

# Burnage Media Arts College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105557
<b>Local Authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	336518
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Janet Palmer 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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	878
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Colin Collinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr I Fenn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Burnage Lane Burnage Manchester M19 1ER
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 35 part lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of students and the School Improvement Partner. They observed the college's work, and looked at a range of documentation including questionnaires from 368 parents and carers, 147 students and 70 members of staff. Approximately half of inspection time was spent looking at learning.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the college's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- students' achievement at Key Stage 4, particularly in mathematics and science
- the progress of particular groups of students
- attendance and punctuality
- the quality and consistency of teaching and learning across subjects
- the effectiveness of support systems and intervention strategies.

## Information about the school

Burnage Media Arts College is a boys' comprehensive of average size situated in inner city Manchester. The college was awarded specialist status in 2007. Over 90% of students are from a range of minority ethnic groups. Over 64% are of South Asian heritage. Over half of the students speak English as an additional language and 70 students are at the early stages of learning English. At least 24 different languages are spoken within the student community. The number of students entitled to free school meals is higher than average.

The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is twice the national average. Much higher than average numbers of students enter and leave the college at times other than the beginning of the college year. The college is a designated centre to receive unaccompanied asylum seekers and almost one fifth of the students have a refugee background.

At the time of the inspection the college was experiencing considerable disruption and lack of facilities resulting from the college's rebuilding programme; a new 'state-of-the-art' college building is due to open in September 2010. The college has achieved several awards including the International School Award, Sportsmark, Investors in People, Healthy Schools and the 2008 Specialist Schools and Academy Trust most improved school award.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

This is a satisfactory and improving college characterised by good outcomes in students' personal development; good and outstanding levels of care, guidance and support; and many effective and outstanding aspects of leadership and management. The college is held in high regard by parents and carers. Comments from parents such as, 'I am very impressed by the way the school is run – a brilliant Head and wonderful teaching staff,' are typical of the positive views expressed to inspectors.

Students' success in gaining five GCSE A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, has improved year on year. Attainment is below the national average but the gap is narrowing. Observation of work in lessons and reliable school data indicates that all groups of students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making satisfactory progress overall, although progress in English is exceptionally good. Progress in mathematics and science is broadly satisfactory.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Improvements in the quality of teaching and assessment to support learning have been driven by the college's specialist subjects and, in particular, the English department where there is good and often outstanding practice. However, these strengths are inconsistent across the college and are not sufficiently well embedded in all subjects to make a broad enough impact on the progress of students. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations, strong subject knowledge and engage students in a range of challenging tasks. Where lessons are less successful, teachers do not pay sufficient attention in their planning to the different needs of students. As a result, the most able are not stretched and for others the work is too difficult. In some lessons teaching assistants make a very positive contribution through well-guided support but this valuable resource is not always used to its full potential.

Vulnerable and disadvantaged students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive good care, guidance and support with many aspects of this work that are outstanding. The positive impact of the high levels of care is immense with numerous examples of students re-engaging with education as a result of well-targeted and creative support programmes. The satisfactory curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The recent introduction of the creative and media diploma signals a range of new academic and vocational options that the college is planning to introduce in September 2010, but which the current college facilities are unable to accommodate. A good range of enrichment and extra-curricular provision enhances the curriculum and supports students' personal development. Students enjoy being at college. They demonstrate good attitudes to learning and

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behave well in lessons. They have good relationships with each other and adults and are respectful of people's differences. Sometimes behaviour in corridors and around the school is boisterous, particularly where there are lower levels of adult supervision. Students make quality contributions to the college and wider community through leadership activities and a range of charitable events. Students reported that the college does not tolerate bullying: the few incidents that occur are dealt with swiftly and effectively; consequently, they feel safe and well cared for. Students have a good understanding of how to stay healthy; many enjoy the healthy lunch options and there are high levels of participation in sporting activities. Very concerted efforts by the college have resulted in attendance levels rising to meet the national average. Punctuality has improved although there is room for further improvement, particularly to lessons in the afternoon. Students show good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A strong programme of visitors from faith and cultural groups helps students understand and respect different values and beliefs; work in drama and other lessons on issues such as racism, homophobia and violent extremism helps them to develop empathy, self-esteem and personal resilience.

