

# Barnhill Community High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131639
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hillingdon
<b>Inspection number</b>	315844
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Janet Mercer HMI

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>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	1400
Sixth form	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Major
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Robert Lobatto
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Yeading Lane Hayes UB4 9LE
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8839 0600
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8839 0643

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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Barnhill Community High is a larger than average comprehensive school. The proportion eligible for free school meals is well above average, as is the proportion of students from minority ethnic heritage. After White British, the largest minority ethnic groups are Indian and Black African. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is also above average. The proportion of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or with statements of special educational needs is around the national average. The school caters for students with specific and moderate learning difficulties as well as those who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are a small number of children on the autistic spectrum. The school has recently been awarded specialist status as a sports college.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Barnhill Community High is a good school where students benefit from outstanding care, guidance and support. The school has created an inclusive and harmonious community, where students learn to work well with others in a culture of mutual respect and tolerance. Senior and middle managers have developed a strong culture of honest and open self-evaluation and reflection, which has led to considerable improvements since the last inspection in a number of key areas. Staff at all levels are focussed on raising standards. As a result, students' achievements have improved steadily over the last four years and are now good.

Students' prior attainment when they join the school is below average. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 11 reflecting that students are making good progress overall. In Years 7 to 9 there has been significant improvement in English and mathematics. The proportion achieving level 5 or above in both English and mathematics is now above the national average and overall progress is now good. Progress in science is satisfactory but standards remain below average. The school has worked hard to identify those students at risk of underachieving and has implemented a range of effective strategies to raise achievement, through improving students' attitudes to learning and building confidence and self-esteem. Tracking and monitoring of student performance is very strong and the school is on course to achieve challenging targets for further improvement. The school has rightly identified the need to improve the performance of White British students across Years 7 to 11, many of whom do less well than other groups in the school.

The school has worked very hard to improve students' attendance, which had been below average for several years. A carefully thought out range of strategies, providing support and encouragement for individuals with poor attendance patterns and their families, has been very successful in reducing absences. Attendance rates improved significantly in the last year and are now good. The school is not complacent and managers are ambitious to improve attendance even further.

There has been a strong drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The proportion of good teaching increased markedly in the last year and, overall, teaching and learning are now good. There is a rigorous system for monitoring the quality of teaching, and judgments made by the school on the quality of lessons are accurate. Students say they particularly enjoy those lessons where they can actively participate and work independently and learn with and from each other. Unsurprisingly, the lessons they enjoy least are those where they are passive or spend too much time copying notes. Students acknowledge that their behaviour in lessons is not always good when they lose concentration or are bored. Not all teachers successfully plan activities to meet the wide range of needs and abilities in some classes and the school has rightly identified this as a priority for development. Assessment data are available to teachers though some do not use the information effectively to help them to plan for the needs of different groups. Consequently, there are not always enough opportunities for independent learning, and for students to take responsibility for their own learning.

Students display positive attitudes towards school and most enjoy their education, including the very good range of extra-curricular activities available. Participation in sports is particularly strong and is being enhanced further by the school's recently awarded specialist status as a sports college. The school is very responsive to the needs of its students and the local community and regularly revises the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all students. It has

adopted an innovative approach to the Year 7 curriculum to provide a smooth transition from primary school for students. This provides effective support for those with lower prior attainment and stretch and challenge for the more able.

The management structure has been altered to place greater emphasis on support for transition between Years 6 and 8, 9 and 10 and from Years 11 to 13. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensures that all students are treated as individuals, and support is carefully tailored to meet a diverse range of needs. Students speak very positively about the help and support they receive from teachers and support staff and the difference this makes to them.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

Students' prior attainment when they join the sixth form is below the national average. Whilst achievement and standards remain around the average for AS and A-level courses, pass rates improved significantly in 2008, especially on AS courses. The smaller number of students who study advanced level vocational courses achieve very well. The school is increasing the range of vocational and level 2 courses to meet the needs of students. This is having a positive effect, as numbers are increasing and more students are progressing from Year 12 to Year 13. A high proportion of students leaving Year 13 continue their education at university, many of them being the first in their family to do so.

