

# Ravens Wood School

Oakley Road, Bromley, BR2 8HP

**Inspection dates** 11–12 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Students have achieved well above average GCSE results in the two years since the previous inspection.
- The most able students make consistently good progress and achieve a high percentage of GCSE A\* and A grades.
- Disadvantaged students are making at least the same amount of progress as others this year.
- Students with statements of special educational needs make extremely good progress. Provision for their needs is one of the school's strengths.
- The sixth form is good. A-level and AS results are above average and improved in 2014. All sixth form students are making good progress this year.
- Teaching has moved into a higher gear in the last two years; marking, lesson planning and matching work to students' abilities have all improved.
- Students feel safe and their above average attendance reflects that they enjoy school life. Safety procedures are thorough. Students learn about the risks they may face in their future lives.
- The executive headteacher, senior and middle leaders and the transition governing body have all contributed successfully to the significant improvements in achievement and teaching. The school is moving forward rapidly.
- Students behave well. They are keen to learn and attentive in lessons. Sixth formers mature into polite, thoughtful and considerate young adults; they are excellent role models for younger students.
- Senior leaders are clear about their roles and carry them out efficiently and effectively. Teachers value the support they receive to improve their practice.
- Students appreciate the extra help teachers give them with their learning and the high quality personal support staff offer whenever they need it.
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, along with a focus on citizenship and an understanding of life in modern Britain.
- In all years, students receive extensive advice and guidance about their future lives and careers.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few middle attaining students do not make as good progress as others.
- The percentage of GCSE and sixth form A\* and A grades is not high enough in a few subjects.
- A-level results have not improved rapidly enough in the past.
- Computer programming is not taught well.
- Students' study skills are not developed well enough to strengthen their learning and prepare students for sixth form work.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed students' learning in over 50 lessons, mostly for about half an hour, others for less time. It was not possible to observe any Year 11 lessons as students were taking mock examinations. Several lessons were jointly observed with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors observed the morning and afternoon form-time sessions and an assembly.
- Inspectors spoke to many students informally as well as meeting representatives from several year groups.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, and staff with responsibility for subjects and other aspects of the school's work.
- The lead inspector met with the Chair of the Directors of the Ravens Wood Learning Trust and the Chair of the Transition Board and four other members.
- Inspectors discussed their observations with teaching staff and examined a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, development plan, monitoring records and reviews. They also scrutinised information about progress, standards, exclusions, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors looked at a range of students' work in lessons and outside of lessons.
- Inspectors took into account 68 questionnaires completed by members of staff and 317 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Clare Gillies, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stuart Davies	Additional Inspector
John Edgar	Additional Inspector
Kewal Goel	Additional Inspector
Glenn Smith	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Ravens Wood converted to become an academy in April 2011, before its previous report.
- The school joined forces with Addington High School, which became an academy in June 2013, as a multi-academy trust called The Ravens Wood Learning Trust. This Transition Board has a small number of directors.
- The executive headteacher of Ravens Wood, who became the chief executive officer of the Transition Board, retired in October 2013, and the present incumbent was appointed to the post of chief executive officer the next month. She had already been involved with Ravens Wood following issues related to the 2013 examination procedures.
- The headteacher and two deputy headteachers of Ravens Wood left in July 2014; until a substantive headteacher could be appointed, the chief executive officer combined two roles and took up the reins of executive headteacher in September 2014. A headteacher has been appointed to start in September 2015.
- The Transition Board established a transition governing body for Ravens Wood with six members, in September 2014.
- The school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school. The sixth form is also larger than average.
- About 80% of the students attending the school are White British, with many small percentages of students from different ethnic minority groups. A low proportion of students speak English as an additional language, of whom only a few are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of students who receive support through the pupil premium is well below average. This is additional government funding for specific groups, including students known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- Between 15 and 20 students have been eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding in recent years. This is for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is average. The main needs are related to autism, and speech, language and communication difficulties.
