

# Bournville School and Sixth Form Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103515
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	286686
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nada Trikić 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>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1074
6 <sup>th</sup> form	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr I McKenzie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs R Harker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18–21 November 2002
<b>School address</b>	Griffins Brook Lane Birmingham West Midlands B30 1QJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4753881
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 4832349

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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	19 June 2007
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Bournville School and Sixth Form Centre is a large comprehensive school attracting students from a large number of primary schools. Sixth form provision is made in collaboration with four other secondary schools. Boys make up 60% of the school population. The majority of students are from White British backgrounds. White and Black Caribbean students form the largest subgroups, with many other minority ethnic groups represented. The number of students with English as an additional language is below the national average, with few at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. The number of students with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. The school became a specialist business and enterprise school in September 2002.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Bournville School and Sixth Form Centre is providing a good and improving education. The decision to become a business and enterprise school has been influential in developing a good curriculum across all key stages, and establishing outstanding partnership links with the business community. Students develop the skills required for the work place very well through special events, with an emphasis on enterprise and financial awareness. They welcome improved resources, especially computers, which have increased their confidence. Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is exceptionally high. The school has met the targets set by the government for specialist schools and this has helped to drive up standards, which are above average at the end of Key Stage 4, reflecting good achievement across this key stage. The school achieved the best GCSE results to date in 2006, with 80% of students achieving five or more higher grade passes, exceeding the target set. However, the proportion that attained higher grade passes in English and mathematics was much lower, similar to the national average. The school has put effective intervention strategies in place to raise standards in these two subjects, which are leading to significant improvement.

Rates of progress have been slower in Key Stage 3. The causes have been weaknesses in teaching, management, target setting, tracking of progress, and the school's greater focus on the progress of older learners. These problems have now been tackled by good leadership and management. There are significant improvements in the use of assessment, and current tracking information shows that students are increasing rates of progress in English, mathematics and science, and standards are rising. There are strong systems for monitoring teaching and learning across the school by senior leaders and directors of learning, which have led to improvements in the quality of lessons. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Strengths are in the planning and structure of lessons, with a strong focus on gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. Students enjoy opportunities to learn through a variety of tasks, and in a range of groupings. Students also benefit from good quality care, support and guidance. The whole-school tracking system has strengthened the monitoring of students' progress as a basis for timely interventions to support students who are in danger of underachieving. School leaders rightly recognise that with further development and a consistent approach to tracking and intervention, standards and achievement will be improved further.

Strong leadership and management have set a high priority on providing a safe learning environment which contributes to students' good personal development and well-being. Students understand well the importance of a healthy lifestyle through exercise and healthy eating. They say they feel very safe, and have good relationships with staff. The work of the 'Hub' is developing well to support the personal development of students with individual needs in coordination with external partners. The majority of students behave well and have positive attitudes, but a small minority do not consistently meet the school's expectations, as is indicated by the number of exclusions. Students welcome the opportunities through the school council to express their views, and to contribute towards improvements.

## Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

**Grade: 2**

The overall effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form is good. At the end of Year 11, 80% of students continue their education either at the school Sixth Form College or Further Education College. Students progressing to the school's sixth form have standards just below the national average. The standards reached by them in 2006 at the end of Year 13 were broadly average, which represented satisfactory progress. However, the school has worked hard to improve the quality of students' learning through a range of strategies such as improved target setting, a focus on independent learning, and flexible curriculum arrangements through the consortium. These improvements are beginning to raise standards and achievement, although it is too early for their full impact to be seen. Students are very positive about the sixth form and enjoy opportunities to participate in the Student Management Group and whole-school activities, and this contributes to their good personal development. Students value the good quality care, guidance and support they receive, which focuses on increasing rates of progress, individual needs and preparation for the future. Leadership and management are good. Leaders have an accurate view of priorities based on thorough monitoring of provision, and have taken effective steps to address areas of relative weakness.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Refine the whole-school tracking system to ensure that students' progress is monitored consistently to inform timely intervention.
- Continue to embed current strategies in the sixth form to raise standards and achievement further.

## Achievement and standards

**Grade: 2**

Students enter the school with standards in line with national averages. By the end of Key Stage 4, standards are above average overall and achievement is good. The school has continued to raise standards and achievement in all key stages but has been most successful in Key Stage 4. In 2006, standards in Key Stage 3 were broadly average and progress was satisfactory, and too few students achieved the higher levels in the national tests. Current Year 9 students are reaching higher standards and making better progress.

In GCSE, all groups of students, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, made equally good progress in 2006. Performance in ICT was particularly strong, with 90% of students achieving four higher grade passes in this subject. However, students did not make the expected progress in English and mathematics. School leaders are successfully focusing on intervention strategies to increase the proportion of pupils who achieve higher grades in both English and mathematics. The wide range of courses meets the needs and interests of students very well and they all gain qualifications.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 2**

Students' personal development and well-being are good. They much enjoy a wide range of activities, and believe that the opportunities available to extend their experiences are a strength of the school. The levels of participation are high. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Behaviour is generally good and improving. The school has developed a range of popular rewards. These are supplemented by a range of intervention and support strategies, such as the recovery room to address classroom disruption. However, these strategies are not routinely evaluated to support a sustained reduction in the number of students excluded.