Students have a positive attitude to the school and choose to enter the sixth form partly because of the strong relationships that they have with their teachers who 'treat us like adults and support us really well.' They appreciate the excellent levels of care and support they receive from tutors. This guides their academic as well as their personal development. Systems to monitor academic progress and set students realistic targets are helping the school to improve standards and achievement.

Teaching is satisfactory and improving. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons that engage students. Warm relationships and mutual respect between teachers and students underpin the good attitudes that students show to their learning. Teachers do not always probe students' thinking or develop them sufficiently as independent learners.

Students develop good personal skills and play a very active part in the school and local community. For example, they help younger pupils with reading and take responsibility for duties around school. They support local primary schools in languages and sport and have played an important role in keeping the neighborhood tidy.

The leaders of the sixth form have a very good understanding of its strengths and areas requiring further improvement. They have already taken effective action to raise achievement, improve the curriculum offer and increase rates of progression from Year 12 to 13.

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

- Ensure all teachers use assessment data effectively to plan learning that is sufficiently challenging in order to raise achievement, including that of White British students.
- Create more opportunities for students to think for themselves in lessons in order to accelerate their learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Results in national tests in English in Year 9 are now above average and students are making very good progress. Standards in mathematics have improved and are in line with the national average, but more needs to be done to raise standards in science.

In the majority of GCSE subjects, there was an increase in the proportion of students who achieved A\* to C grades in 2008. Whilst the percentage of students achieving 5 or more A\* to C grades including English and mathematics remains below the national average, students' rates of progress overall have improved each year for the last four years. Tracking of students' progress in the current Years 10 and 11 indicates that they are now making good progress overall.

The school has identified that there are still some areas of underperformance. For example, the attainment and progress of White British students remain lower than for other groups in the school, and a small number of Black African boys achieved less well in Year 11 than other students. There are a range of strategies in place to provide support, with school staff working individually with students and their families to raise attainment, and to provide effective curriculum options to engage their interest and help them succeed.

Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with statements of special educational needs are now making the expected progress. The school has worked hard to develop a strongly personalised approach to providing support for these students. Effective partnership with external agencies helps to meet their different individual needs. Students who speak English as an additional language often achieve better results than others in the school.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Students' good personal development has its foundation in their effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance has improved. Students are polite and friendly and understand the code of conduct, which influences their good behaviour. Students understand anti-bullying strategies and racist incidents are rare because of effective support, for example, from pastoral support officers, the school counsellor and learning mentors. The revamped school council aims to strengthen student participation in decision-making.

Sports activities are a consuming passion for the majority of students. They recognise how healthy eating and exploring their feelings and emotions contributes to a healthy lifestyle. All are aware of how to keep themselves safe in relation to issues both in and out of school. Risk assessment is particularly strong in practical subjects enabling students to work safely. Students enjoy and appreciate the multi-cultural nature of their community. They are caring, articulate and considerate of each other and often raise funds for charity. They enjoy community involvement through close links with their extended school cluster, trips, visits and support from services such as the police. Work experience, enterprise activities, financial management courses and improving academic standards prepare students well for their future economic well-being. Most students in year 11 progress to further education, training or employment.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning are good. Effective monitoring of lessons and sharing good practice has led to improvements and is helping to raise students' achievement. Lessons are most successful where teachers have good subject knowledge, high levels of expectation and the work is very challenging for the students. Teachers know their students well, understand their different abilities and use many different and often innovative strategies to ensure they are all involved in the class activities. In the best lessons, good use of pair and group work, with effective and targeted questions encourages students to think for themselves and make good progress.

Much, but not all, teaching responds well to the range of ability in the class. In a minority of cases, lessons observed lacked pace and did not meet the needs of all students. Students were not always given enough opportunities to learn independently in lessons. Teachers did not always effectively sum up and check learning at the end of the lesson. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to supporting students in lessons and in providing training sessions for teachers.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The quality and range of the curriculum are good and meets the needs students well. Revisions to the curriculum are beginning to increase student engagement though there has not yet been enough time to determine the full impact of this on raising achievement. There is an appropriate and expanding range of vocational courses to meet the diverse range of interests and abilities. A growing number of students are taking some Year 9 tests and GCSE examinations a year early. Extra-curricular activities are a particular strength, offering a wide range of academic and other opportunities with good levels of participation. For example, the Asset languages programme, offering students the opportunity to gain a qualification in another language, is particularly impressive and wide ranging. It is a mark of the success of this programme that the school is now a hub for the dissemination of good practice.