- No students attend any off-site educational provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Raise standards:
  - improve GCSE and sixth form results, particularly in subjects where students do not yet achieve a high percentage of A\* and A grades
  - check that all middle attainers, in all years, make as good progress as other students
  - ensure that all middle leaders and teachers assess sixth form students' work regularly and accurately and respond quickly to any underachievement.
- Improve teaching:
  - introduce the study skills that students need in the sixth form into Key Stage 4 lessons
  - deliver high quality computer programming lessons
  - intensify the dissemination of the outstanding practice that exists in, for example, preparing work for different abilities and marking students' work.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher is extremely well supported by a deputy headteacher and seven assistant headteachers, one of whom leads the sixth form. Most of them are new to their roles or to the school. They have brought an energy and determination to the school's culture in which good behaviour and effective teaching flourish.
- Senior leaders have tightened up all procedures for monitoring students' progress. They have introduced regular assessments in all subjects, used external validation to check the accuracy of teachers' marking, improved how information is collected, and analysed and ensured that underachieving students receive extra support, from Year 7 upwards, to catch up fast.
- Students know how well they are doing as every subject has drawn up a 'flight path'. Every term from Year 7, this shows students where they should be to achieve their GCSE target grades. Students and parents understand this simple, but effective, way of displaying progress.
- The leadership of teaching has gathered momentum; staff value the support and training they receive. Senior leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and identify strengths and areas for development accurately. Staff morale is high and even those who generate outstanding learning are keen to learn from others to improve their practice.
- The school's plans for the future are precise and accurate. However, leadership and management are not outstanding because many of the recent improvements have yet to impact on a few middle leaders' and teachers' skills and raise achievement in a few subjects, particularly in the sixth form.
- Nevertheless, middle leaders know they are accountable for the outcomes of their department's work and many of them monitor the quality of teaching and students' progress well. They do not always check that all staff have marked every sixth form assessment accurately so that rapid action can be taken to address underachievement. As one observed, 'We need to strive for excellence.'
- The special educational needs support team is very effective. National changes to special educational needs have been absorbed efficiently. An external consultant is supporting the skilful team well in the absence of the special educational needs coordinator.
- Funding for disadvantaged students and those eligible for catch-up funding is used carefully. Last year students had individual packages to help them make good progress. Experienced learning support assistants, teachers and external specialists provide one-to-one sessions; students are encouraged to be involved in music and sports. A parents' forum has been set up so that parents can understand and back up what the school is doing for their children.
- Parents' responses to the questionnaire were practically all positive. A couple of individual concerns were discussed with the school. Senior leaders take parents' concerns seriously. Parents receive weekly newsletters and regular information about the achievement of their sons and daughters (in the sixth form).
- Careers guidance is a regular feature of form times. All years have focus days when the options and reality of work are discussed and form times focus on post-16 education. Three quarters of Year 11 students stay on into the school's sixth form. Guidance about their subject choices has been tightened up this year, so that they select courses matching their abilities as well as their interests.
- The curriculum is good, with a focus on academic subjects but also a range of work-related ones which meet students' interests. English and mathematics have a high profile. The extra-curricular offer is extensive with numerous clubs, trips and visit throughout the year. The school does not enter any students early for GCSE examinations.
- The school's work to prepare students for their future lives is well organised. In morning and afternoon form times, students might explore the meaning of British values, discuss the commonwealth or tackle issues related to extremism, health or equality.
- To complement this work, students spend whole days on topics such as prejudice, discrimination and diversity, or democracy, justice and respect. The strong promotion of equality of opportunity and zero tolerance of discrimination contributes to the school's excellent relationships and harmony. A Year 7 student observed, 'The school is special because everyone is treated equally.'
- The Ravens Wood Learning Trust gives the school much useful support and advice. The two schools in the multi-academy trust benefit from sharing teaching expertise.
- The school's safeguarding procedures and arrangements are meticulous and meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the Transition Board bring much relevant experience and expertise to their work. They know exactly which aspects of the school's work have improved already and those which require further