Senior leaders have an ambitious vision for the college, which is communicated well to staff, parents and carers. Students frequently quoted to inspectors the headteacher's motto, 'Be the best you can be' and parents and carers overwhelmingly support the excellent leadership of the headteacher. The college has developed a range of effective partnerships to promote learning and contribute to students' well-being. The college rightly prides itself on its inclusive policies, which permeate all aspects of its work. Engagement with parents and carers, particularly those whose circumstances make them hardest to reach, is outstanding, as is the effectiveness with which the college promotes community cohesion. Developing excellence in community relations is central to the ethos of the college; much of its work exemplifies best practice; effective partnership with local religious groups, the police, support services for students, and families is having a very positive impact on outcomes for students. Senior and middle leaders have an accurate understanding of the college's strengths and areas for development. They have effectively addressed issues for improvement at the last inspection. Several strategic appointments have been made to tackle areas of identified weakness and the current governing body is very effective in challenging the leadership team; hence, capacity for further improvement is good.

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

- Further increase the proportion of teaching that is good or better to raise attainment and improve progress by:
  - the consistent use of effective assessment strategies
  - ensuring that activities in lessons, and the deployment of resources, are well matched to meet the individual needs of students.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5

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inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

When students arrive at the college their attainment is lower than the national average. Although progress is improving, and is good where teaching is most effective, overall it remains satisfactory because improvements in teaching and learning are not yet reflected in longer-term measures of progress. No particular groups of students significantly underachieve. Parents and carers support students' view that the college is a safe and caring environment. Students understand well the factors that impact on physical, mental and emotional health. They demonstrate good commitment to improving the college and wider community through activities such as the Junior Sports Leadership and Duke of Edinburgh Award schemes; representation of the student council on the police advisory group; drama performances and work with older people. Students' good social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is enhanced by links with a school in Palestine and through good opportunities in lessons, assemblies and tutorials to reflect on their feelings, values and the consequences of their actions. They are prepared satisfactorily for their future economic well-being, learn financial literacy and enjoy a range of work experience and enterprise activities.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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**The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

**2**

## How effective is the provision?

Where teaching is sharply focused on helping students to achieve individual learning objectives, they are motivated and appropriately challenged. However, in some lessons the whole class follows the same plan and higher-ability students, in particular, do not have the chance to work with the teacher on more difficult concepts or skills. In the better lessons questioning is used effectively to motivate students and ascertain their levels of understanding, good use is made of interactive whiteboard technology and opportunities for independent learning further contribute to students' enjoyment of lessons and development of study skills. However, a minority of teachers miss the chance to help students make good progress by not effectively assessing their understanding and using such information to adjust the tasks and use resources effectively to meet their needs.

The college's specialism is central to the recent improvements in the curriculum. This includes a greater range of subjects that have captured students' interest, such as photography, media studies and film. The compulsory full GCSE course in religious education is valued by students who see this as vital learning for life in a multicultural society. There is an increasing range of clubs and activities that support students' personal skills. These include the film and writing initiative with primary schools, the Radio Club and a therapeutic horticultural project to help more vulnerable students, such as asylum seekers and new arrivals, build their self-esteem. Students benefit from a vast array of visitors and visits to venues such as theatres, museums and galleries, as well as overseas visits such as the history trip to Ypres. Students, parents and carers have been consulted on the curriculum and are enthusiastic about the new range of options on offer for September 2010.

