

Belmont Park School

101 Leyton Green Road, Waltham Forest, E10 6DB

Inspection dates 2–3 July 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| 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 | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school provides an environment in which students make significant improvements in their attitudes to learning. Their academic achievement is good as a result.
- Students in Key Stage 4 who remain at the school successfully complete a number of GCSE courses and other nationally accredited courses. In 2013, all students gained either a functional skill or GCSE qualification in English and mathematics.
- Students say the school is a safe place in which to learn. They say there is no bullying and that there are lots of adults they can talk with should they feel the need to share a problem.
- Teachers' high expectations and interesting lessons ensure students enjoy learning and make good progress.
- Students' behaviour in and around the school is good. Those students who have found school challenging in the past settle quickly into the life of the school.
- Learning mentors, some of whom provide one-to-one support for named students throughout the day, are highly effective in managing students' behaviour.
- The headteacher, her deputy and others with posts of responsibility provide good leadership and management at all levels. All staff want the best outcomes possible for students. They make sure improvements in the quality of learning are sustained.
- Experienced governors know the school well. Their range of individual expertise enables them to hold the school to account, including checking on students' learning and progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is inconsistency in the quality of students' learning of key subject vocabulary. Some students are therefore not always making the very best progress in all subjects.
- Although the school provides suitable curriculum pathways for students' different levels of ability, there are not enough challenging courses for higher attaining students.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook 11 formal classroom observations of learning, visiting nine of the 10 teachers. Four formal joint observations were undertaken with the deputy headteacher. Other evidence relating to teaching and learning was scrutinised, including a sample of students' books and other sources of work produced by students.
- Inspectors talked to a group of older students. They also held meetings with the headteacher and her senior leadership team, others with posts of responsibility, the governor with responsibility for safeguarding and a representative from the local authority. The lead inspector spoke to the Chair of the Governing Body by telephone.
- Too few submissions were made to the online inspection questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors took account of 27 responses to the school's own recent parent and carer survey, and considered the views of 26 staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's practice and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, improvement planning, information on students' progress, documents used by senior leaders to check the school's work and governing body documentation, as well as records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors also evaluated the impact of the use of additional government funding made available through the pupil premium.

Inspection team

James Bowden, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Liz Bull

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school provides for students with extremely challenging behaviours. All have a statement of special educational needs for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. In addition, a small minority of students have high level statements of special educational needs that require a dedicated learning support assistant at all times. A small minority also have other complex needs.
- Currently, the very large majority of students are boys. There are similar proportions of students of White British backgrounds and Black or Black British backgrounds as found nationally. A few are of mixed backgrounds and a very few are of Asian or Asian British backgrounds. A few are from homes where English is not the home language.
- The large majority of students are from Waltham Forest with a small minority from other London boroughs. A very few are currently in secure accommodation, whilst remaining on the roll of the school.
- All students at the school are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding to support those known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care. Currently, there are a few students in local authority care.
- Students are allowed to take early entry GCSE examinations.
- Pupils new to the school are admitted at any time throughout the year, including a few who transfer from mainstream schools. Almost all have had a number of school moves prior to joining Belmont Park.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching by:
 - providing effective support in all lessons for students' understanding of key terminology in all subjects.
- Extend the GCSE curriculum to provide more challenge for higher attaining students.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students arriving at Belmont have faced serious disruption to their education, such as managed moves, inappropriate placements and, for some, short periods of time in secure accommodation. Consequently, all have been underachieving and their attainment on entry to the school is well below that of their classmates in mainstream schools. The school works hard to re-ignite their interest in learning. Most eventually complete a range of GCSE courses and other nationally-recognised accreditations.
- Students are tested on entry to the school, particularly in relation to their capabilities in English and mathematics. All students can now follow at least seven GCSE courses and choose to take a range of functional skills courses or follow BTEC courses. The proportion of students achieving GCSE passes has increased, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Students are encouraged to take early entry examinations in English and mathematics, as well as the other courses on offer. This motivates them further as they then realise they are capable of achieving higher grade passes the next time. The school's predicted grades show potentially higher grade passes in 2014 for many students, particularly in English and mathematics.
- This has also motivated a few students who have chosen to stay on this year for Year 12, in order to prepare themselves fully for the next stage of their learning. For the past three years, all students have moved on to either education, employment or training when they leave school at the end of Year 11.
- As a result of good quality teaching and highly effective support for each individual, achievement is good across the school. This is irrespective of students' behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The most able students make good progress because teachers set targets that are hard enough. Students told inspectors that they felt the work provided was challenging and made them work hard. There are no particular differences in the rates of progress made by boys and girls, students from different ethnic backgrounds and those few from homes where English is not the home language.
- Those students eligible for free school meals and the few looked after by local authorities make good progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills. Their attainment levels in English and mathematics at the end of Year 11 differ considerably because of the wide variation in their starting points and time spent at the school.
- In almost all lessons, students' progress is typically good. In an English lesson, developing students' knowledge of Shakespeare and recall of Shakespearean facts, the use of a modern rapper made learning relevant and interesting. Students remained on task throughout and keenly answered the teacher's questions, developing their understanding well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good learning is the norm because lessons, including English and mathematics, are interesting. In addition, there is a strong focus on supporting students' all-round literacy skills. A variety of interesting activities also engage students in learning. In an art lesson, prior to planning a design for a poster, students were keenly interested as the teacher led a discussion on the ethics of having performing animals in circuses. In an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson, students were motivated by discussing 'game addiction'.
- Learning mentors and teachers have a seamless approach to supporting students' learning. Never overly intrusive, they are highly effective and students appreciate this. In a drama lesson, all students were presenting improvised performances on their chosen themes, sometimes involving an adult. The students made rapid progress in developing their skills.
- Adults' high expectations of students' attitudes and behaviour and their effective management of any frustrations with learning are the key to students' successful learning. This was clearly evident in a series of team building tasks that students were involved in as part of their BTEC