development. They support the school enthusiastically, but are not afraid to challenge leaders if progress is slow.

- Transition Board members approved all the appraisal outcomes last year. They support the executive headteacher's stance on how teachers' performance is assessed and will be rewarded only if high quality is proven. They are aware of those teachers receiving support to improve their practice.
- Transition Board members have received training on information about standards and progress so they are confident to ask the right questions to explore individual subjects or disadvantaged students' performance. They know the position of the school related to national standards.

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

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Students' behaviour in lessons is often exemplary. Students concentrate, join in enthusiastically and work hard. They can be trusted to work sensibly in groups or pairs, whether discussing work or practising their speaking skills in French or German. The presentation of their work, criticised in the previous inspection, has been addressed ruthlessly and they now know that it matters.
- Students' attendance is well above average. Exclusions are rare because the expectations of behaviour are clear and practically all students follow them. Around the school, students behave well but, as one student observed, not quite as well as they do in lessons!
- In discussion with students, they admit there is banter and that occasionally this can morph into bullying, often unintended. Students are confident that the school responds fast to any bullying issues, but their behaviour is not outstanding as incidents do occur. There is no racist bullying because students get on very well together and respect their differences.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Assemblies and form times are sometimes allocated to discussions about e-safety, cyber bullying and similar issues impacting on students' lives. Year 7 students know exactly what to do if they receive a malicious email. Students do not feel homophobic language is used in school; they talk about this, and show respect for those of different faiths or lifestyles, in religious education lessons as well as form time.
- All students feel confident there is a member of staff they would talk to if they had any personal concerns or wanted advice. The school site is secure and staff are around at breaks and lunchtime to ensure students play safely. Physical education teachers and others in departments such as science and technology make a point of reinforcing safe practice.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection; many new staff having been appointed in the last two years. They work enthusiastically to match the high standards being promoted by senior leaders. Teaching is at least good in the great majority of lessons, and students' learning is often outstanding. It is only in information and communication technology lessons that the quality of teaching is not good enough, particularly in computer programming.
- Well-planned lessons contribute to students' interest and attention. Respectful conversations between students and teachers, including humour, underpin the excellent relationships which contribute to enjoyable and successful learning.
- During lessons, teachers question students carefully to check they have understood new work and to deepen their learning when they are ready to move on. Teachers assess students' progress regularly and accurately so that students are quite clear about how well they are moving upwards along their 'flight path'. Students enjoy being challenged, particularly if told, 'If a sentence doesn't merit a mark, I'll take a mark away!'
- All teachers have accepted how important it is to mark work carefully. Outstanding marking is a feature of work in English, physical education, dance and drama. This high quality feedback has had a positive impact on students' learning and progress. Students know that they have to take on board the written and verbal feedback teachers give them. They often respond well by, for example, writing more detailed paragraphs or answering questions which teachers pose.
- Some teachers, especially in mathematics and religious education, are particularly skilful at preparing work to match different abilities. This means that all students can tackle the work without it being too easy or too hard. For example, providing information or a choice of questions to answer with increasing levels of

complexity, most students respond by challenging themselves or sensibly referring to sentence starters to help them get going.

- Teachers have tightened up their schemes of work for Key Stages 3 and 4, but do not blend in enough of the study skills students need to achieve the highest GCSE grades and cope with advanced work in the sixth form.
- History lessons are brought to life by using artefacts to stimulate discussions. However, many teachers do not fully exploit modern technology as an aid to generating rapid understanding, especially for students who learn best by seeing. Most classrooms have interactive whiteboards, but only a few teachers aid or deepen learning by using their interactive features.
- Learning support assistants provide very effective support to help students learn and carefully consider the best resources to support their progress. They are skilful at knowing when a student is lacking confidence or when it is best to stand back.
- Students read confidently because intensive programmes for all students in Years 7 and 8 are taught well and generate rapid improvements. Only a few students need to continue this work in Year 9. Teachers stress the importance of subject-specific vocabulary and correct spelling. Most subjects have useful 'literacy mats' related to their subjects, which students can refer to.
- Most students' mathematical skills are secure enough for work in other subjects such as science or geography. Those who struggle with basic numeracy receive extra lessons and, as necessary, adapted timetables so they can strengthen their mathematics and English by spending more time on them.

