



# Broomhill Bank School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 119026  
**Local Authority** Kent  
**Inspection number** 291292  
**Inspection date** 16 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Terry Elston

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	Broomhill Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Rusthall
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8-19		Tunbridge Wells TN3 0TB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls	<b>Telephone number</b>	01892 510440
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	81	<b>Fax number</b>	01892 502460
<b>Number on roll (6th form)</b>	30	<b>Chair</b>	Alvin Chantler
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Headteacher</b>	Phil Barnett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 September 2002		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a day and residential school for girls of secondary school age with multiple and complex learning difficulties. An increasing number are admitted with speech and language needs and autism. The sixth form admits pupils from this school and other schools in the south east. The school has just been awarded Healthy Schools status.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good school with many outstanding features that justifies its high reputation as both a day and residential school in the county. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in all aspects of their work because that is what is expected. Although standards are significantly below average, pupils consistently exceed their challenging targets and attain well in examinations at all ages compared with pupils from similar schools. The school assesses pupils' work regularly to check on individual progress, but lacks the systems to provide a long-term view of how well different groups are doing. The leadership and management are good. Weaknesses in the use of assessment have been identified and improvements begun. There is strong and purposeful leadership, not least by the headteacher, which drives the school forwards continually and makes all members of the school feel special. Teachers feel highly valued and work very hard to make their lessons enjoyable and matched to the very wide range of needs. Pupils appreciate the good teaching they receive and are quick to say how much they enjoy lessons. Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their behaviour, is excellent. They always concentrate hard and are justifiably proud of their successes. They speak highly of the excellent curriculum that provides such interesting work for them, including important work on how to keep safe and live healthy lives. Pupils are very well prepared for the future by the many opportunities provided to develop their independence and teach them how to succeed in life after school. They feel safe at school because of the outstanding quality of the care, support and guidance available to them. These strengths of the school, and the impact they have on pupils' all round development, can be summed up in one parent's letter to the inspectors. It reads: 'My girls have blossomed during their time here and their achievements in all areas have surpassed our wildest dreams.'

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

The sixth form makes very good provision for its pupils. The high quality of the teaching, leadership and management accounts for pupils' very good achievements in terms of their academic and personal developments. As a result of excellent care, support and guidance, they grow in confidence, enjoy the wide range of challenging opportunities provided to develop their independence and leave as mature young adults.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

The boarding provision makes an outstanding contribution to the learning and the personal and social development of the 27 residents. They take full advantage of the excellent activities after school, and say how much they enjoy being boarders. The links between the school and residential setting are excellent. The last annual report

