

Bristol Gateway School

Long Cross, Bristol, BS11 0QA

Inspection dates 15–16 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people		are good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and students

This is a good school.

- Students make good progress and achieve well in a range of subjects. The school prepares them well for the next stages education or training after they leave.
- Teaching is good. Staff convey high expectations to students of progress and behaviour. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together. New work, including any new vocabulary, is carefully introduced so that students grow in confidence as they come to understand it.
- Behaviour is good in lessons, contributing strongly to the progress of the students. Around school, students also behave well. Students feel safe and express confidence in being able to speak to staff if anything is worrying them.
- Leadership and management at all levels, including governance, is good. The different skills of the senior leadership team combine well to drive the school forward. Consequently, the school has improved achievement, teaching, and students' behaviour and safety since the previous inspection.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is encouraged well through good relationships between students and staff, and through a range of activities, including visits.
- Governors bring a very wide range of skills and knowledge to bear on their work. They know the school well, vigorously holding to account the leaders and managers.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although improving, attendance is still lower than that of special schools nationally.
- Sometimes, teachers do not set work at the right level for students of different abilities, and on occasion, the pace of learning inhibits progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons, two with senior managers. Breakfast club, tutor time, morning break and lunch arrangements were also seen.
- Meetings were held with students, parents, staff, governors and representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors heard students read to the class in lessons.
- The school’s work was observed. Inspectors looked at various documents, including those relating to keeping students safe, and records of students’ progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors analysed 20 questionnaires completed by staff.
- There were not enough responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire, to show the results. Inspectors looked at the responses to the school’s own survey of parents’ views and held a meeting with three parents.

Inspection team

Michael Farrell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ann Sydney

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- All students have a statement of special educational needs, except 13 students in Year 11 who have transferred to the newer education health and care (EHC) plans. The local authority plans to gradually transfer all students and is currently arranging this for Year 10. The students' main special educational needs are behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- Students enter the school in different years and at different times of the year. About 83% of students in Key Stage 4 were not on the roll of the school in Key Stage 3.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after) is high compared with the national average. Also, a higher than average proportion of students in the school are looked after by the local authority. This means that at the end of key stages there may be one or sometimes no students who are not eligible for pupil premium. This prevents any meaningful comparisons between groups of disadvantaged students and other students in the school.
- Around one in 10 students are girls.
- Just over 13% of students are from a minority ethnic group. This is a little over half the proportion that is found nationally
- Year 7 students receive literacy and numeracy catch-up funding.
- No students are entered early for GCSEs.
- A small number of older students are currently taught at two alternative providers: 'Include Bristol', Bedminster, Bristol; and The Bristol Hospital Education Service, Bristol.
- The school has a breakfast club before lessons start.
- The school is federated with a local primary special school with which it shares a governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance by:
 - extending the range of interventions to encourage attendance
 - evaluating the respective effectiveness of all such interventions to establish what works best for different groups and in different circumstances
 - acting on the results of this analysis.
- Ensure that work in lessons is always set at the right level to challenge students and that the pace of learning is appropriate to ensure students' best progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The senior management team combine their different skills and knowledge to good effect. They communicate high expectations to staff and students. Staff are committed to the school and generally have positive views. Improvements are recognised in comments such as: 'The school has become a cohesive unit with all staff working towards a common goal.' Subject leaders and those with oversight of behaviour have clear roles and contribute effectively to the school's progress.
- Effective systems are in place to monitor the effectiveness of teaching using a wide range of evidence. This is supported by well-chosen opportunities for further training, although some staff say they would like more opportunities for professional development.
- The school evaluates itself accurately, using information gathered from a wide range of sources.
- Students have equal opportunities to achieve because their progress and development are monitored, and steps are taken if individual students are at risk of slipping behind. Good relationships are promoted well and the school tackles any instances of discriminatory language unequivocally.
- Students' behaviour is carefully monitored and resulting assessments are used effectively to improve the management of behaviour. This contributes strongly to developing students' good behaviour and reducing the number of fixed-term exclusions.
- The well-developed curriculum promotes spiritual and moral development well through talks from Holocaust survivors and other visits and visitors. Social development is effectively encouraged in opportunities for small group working and through a citizen awareness day. Cultural development is promoted well through considering the work of artists from different countries and through similar explorations in photography.
- Students are well prepared for life in modern Britain. British values are promoted well through discussions, such as those in personal, social and health education lessons. Older students receive guidance and support enabling them to plan for the future in an informed way.
- Parents value the school and express positive views about it. One stated that 'problems are sorted out'. Another affirmed that the school listens to parents' views.
- The local authority provides strong and effective support, including monitoring visits and training.
- Pupil premium money is effectively used to extend additional individual support for literacy and numeracy, and the positive effects of this are carefully monitored. Year 7 catch-up funding is used to buy special resources for literacy and numeracy.
- Leaders carefully monitor the attendance, behaviour and progress of students attending alternative provision, for example through visits and through receiving regular reports and information.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. All staff are trained in positive handling in relation to students. Its effective arrangements are supported well by the school's systems for recording and monitoring behaviour.
- While leaders and managers are improving students' attendance, they are not yet evaluating the information on attendance in enough detail to show what interventions are working best with particular groups and in particular circumstances.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a very wide range of expertise and skills to bear on vigorously holding the school to account. They know how well students achieve through visiting the school and through receiving reports and presentations about progress.
 - Governors have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching through first-hand observations and discussions with staff. They take their safeguarding duties seriously and oversee students' safety with care. Governors have a thorough involvement in the management of the headteacher's performance. They oversee the management of other staff performance ensuring that good performance is rewarded.