Students, parents and carers value the very effective care, guidance and support. One boy wrote, 'My school is a school which cares for the needs of each pupil,' and a parent commented: 'My child has behaviour problems, at any other school other than Burnage Media he would have been excluded. Burnage are excellent and have given my child an education.' Very effective transition arrangements ensure that students who join Year 7, or at other times, settle into the college quickly and smoothly. Case studies for vulnerable students are well documented, demonstrating the good arrangements with external agencies, and parents and carers, to support individuals' needs. Good careers advice and guidance helps students to follow their aspirations and contributes well to the very low numbers who leave the school without access to work, training or further education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

**The quality of teaching**

Taking into account:

The use of assessment to support learning

**3**

3

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Excellent role models in school leadership set high expectations and aspirations resulting in well-motivated and committed staff. The college has put in place rigorous systems to support and develop current and future leaders. These aid good succession planning and develop leaders with a broad range of skills. Whole-college monitoring is effective and informs improvement planning and staff training. The governing body has a good understanding of the college's strengths and priorities. Individual roles are targeted to the specific expertise of governors. The work of the governors' safeguarding children sub-committee is a particular strength, contributing to the development of the college's outstanding policies and practices. The college's work with vulnerable students is greatly enhanced by its success in engaging parents and carers and this has led to some excellent outcomes for specific students. Parents and carers receive reports on their sons' progress five times throughout the year and regular newsletters and information posted home complement the frequently updated information on the school's website. Partnership working is central to all aspects of the college's work. Many partnerships are specifically tailored to meet the individual needs of students. Links with the local specialist language college broaden language provision for some students and local college partnerships enhance provision for students in danger of disengagement. The college's excellent work on promoting equality and tackling discrimination is exemplified by its deep understanding of its own community, the celebration of diversity and the ways in which this enriches the curriculum, for example in lessons where issues of race, culture, religion, gender and sexuality are debated and discrimination challenged. Students speak with pride of the college's zero tolerance of discriminatory language or behaviour.

The college has sound finances and is providing satisfactory value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>



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<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Forty-four per cent of parents and carers gave their views and a very large majority of responses were supportive of the college and its management. A very small minority did not feel that the college dealt effectively with unacceptable behaviour although inspection evidence judged students' behaviour to be good in lessons and satisfactory overall. A few of those who responded did not feel that the college took sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns or helped them enough in supporting their children's learning; however, inspectors judged engagement with parents and carers to be outstanding overall. A very large majority of parents and carers told us that their sons enjoyed their time at college and a similar proportion were happy overall with their sons' experience at college.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of students registered at Burnage Media Arts College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 368 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 878 students registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	138	38	211	57	15	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	141	38	201	55	18	5	5	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	180	49	163	44	19	5	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	123	33	194	53	42	11	4	1
The teaching is good at this school	129	35	210	57	22	6	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	114	31	188	51	54	15	6	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	107	29	210	57	40	11	6	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	126	34	205	56	28	8	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	97	26	215	58	42	11	6	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	142	39	181	49	28	8	13	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	76	21	225	61	46	13	7	2
The school is led and managed effectively	135	37	207	56	17	5	4	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	163	44	167	45	25	7	8	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



5 March 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Burnage Media Arts College, Burnage M19 1ER

After our visit to your college, I would like to share our findings with you and thank you for your friendly welcome and for taking time to talk to us. Burnage Media Arts is a satisfactory and improving college with several good and outstanding features. It is well led by the headteacher, senior leaders and governors. Your success in gaining five good GCSE grades has improved year on year. Your attainment is below the national average but the gap is narrowing. Your progress is satisfactory overall and in English it is exceptionally good.

Many aspects of your personal development and well-being are good. You told us that as a result of the very good care, guidance and support you receive, you feel safe and secure in college. You told us that the college does not tolerate bullying and the few incidents that occur are dealt with swiftly and effectively. You have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and we were impressed by your good behaviour in lessons and many contributions to the community. Your attendance and punctuality have improved although some of you still arrive late for lessons, particularly in the afternoon. Your teachers are enthusiastic and caring and you engage well with lessons. There are very good strategies in place to identify those who need extra help. There are now more vocational courses at Key Stage 4 and new courses will be available when you move into the new building in September.

In order that staff can help you to continue to progress well and reach higher standards we have recommended that the college undertakes the following:

increase the proportion of teaching that is good or better by:

- using effective assessment strategies consistently
- ensuring that activities in lessons and the deployment of resources are well matched to meet your individual needs.

You are rightly proud to be members of Burnage Media Arts College. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Janet Palmer

Her Majesty's Inspector

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