The students respond well to the many opportunities for them to contribute to the community; year and school councils are viewed positively, and students say that they have opportunities to express their views. They demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the needs of others, for example, through charity fundraising events.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall. The more effective lessons move at a rapid pace and teachers challenge students to think for themselves. Teachers make good use of questioning to deepen students' understanding and to develop their oracy skills.

Good use is made of ICT to motivate and enhance the quality of lessons. Students are very clear about their targets for the end of each key stage and most understand the steps required to improve. Assessment and marking policies to track students' progress are in place but, although strong in many areas, are not consistently applied. The very effective programme for professional development is strengthening teaching and learning; this is particularly evident in the current progress in Key Stage 3, core subjects and the sixth form.

### Curriculum and other activities

**Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good, with significant strengths. The school has effectively adjusted the curriculum to meet the needs of students and to provide alternative pathways to enable all students to achieve well. The school's specialist status has strengthened the curriculum. There is a more extensive range of vocational courses and opportunities, which effectively supports progression in further study. Students enjoy the special events such as 'Enterprise Week' to develop team work and problem-solving skills. These are supported by excellent links with business representatives. The curriculum promotes safe and healthy lifestyles through a well-planned personal, social and health education programme. Whole-school strategies to support literacy and numeracy are leading to improvement in these key areas for

the school, but there is scope for them to be more effectively implemented. There is a good range of popular extra-curricular activities, including study support.

## Care, guidance and support

**Grade: 2**

The quality of care, guidance and support for students is good. Students have confidence that they can access support and value the care they receive. The arrangements for safeguarding students are robust. There are well managed procedures for the protection of students, and for their health and safety. The school has well-developed systems such as mentoring to meet the needs of learners. However, there is recognition that a specific plan would assist in the reduction of the number of excluded students. There are good systems in place to help students as they move through key stages within the school. Information, advice and guidance are readily available to support course choices and future options. Leaders are now more confident in setting cohort targets which will demonstrate their aspirations for all students to make good or better progress. The recently introduced role of progress leaders is already showing impact and leading the way towards more effective academic mentoring by form tutors, to improve the consistency of tracking. The school works well with parents; they are very positive about the school and provide helpful feedback on aspects of the school's work.

## Leadership and management

**Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is well supported by the senior leadership team and together they have a clear focus on strategies to improve the school. Priorities are accurately identified, based upon an extensive self-evaluation process involving input from staff, governors, students and parents. There is a clear awareness of strengths and weaknesses which has been used to support continuous improvement. For example, weaknesses in Key Stage 3 have been successfully addressed through a rigorous programme of support and intervention.

Provision has developed to enhance the personal development of students, including the introduction of progress leaders, and academic mentoring. Some aspects of the school's work are not as rigorously evaluated to assess their effectiveness, such as strategies to reduce the number of exclusions.

The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well, and governors take an active role as 'critical friends' of the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The leadership and management of the school ensure its resources are well deployed, and there is good capacity for further improvement.

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## 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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage		
The effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision		
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

How well do learners achieve?	2	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	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 disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

<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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has insufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

## The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2	2
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?	2	2

## Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	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	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	



20 June 2007

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Bournville School and Sixth Form Centre, Birmingham B30 1QJ**

Thank you for being so welcoming and friendly when we came to inspect your school recently. Bournville School and Sixth Form Centre is providing you with a good and improving education. The students we spoke to were very positive about the changes that had taken place since becoming a specialist business and enterprise school. You welcomed the extra resources, especially the computers, which allow you to take a more active part in lessons. The school's focus on information and communication technology helps to build your confidence and skills, and you achieve exceptionally well in this area. You were particularly enthusiastic about the special events such as 'Enterprise Week' and themed days, which have increased your skills in, and awareness of, finance and business.

You told us that you feel really safe in school, and that adults support and care for you very well. You were very positive about all the extra activities and visits, and appreciated that staff give up time to extend your experiences. Those we spoke to felt the school council was working well and had led to some improvements in school, and gave opportunities to discuss issues of concern. Most of you behave very well but there is a small minority who do not meet the school's expectations.

Students at Bournville reach above average standards and make good progress by the end of Year 11. The school ensures that there is a good range of courses to meet your needs. Progress has not been so good in Key Stage 3 but is now improving. Standards and achievement in the sixth form are satisfactory and we have asked the school to carry on working hard to support even higher standards through improved target-setting, teaching, and flexible arrangements involving partner schools.

From talking to you and observing your lessons, we know that you learn best when you are involved in a variety of tasks with opportunities for paired, group, practical and independent work which is planned to challenge you and make you think about your learning. Teaching and learning is good throughout the school and getting stronger. We believe that you can make even more progress as you move through the school. We have suggested that the school monitors your progress carefully across all subjects and intervenes if you are not making the expected progress.

You yourselves can help by attending every day and by thinking about what you are learning in lessons, and what you need to do to improve.

Our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nada Trikić  
Her Majesty's Inspector