The behaviour and safety of students are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. It is encouraged through the positive climate for learning reflected in the care taken to keep the school and classrooms neat and tidy.
- In lessons, breakfast club, tutor time, breaks, lunch and around school, students behave well.
- Students are courteous and polite, and are increasingly aware of the needs of others. They are punctual to lessons and arrive ready to learn because they enjoy lessons. This has a beneficial effect on

achievement because time is fully used.

- Students express positive attitudes about their learning. They mention lessons and activities that they particularly like and explain why. One pupil explained that he likes English 'because I'm good at it'.
- When unacceptable behaviour sometimes occurs, staff manage it effectively so that learning can continue.
- Most parents have positive views of students' behaviour. Staff recognise that students' behaviour can be challenging but that overall it is good and improving. Students consider that in general behaviour is good.
- The school's monitoring indicates that students experiencing alternative provision behave well and are safe.
- Attendance is improving over time because of the school's actions and additional support the school has put in place. However, it is still lower than that for special schools nationally.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Older students speak of the considerable improvements that have been made in the school to lead to this situation.
- Students say they feel safe at school and that they can speak to a member of staff if they have any worries.
- Students can explain how to keep safe when using the internet and know about blocking sites and filters. Students are aware of the potential risks of using social networking sites and know, for example, how to report any abuse. Students vividly remember what they learned at a recent e-safety day.
- Students know about bullying and the different types. They say there are a few instances of bullying, mainly name-calling, including racist and homophobic comments. They state that when this occurs, staff deal with the situation in a fair way.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Good teaching has a positive impact on achievement, including literacy and mathematics. This is reflected in the good achievement of students and the records of lesson observations undertaken by the school. This matches what was seen by inspectors.
- Staff help to ensure there is a positive climate for learning in the school and in each classroom.
- Expectations of students are high. Good relationships between staff and students help give students the confidence to try hard in their lessons.
- Effective questioning helps probe what students understand, enabling teachers to correct any misconceptions and build on students' existing knowledge.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together so that time is used well. Humour enriches lessons from time to time. Older students in an art lesson were given confidence by the good relationships and encouragement of the teacher. They worked hard, developing a good insight into the techniques used by an artist they had chosen.
- Any new words are introduced and explained well so that students use new vocabulary confidently. Staff ensure activities are interesting and relevant to students' interests and needs, helping motivate students and encouraging good progress. Younger students enjoyed making bird boxes and painting them with great care because they could see the relevance of the task. One pupil was looking forward to erecting the box in his garden.
- Behaviour is managed skilfully so that the climate is positive and encouraging. Any disruption is handled effectively, ensuring that learning is not disrupted.
- Marking generally indicates how students can improve, and students act upon this to make their work better. Notes are made if comments have been made to the student verbally rather than being written in their book. Suitable homework is set which contributes well to students' progress.
- Sometimes, work is not set at the right level for students with different abilities. For example, a more-able pupil may be given a similar task to others which is too easy, only moving on to a harder task once that initial piece of work is finished instead of being given harder work throughout. Just occasionally, the pace of parts of lessons does not support the best learning. For example, sometimes the pace is pedestrian where it would be appropriate for it to be brisker and vice versa. When this happens, students begin to lose concentration, slowing progress.

The achievement of students is good

- Students' attainment when they enter the school is typically significantly below that of students of a similar age. From different starting points, they make good progress and achieve well in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, art and design, photography, catering and vocationally related courses. In the past, students did not take GCSEs. Increasingly, the school is entering students for these, as well as a range of other examinations, including vocational ones.
- Parents express confidence in the progress their child is making, one stating that their child had 'come on in leaps and bounds'. Students also recognise when they are achieving well.
- Owing to their special educational needs, and often due to previously missed schooling, students reach standards that are frequently below those of students in other schools nationally. Disadvantaged students are in the great majority in the school, making end-of-key-stage comparisons between these students and others in the school limited. However, the individual progress of disadvantaged students and others is similar. This is because, for all students, work is planned individually according to what the students already know and can do.
- In a mathematics lesson, younger students achieved well in understanding vectors. They grew in confidence because they learned in a systematic way and were encouraged to evaluate their own work. Older students, in a science lesson on the importance of testing drugs and medicines, achieved well. They were able to understand and explain the differences between various trials used in research and to recognise the importance of drugs testing.
- Different groups, including boys and girls, and students from minority ethnic backgrounds, achieve similarly. This is because the school 'tracks' the progress and behaviour of individual students regularly and intervenes where necessary. For example, when it was seen that mathematics progress in Key Stage 4 was not as strong as that in Key Stage 3, the school increased individual support to help students catch up to tackle this, leading to improvement. This individual approach also ensures all students, regardless of when they join the school, achieve equally well.
- Comparatively, the most-able students generally achieve well. Occasionally, in lessons where the work is not challenging enough, their progress is slowed where this occurs.
- Students attending alternative provision achieve well from their different starting points.
- Students are not entered for examinations early. Older students take a range of accredited courses, gaining qualifications that are well matched to their abilities and needs. This helps them be well prepared for the next stage. For example, last year, 100% of leavers moved on into training or education.

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	132239
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	462509

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Searle-Barnes
Headteacher	Kaye Palmer-Greene
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 April 2013
Telephone number	0117 377 2275
Fax number	0117 377 2283
Email address	bristol.gateway.school@bristol.gov.uk

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