about rapid improvement in many subjects. The headteacher and senior leaders have been supported well by governors to achieve these improvements, including in the quality of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress students make in mathematics, although improving rapidly, is not as strong as that made in English.
- In some subjects, such as geography and history, the most able students do not always reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- The data the school has available, although varied and substantial, are not yet consistently used by all leaders to quickly identify any potential underachievement and, therefore, ensure any interventions are timely.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited 28 lessons, two of which were observed jointly with senior leaders from the school.
- Formal discussions were held with the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders, three groups of students and the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a wide range of supporting documents and records, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, the school’s own view of its performance, the monitoring of progress in lessons, achievement data, minutes from governing body meetings and records of support from Bury local authority.
- Scrutiny of students’ work was carried out during lesson observations and as three separate exercises.
- Inspectors listened to the Year 7 students who benefit from additional support with their reading as part of the school’s approach to improve standards of literacy across the school.
- Behaviour throughout the school was observed, including in lessons and at break time. Consideration was also given to the opinions of the staff, pupils and parents about behaviour.
- Inspectors analysed 38 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to enable them to be viewed. The results of the school’s own survey carried out with parents and students were considered.

Inspection team

Colin Scott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bernard Robinson

Additional Inspector

Bimla Kumari

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Broad Oak Sports College is smaller than most secondary schools. The school has a largely mobile population and annually is experiencing large numbers of pupils who move out of the area and others who move in.
- The majority of the pupils are of White British heritage with a large minority from ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is double that typically found nationally. This funding is available for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for its students.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school enters most students early for GCSE examinations.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the rates of progress for all students, particularly in mathematics.
- Further support the progress of the most able students so that they achieve the highest possible standards in all subjects equally.
- Sharpen the skills of leaders at all levels to be able to promote the best possible progress of students and further improve the quality of teaching, by:
 - using the good tracking data available in school to identify more quickly any potential underperformance of students
 - developing leaders' abilities to ascertain accurately the impact of teaching on students' progress, as part of the school's normal observations of lessons
 - supporting teachers to develop their skills further so more teaching results in outstanding progress for students.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students make good progress from their individual starting points and leave Year 11 with standards that are above average in English, close to average in mathematics and broadly average in other subjects. In 2013, the proportion of students gaining five or more A*–C grades, including English and mathematics, in GCSE examinations, rose markedly.
- Despite a slowing of progress in mathematics for Year 11 students in 2013, inspection evidence for students currently in Years 10 and 11 shows that this dip in achievement has been reversed. In mathematics, students are now on track to make at least expected progress. This is due to senior leaders conducting an immediate review of the causes, and implementing a programme of effective support. This was further augmented by an external validation of the school's data in mathematics. However, progress in this subject is not yet as strong as that in English.
- In other subject areas, such as design and technology and science, the standards students reached in GCSE examinations in 2013 were higher than typically found nationally.
- The students entered early for GCSE examinations in Year 10 do not reach the highest standards of which they are capable. However, this is used as an exercise by the school to help to accurately identify the gaps in students' learning and introduce targeted support, so that by the time of the summer entry in Year 11, many students reach the highest standards they can.
- The support for literacy across the school in all subject areas is strong. This is having a marked impact on the progress students make across all areas of the school; it is providing additional help to those who are new to English and ensuring equality of access to learning for all.
- The most able students do not always do as well as they could, particularly in geography, history and mathematics. The school recognises this and inspectors found that the extra support provided for the most able is beginning to have a positive impact on their progress.
- The few students who are disabled or who have an identified special educational need make good progress, which is as strong as that of the majority of their peers.
- The achievement of students who are supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is not currently as good as that of their peers. However, more effective use of this funding is helping to close the gaps between this group's attainment and progress and those of other students in the school. For example, school data and inspection evidence supports that the current Year 11 students are on track to make better progress in English than their peers and almost as good progress as their peers in mathematics. Students targeted for the Year 7 catch-up programme are making good progress and the funding is used well; for example, targeted support is provided through a nurture group in Year 7, and this resulted in these students making good progress in reading and writing. This improvement in their literacy skills enabled their full integration into the main school by Year 8, because they were able to access the learning materials in other subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching leads to good learning and progress over time for students. It is equally strong in Key Stages 3 and 4. Overall, teachers have high expectations of their students and work hard to ensure that learners do well.
- Teachers have developed their skills and knowledge further so that there is now at least good progress for all groups of students.
- The quality of students' learning in mathematics is now much better. Inspection evidence of current progress in both Key Stages 3 and 4, through lesson observations, work scrutiny, the school's own tracking data and the external moderation of internal data, demonstrates that the progress students make is now much stronger as a result of better teaching. For example, in one mathematics lesson, Year 10 pupils were able to reflect on their prior learning in order to confidently call upon their knowledge to find the solutions to written problems.