The school's recently awarded specialist status in sport is a key part of the strategy to raise achievement further and strengthen engagement with parents and the local community. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning has been underdeveloped in the past. Following changes to contractual arrangements, the school is beginning to improve this. There is a well thought out and comprehensive programme catering for gifted and talented students, which is held in high regard by the students involved.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

A dynamic, diverse, talented team is committed to the care of students, which has an outstanding impact on care, guidance and support. The innovative transition systems help to smooth students' passage across Year 6 to 13. Excellent guidance and support systems target the needs of individuals. The student support team pride themselves on their approach to personalised planning for all students. Health and safety systems are secure. All procedures for safeguarding students meet government requirements. Effective support assistants work well with students

with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from different cultural backgrounds to raise their attainment. Assessment data are widely available to help plan teaching and monitor students' progress. Whilst many teachers make good use of this, others are still developing their skills in using assessment data to aid learning. Collaboration with parents is strengthening. Parents are very positive about the way in which the school supports their children. Inclusion plans and procedures are excellent, enabling true equality of opportunity for all students.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and leadership group have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses with a very strong emphasis on raising standards. Middle managers contribute actively to the rigorous review and monitoring of students' standards and progress. Monitoring and self-evaluation is having a positive impact on standards across the school. Strengths and areas for development inform the targets in the school development plan. Continuing professional development is linked to the outcomes from reviews, monitoring and other areas identified by staff. Induction and support for new staff are good and a systematic training program for middle managers is in place.

The leadership group is working creatively and enthusiastically to improve the curriculum and meet the needs and interests of all students. There is a very positive environment and everyone in the school feels valued. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and ensures opportunities for all to achieve their full potential and aspirations, but managers are keenly aware of the need to raise achievement of White British students.

There are good links with local schools, colleges and the Hillingdon Education Business Partnership, enhancing the delivery of academic and vocational courses and raising student expectations. The school has a good understanding of its community and encourages positive interactions between school and the local community. Resources have been effectively deployed and value for money is good. Governors ensure that all the statutory requirements are met and they are appropriately informed about school performance and challenges ahead.



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**Annex A**

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19
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**Overall effectiveness**

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	2	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3	

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

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

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

## 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	1	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2	
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	3	
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	

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

30 September 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Barnhill Community High School, Hayes, UB4 9LE

On behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently, I would like say how much we enjoyed meeting and talking to you, in your lessons and around the school. Many of you and your parents spoke very positively about the school. We have taken these views into account in arriving at our judgement that Barnhill Community High School is a good school with outstanding care, guidance and support and that the majority of you are making good progress. Standards are rising, particularly so in Year 7 to 9, and rates of progress are increasing across the school.

You develop good personal and social skills while at school. We were impressed by the way all the different groups of students get along with each other and how you show respect and consideration for different cultures and beliefs. The school has worked hard on improving attendance and behaviour and these are now good. Most of you participate well in lessons and enjoy your work.

Many of you told us that you feel very safe and well supported. Your teachers and support staff know you well, and work hard to help you make as much progress as you can. There are good opportunities for you to take traditional and vocational courses, depending on your interests and abilities. Many of you participate in the wide range of extra-curricular activities available and make very strong contributions to the school and local community.

We have asked the school to make sure that all teachers make the best use of assessment information to set work that matches the needs of all students, and to ensure that marking and written feedback helps you to improve. As many of you told us that you learn best when there are opportunities for working independently, we have asked the school to make sure that teachers build this into lessons.

Your headteacher and senior managers have high aspirations for the school's future. Your teachers are committed to improving the school further to give you all the best opportunities possible to do well. We have confidence that the school will continue to improve and that you will all do your bit to make it a success.

Yours sincerely

Janet Mercer

Her Majesty's Inspector