work.

- Resources to support learning are used effectively. In a mathematics lesson, the teacher made effective use of ICT resources to support learning in algebra and fractions. The teacher skilfully used and manipulated numbers on the interactive whiteboard to deepen students' understanding.
- There has been a recent whole-school focus on supporting literacy across the curriculum. However, there are still inconsistencies in how well planning for learning ensures that students learn the key vocabulary used in different subjects.
- The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the school's questionnaire consider their child is taught well. Students who spoke with the inspectors said that teachers helped them learn, provided lots of advice and would not hold them back.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. The high levels of adult support and consistent routines throughout the day are a key strength of the school. Students know exactly what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour, including at off-site sporting activities. They appreciate the 'rewards vouchers' for good attitudes and behaviour.
- Students respect the fabric of the building and its surroundings. They appreciate the displays and find them helpful to learning.
- Attitudes to learning in lessons are positive because staff are adept at ensuring the work is interesting and pitched at an appropriate level. Students appreciate the high levels of quality support from learning mentors as well.
- Behaviour over time improves for most. Actions taken by the school have been effective in reducing the proportion of students who receive fixed-term exclusions for poor behaviour. There have been no permanent exclusions in recent years. Racist incidents are rare and there have been no homophobic or sexual harassment incidents. Students told the inspector that boys and girls get on well together.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. The site is secure and there is a high level use of CCTV cameras in and around the building. Students feel positive about this, as they do about search procedures on entry and the expectation that all mobile devices are handed in. Internet safety is a high priority, with access denied to inappropriate sites. Students told inspectors the school is a safe place to be. They say there are no instances of bullying but that the school would deal promptly with any instances arising.
- The school is effective in improving levels of attendance and is working hard to improve punctuality at the start of the day. It works closely and successfully with other professionals. This has meant overall attendance rates for many students have improved considerably when compared to that in their previous histories. A greater proportion of students now attend as regularly as their classmates in other special schools. Punctuality at the start of the day is improving, with a few students arriving each morning before school officially starts.
- Most parents and carers who responded to the school's own questionnaire feel their child is well looked after by the school. In addition, the school deals promptly with any potential complaints about safety issues.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's passion for 'turning around' the lives of vulnerable young people by re-kindling their interest in learning underpins the work and ambition of the school. All staff subscribe fully to this ethos.
- Senior leaders make regular checks on teachers' performance and the outcomes of these inform decisions about salary progression and professional development opportunities.
- Capacity for further improvement is good because of effective, accurate self-evaluation and

improvement planning. However, senior leaders recognise that the curriculum does not always offer enough challenge to the higher attaining students in Key Stage 4.

- Equal opportunities for all to succeed are at the forefront of the school's work, including extra support and guidance for all individuals. This results in all students making good progress and raising their own aspirations, which prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- The curriculum follows that of mainstream schools, with all students able to follow seven different subjects, including to GCSE level. In addition, functional skills courses and BTEC vocational courses are available.
- Good all-round personal development, including strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, is the norm. This is as a result of formal SMSC lessons during the week. The school fosters good relationships between students and with adults, and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The school has highly effective partnerships with a wide range of external, specialist agencies and other professionals. These support further the progress students make during their stay at the school.
- The school maintains close links with parents and carers, including regular opportunities for meetings. Parents and carers appreciate this, as is evident in the overall positive responses of the very large majority who responded to the school's recent questionnaire. Almost all parents and carers feel the school keeps them well informed.
- The local authority currently offers an appropriate level of support to this good school
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body and governors work effectively with the school, holding it to account for all aspects of its work. They have a good understanding of performance data, the quality of teaching throughout the school and the use of performance management. After checking the work of the headteacher and other staff, governors make appropriate decisions about how well they are working and any action that needs to be taken, as well as about training opportunities and pay. Regular visits to the school are commonplace. Governors ensure the school is financially stable.
 - Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures and protocols are robust and effective, and a nominated governor checks this aspect of the school's work. In addition, governors monitor carefully the allocation and impact of the use of pupil premium funding. This is currently being used to support students' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 131697 |
| Local authority | Waltham Forest |
| Inspection number | 430470 |

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

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| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Community special |
| Age range of pupils | 11–17 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 60 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Jim Minton |
| Headteacher | Julia Mainwaring |
| Date of previous school inspection | 14–15 June 2011 |
| Telephone number | 020 8556 0006 |
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