by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) identified exemplary practice and only minor issues relating to the buildings that the school has rectified.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards by developing better systems to evaluate how well different groups of pupils are progressing.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Although standards are significantly below average, achievement is good. Throughout the school, nearly all pupils achieve well and make good progress towards their challenging targets. Younger pupils make a good start and achieve well, particularly in their reading, speaking and number skills. Compared with similar types of school, standards by the age of 14 are above average in English, mathematics and science and are consistently in the top 25% in all subjects. At the age of 16, pupils do well in external examinations. Their GCSE results show very good achievement across a wide range of subjects and are improving year by year. The data shows that, by the age of 16, pupils have made good progress from their starting points in all areas, and very good progress in their speech, language and mathematical skills. Throughout the school, pupils make very good progress in art and design and physical education. In the sixth form, students continue to achieve well in courses preparing them for college placements or the world of work. Their achievements in independent living are impressive, and they look after themselves very competently in the school's flat.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development and are very well prepared for when they leave school. Their enthusiastic fund raising initiatives raise significant sums of money for charities and give them a very good understanding of the needs of others. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and accounts for their excellent behaviour, impressive levels of maturity and very good awareness of different cultures in the world. The school council plays an important part in giving pupils responsibility for their environment, and its members voice their opinions with great maturity during meetings. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. One pupil, typical of many, said with some passion, 'I love it here. Lessons are great fun and there are so many different things to do after school.' Sixth form students enjoy the extra responsibilities provided for them, and learn much about the world of work through mini-enterprise schemes and learning how to manage a budget. Pupils have an excellent awareness of healthy living and love making sensible suggestions to the catering staff about the best food to eat at lunchtime.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The teaching and learning are good. The benefits of very effective staff training opportunities are evident in the high levels of expertise shown by all staff. This ensures that pupils learn quickly in all subjects. Teachers are very good at reminding pupils of the need to listen carefully and speak clearly at the start of lessons. This does much to improve pupils' understanding of the work and helps them communicate effectively with others. Teachers work hard at making learning fun, which is why so many pupils say that the best thing about school is the lessons. They provide a good mix of class teaching, small group work with the support of skilled teaching assistants and opportunities for pupils to work independently. This enables pupils to gain knowledge very quickly, put their new learning into practice and learn how to find things out for themselves. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils, but sometimes the work for more able pupils is not hard enough and this limits their progress. Teachers' regular assessments of pupils are very thorough and provide pupils with a clear picture of their levels of attainment, although current systems do not provide an accurate measure of the progress of different groups over time.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The curriculum is outstanding and very well suited to the needs of all its pupils because of the many opportunities for pupils to put their learning into practice, such as when sixth form students are able to develop their independence skills using the training flat and house. An extensive range of visits and visitors helps bring the curriculum to life and make learning enjoyable. The very well planned personal, social and health education curriculum gives pupils an excellent awareness of how to be healthy, stay safe and get along with others. The teachers make very good use of the school grounds to teach pupils how to care for their environment and have first hand experience of science and nature. The school has excellent links with the world of work, and the very well organised work experience opportunities prepare older students very well for earning a living when they leave.

### **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The care, guidance and support are excellent and this in turn results in excellent personal development and well-being. Staff are very thorough in their recording of individual personal development and academic progress and use this detailed knowledge

to provide high quality support for pupils. Health and safety systems are excellent which make the school a secure and safe place where pupils are confident. All staff have had good recent training in child protection procedures and are always there to listen to pupils' concerns. The school does much to encourage healthy eating and its success has been recognised by a recent Healthy Schools award. Links with other professionals such as educational psychologists and health staff are excellent and provide valuable support to the school in ensuring that all pupils, including those with complex needs, achieve well. Pupils who board at the school benefit from outstanding levels of care, and speak very highly of the way they are looked after. Provision for speech therapy has been patchy in the past because of recruitment difficulties, but the new arrangements involving training existing staff at the school are working well and pupils with communication needs are making good progress in line with their peers. Provision for careers education is very good and pupils benefit from valuable guidance on the best choices to make.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

The good leadership and management are the keys to the school's success. The headteacher's high expectations of what everyone can achieve have helped create an enthusiasm that is evident throughout the school. This results in teachers and pupils working their hardest towards their challenging goals. The headteacher listens carefully to the views of others, and consults pupils, teachers and parents regularly about ways to improve the school further. Other leaders share the headteacher's commitment to high standards and support him very well. This has helped the school make good improvement since the last inspection and shows why it will continue to do so. The leaders have good systems to evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses and work very well as a team to improve the school. For example, following a recent review of the provision, the school has made significant improvements in the management of the finances, provision for information and communication technology and the use of teaching assistants to support individual pupils. However, they recognise the need to use the data they have on pupils' achievements more effectively to measure their progress over time. The leadership and management of the sixth form are good, and have helped create a thriving community of young adults prepared very well for the future. The school is supported and guided well by a good governing body. Governors know their school very well and are not afraid to hold it to account.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision	2	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

### Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for letting us come to visit your school. We both really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and play so energetically in the playground. Those who were kind enough to speak to us told us a lot about your school.

What we liked most about your school:

- You are very friendly and helpful to visitors.
- You work very hard and make good progress.
- Your behaviour is excellent, both in class and out in the playground.
- Your headteacher and other leaders run the school well and know how to improve things.
- Your teachers are doing a good job. They work very hard to plan interesting work and make your lessons fun.
- All staff at the school take excellent care of you and keep you safe.

What we would like the school to do now:

Make better checks on your progress over a long period of time so that they know just how well you are doing.