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement has improved since the previous inspection when standards were below average. In 2013 and 2014, students achieved a well above average percentage of five good GCSE grades including English and mathematics. In 2014, they attained a high percentage of A\* and A grades in English literature, mathematics, science, resistant materials and religious education, and over 90% pass rates in music, media studies and physical education.
- The percentage of top GCSE grades is not high in all subjects though. These include art, French, geography, history, drama and applied science. Students who attain average standards at the end of primary school do not all make as consistently good progress as others. The challenge for the school – and why achievement is not yet outstanding – is to bring all subjects up to the standards of the best and ensure all students make equally strong progress.
- The most able students achieve very well, with 80% of them attaining the EBacc qualification in 2014 and 96% attaining A\* to C grades in English and mathematics. They achieved very well in the three separate sciences and in French and German. They are making very good progress this year.
- A higher percentage of disadvantaged students attained grades A\* to C in English and mathematics in 2014 than in previous years. Nevertheless, the 2014 gap in results between these students and others in the school was over one GCSE grade in English and just over one and a half grades in mathematics. The gap to other students nationally was one GCSE grade in both subjects. Disadvantaged students made less progress than others in the school and others nationally, especially in mathematics, but these gaps narrowed considerably in 2014.
- The gaps in GCSE grades narrowed in 2013, but widened in 2014 because just under one third of the small number of disadvantaged students had issues which impacted on their learning. These included joining the school in Year 11, serious illness, very poor attendance or situations which were beyond the school's control. The school could not have done more to support them.
- The majority of disadvantaged students did almost as well as others in the school in 2014, with over 60% of them attaining five good GCSEs including English and mathematics. Accurate assessments and work seen during the inspection show that disadvantaged students, in all years, are making the same progress, and sometimes more than others, particularly in Year 11.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs attained a much higher percentage of five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, than the same students nationally. Students with statements of special educational needs made outstanding progress in the last two years and half the other students receiving support achieved five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, in 2014. The education and support provided for these students meet their needs very well and they continue to make good progress.
- The small number of students with English as an additional language made more progress than other students in English and mathematics and achieved well in their 2014 GCSEs. Practically all ethnic groups achieved results similar to those for all Year 11 students.

**The sixth form provision****is good**

- The sixth form gives students a good education that matches their different interests and abilities. A-level and AS pass rates were above average in 2014. Despite being 50% or higher in one third of the A-level subjects taken, the percentage of A\* to B grades was well below that seen nationally. AS results and the progress made by students improved in the last two years.
- Observations during the inspection and secure information on mock grades show that, in most subjects, students are making good progress this year. Results, particularly at AS, are set to be higher, but work remains to be done in the weaker subjects. Students taking work-related courses achieved very well in 2014 and gained valuable BTEC level 3 qualifications.
- Teaching is good. Teachers encourage students to read widely, to think for themselves and to keep their work well organised and up to date. New staff are already making a positive difference to students' progress in subjects which had relatively low standards in the past.
- Appointed in September 2014, the assistant headteacher leading the sixth form, extremely well, has introduced numerous improvements which are driving up standards. These include careful checking that students are on the right courses, organising study sessions which they must attend, external validation of their mock results and challenging poor work or attendance. Specialist teachers deliver lessons for the very few students retaking English or mathematics; most are successful before the end of Year 12.
- Students have many ways in which they can develop leadership skills, such as mentoring younger students, being part of the prefect system or leading sports. Many were attracted to stay on after Year 11 to participate in the Institute of Leadership and Management Coaching and Mentoring programme. Students' form sessions include topics similar to those in the main school, but in greater depth. Students have good awareness of personal development, safety and risks, and preparation for their future lives, for example in how to manage money.
- Students rightly rate the careers advice and guidance they receive highly. They attend several careers fairs, visit universities, have UCAS talks and interviews with careers officers; Year 12 students will carry out work experience this year. Apprenticeships are promoted and specific advice offered for those attending the successful elite 'academies' for drama, music, rugby, football and media.
- Students behave extremely well, dress smartly, are confident and polite, and cannot think of anything they want to improve at the school. Over 90% of them stay for two years in the sixth form and complete their courses. The percentage of students not moving on to higher education, employment, or training is low. About two thirds proceed to university.

## 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>	136517
<b>Local authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	454981

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,430
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	308
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The Transition Board
<b>Chair</b>	Jeremy Allen
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Colette Singleton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20–21 June 2013
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