- Students speak very highly of teachers' skills. In the school's own parental survey, the overwhelming majority of parents indicated that they have a high regard for the way teachers prepare students for moving through the school, and said teaching is good.
- Teachers' marking is further supporting the progress students make, although the impact of this is still variable between teachers and subjects. Some teachers do not use the information from assessment and tracking to set work for students of different abilities so that they make the best possible progress. This is particularly the case for the most able students in mathematics.
- Teaching assistants and other classroom support staff are used extremely well in supporting students with particular needs, ensuring that all students are able to fully access learning. For example, targeted support for students new to English ensures that they learn as well as their peers and acquire language skills rapidly.
- Teachers' support for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Opportunities to develop students' ability to reflect on society are good. For example, in one lesson, students discussed the segregation laws introduced in America in the twentieth century. The discussion enabled a full and frank reflection by students of the effects of such laws on all groups in American society.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say that they feel safe and that the school also helps them understand how to be safe when using modern online technologies and social media. The overwhelming majority of parents who took part in the school's own survey agree that their children are safe in school.
- Students say that bullying is rare and is more likely to be verbal than physical. They say that the school is always swift to deal with it when it does occur.
- Attendance has risen markedly and is currently average. The school has worked hard to reduce the persistent absence of a small number of students and this has resulted in the incidence of persistent absence being lower than that found nationally.
- The school is hesitant to use fixed-term exclusions. Exclusion rates are similar to those seen in schools nationally.
- The behaviour of students is good. They are highly engaged in their work because, overall, teachers ensure activities are both suitable and challenging for all. Students respond well to this expertise and are genuinely interested in their learning.
- The school ensures all students are able to access all learning opportunities, regardless of their background. Inspection evidence showed that the school is successful in ensuring that no student experiences discrimination and that staff are vigilant and sensitive in ensuring this.
- The school works successfully to ensure that there is a culture of fairness and acceptance. Students are highly considerate of others and their teachers. Similarly, teachers have strong and supportive relationships with students that allow them to feel highly valued. When talking about his teacher in mathematics, one student said, 'She's amazing, we've had her since Year 7 and it's like a family.'
- Students value their education and school highly. This is shown by the good presentation of their work, the cleanliness of the school buildings, their preparedness for lessons and their punctuality, and the way they conduct themselves in lessons and around the school.
- There are many opportunities for students to experience activities in and out of school. Students speak highly of the annual visit to Siberia and are passionate about both the extra learning this gives them and the chance to experience different cultures.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders have driven improvements across all areas well, so that achievement is now good and sustainable. A good capacity for further improvement is evident.

Parents who responded to the school's own survey, and the staff who submitted inspection questionnaires, indicate they are extremely supportive of leadership.

- Leaders at all levels feel they are supported well by external partners and say that the challenges they get from the local authority are effectively boosting their capacity to make further improvements to all areas of the school's work. For example, a thorough review and an evaluation of provision in mathematics, both internally and using this external support, have astutely identified areas of improvement, and the actions taken to bring about these are already positively impacting on students' progress.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance is accurate. There are clear and measurable targets on how to improve outcomes for students. External moderation and evaluation of both the progress students make and the leadership of subjects are used well to support strategies for improvement.
- School policies, such as for marking and assessment, are not yet consistently applied by all teachers to effect positive outcomes for all learners, particularly the most able students. However, this is improving over time so that more teachers are ensuring that the progress all students make in lessons is at least good.
- The school has effective methods to track the progress students make across the school. However, this is not always used by all middle leaders to proactively identify underachievement and ensure that support is timely so that students' good progress is maintained.
- Standards are rising and the progress students make is accelerating as a result of higher expectations and stronger teaching since the last inspection. This has been due to the relentless drive of the headteacher, senior leaders and governors to improve teaching. However, there is scope for further training for leaders to enable them to evaluate more rigorously the links between what teachers do and the impact this is having on students' attainment and progress.
- Performance management ensures teachers progress through the pay scales appropriately. Support for newly qualified and recently qualified teachers is excellent, resulting in their rapidly improving professional skills.
- Overall, leaders promote equality of opportunity extremely well. For example, those students new to speaking English receive prompt and accurate support so that they can access the curriculum as soon as possible. Similarly, through careful and accurate use of the pupil premium funding, no student is prevented from joining in activities due to their circumstances.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors effectively challenge leaders, and hold them to account for the progress students make and for the financial stability of the school. They are careful to ensure that leaders' analysis of students' achievement is appropriately endorsed by external evaluations of attainment and progress. Governors are astute in their understanding of nationally published performance data.
 - Governors have a clear understanding of students' standards and the quality of teaching that they receive. They ensure that this is strongly matched to the ethos and vision of the school, so that parents know clearly what the school is doing for their children.
 - Governors are passionate about the school and are proud to be associated with it. They feel that the school is a place in which all are highly valued and supported in all that they do.
 - The governing body ensures safeguarding meets requirements.

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	105364
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	442336

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	553
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Kerr
Headteacher	Neil O'Connor
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2013
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