

Bournville School and Sixth Form Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103515
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336098
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Davinder Dosanjh HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1237
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Mackenzie
Headteacher	Barbara Easton
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2007
School address	Griffins Brook Lane Bournville Birmingham B30 1QJ
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Age group	11–19
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 30 teachers, visiting 32 lessons and observing two assemblies. Six of the lessons were observed jointly with the senior leaders. Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, groups of students, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at progress tracking, performance data, governors' minutes, students' work and numerous policies, guidelines and plans. Completed questionnaires from 138 parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- how well students achieve in English
- how well teaching challenges individual students and helps them make good progress in lessons
- the contribution of the specialist status in business and enterprise and music in improving the overall quality of education
- the effectiveness of the sixth form in raising standards and achievement
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in monitoring, evaluating and improving performance.

Information about 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 above the national average, with few at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. The number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion that has a statement of special educational need is above average.

The school gained specialist business and enterprise status in September 2002 with music being added in 2007. It has a resource base for visually impaired learners. The school is part of the Oaks Sixth Form College.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Bournville is judged to be a good school. Under the strong leadership of the very able senior leaders the school has developed some systematic and rigorous approaches to its work. The impact of these systems is most evident in improved attendance, declining exclusions and outstanding safeguarding procedures. Rigorous tracking and monitoring of student performance referred to as 'data heaven', has led to greater scrutiny of student progress at all levels of the school. Students' attainment has been rising over time, although the areas that are good vary from year to year. Current Year 11 students are on track to exceed targets and show substantial improvement compared with previous GCSE examination results in English and mathematics. Accurate self-evaluation by the school's leaders and the success of intervention strategies, such as a girls' project to improve students' outcomes, indicate that the school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

These following are the notable strengths of the school.

- The school is an inclusive community.
- Good care, guidance and support ensure staff know each student well. The work of the 'Hub' in conjunction with external agencies provides good support for vulnerable students.
- The school's curriculum offers a wide range of curriculum options and personalised learning especially at Key Stage 4. There are many strong partnerships with local schools, colleges and other agencies which enhance the provision available for students.
- Students enjoy school, feel safe and feel adults care about them. Students are particularly pleased that the trips and visits include travel abroad and some agreed that this gives them insight and a different perspective on their own families and communities.
- Students make a good contribution to the school and wider community through the student council, sports leadership, and taking part in performing arts and musical activities. Music, which includes a boy's choir, has a high profile and is a source of interest and motivation for significant numbers of students.
- Students make good progress during their time at school and attainment is improving, especially in English and mathematics.
- Leadership and management are good. The school is well led at all levels and supported by a group of knowledgeable governors who bring a wealth of expertise to the school. Staff are very committed to improvement and their morale is high.

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- The school's specialist status in business and enterprise and music has been very beneficial to students. High quality music performances, strong business links and enterprise days enhance students' personal development and prepare them well for the future. The introduction of more appropriate vocational courses has improved the attainment of students.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is given a high priority and thus lessons are well planned, engage students in their learning well and there are frequent checks on what students have learnt.

Aspects of the school's work that are less effective include:

- The progress made by students in the sixth form is sometimes too slow and uneven across subjects.
- Students' understanding of healthy lifestyles is limited.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards and achievement in the sixth form by:
 - developing collegiate links with other schools and colleges to broaden the provision available for students
 - develop teaching and learning strategies to incorporate high order skills which focus on independent learning and synthesis.
- Increase students understanding of healthy lifestyles by ensuring that students' understanding of wider health and food issues is consolidated.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students enter school with below average attainment and from their starting points they make good progress. The percentage of students who gain five or more GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, at grade C or above has been uneven but is now broadly average. The whole-school data tracking system has improved since the last inspection and provides extensive information about students' progress. 'Intervention Heaven' has been particularly effective this year at raising the attainment and progress of targeted students. The imbalance of the progress of girls and boys has been addressed effectively and current data shows no significant differences this year. The progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good due to the very effective support they receive with their learning. There are no significant differences in performance between different groups of students. The majority of lessons observed show that many students have good attitudes to their work and the quality of learning is good. Students enjoy learning and say that they have confidence in their teachers.

Different groups of students say they feel safe, well supported and cared for. Bullying is said to sometimes happen but students say that the school responds

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quickly to their concerns and they have confidence in the actions that are taken. Students generally behave thoughtfully towards one another. Fewer students than in previous years are excluded from lessons and the school makes effective use of the e-portal to give parents regular feedback on good as well as weaker behaviour. Students feel that, although behaviour is good and has improved, it could still be better.

The school has established an effective referral system that allows students who would benefit from the additional support and guidance the chance to see other health professionals. The take-up of healthy foods has a mixed response from students, as does the dangers of smoking. There is confusion about what constitutes a healthy diet.

The students make effective use of the powers they are given to influence, effect change, and ensure that others benefit from their efforts. The school council is a key group within the school who have worked hard to get a bicycle shelter installed and to take action on other matters that students feel strongly about. Charitable work is considered to be fun by students but it is underpinned by a strong moral sense of responsibility and a desire to help others. Consequently, students’ social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. There is an emphasis on celebrating cultural achievement and thus the school makes a good contribution to the cultural life of the City with a high incidence of involvement in a wide range of events.

The most recent data shows attendance to be above average and slightly better than last year. The school has worked hard to bring pupils with a poor record of attendance to the attention of the local authority and for action to be taken. The school has worked alongside a small group of students with a very poor record of attendance and has been very successful in keeping them in school and helping them achieve their personal goals.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2

¹ 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 to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and relationships with students are good. The planning of lessons is a strength and the use of the four-part lesson is strongly embedded. In the best lessons, there are appropriate activities for the range of student abilities. A wide range of stimulating activities successfully engage and motivate students. Good use is made of tracking and monitoring data. Some good examples of self and peer assessment were observed. The use of questioning activities is variable, with a tendency to address the class generally. There are good examples of detailed marking giving advice to students on how to improve but also inconsistencies within and across subjects. Students are well informed about targets.

The curriculum is well organised, broad and balanced and provides a wide range of opportunities for learning. At Key Stage 4, the curriculum provides flexible pathways and personalised learning. There is an increased range of partnerships and cooperation with network partners, resulting in an aligned timetable from September 2010. The impact of the specialisms is very evident with all students doing a business and information and computer technology course in Key Stage 4. Music and notably music technology have strong numbers. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits which are well supported by students. Challenge Days are used effectively to enhance the curriculum in a range of areas such as sustainability. Students also enjoy Challenge Days because of the chance to learn in different ways and to see the connections between subjects.

Students are well cared for and good relationships with a range of external agencies are used to support students' personal development. The school provides well for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who have to make significant strides to overcome barriers to learning. There is an effective team of staff whose expertise and diligent record keeping and tracking have brought about significant changes for a number of students.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

The school is well led and collaborative leadership and management is driving forward improvements. There are clear lines of accountability which enable senior managers and directors of learning to ensure the smooth running of the school. The key strategic priorities are shared with staff so that there is a clear agenda for raising standards and improving teaching. Target setting is challenging and well understood by staff. Detailed tracking of student progress leads to appropriate and effective interventions, such as a boys’ group in English and the successful girls’ project. Directors of learning make a strong contribution to bringing about improvements. The school recognises that there has been greater success in some subjects than in others in securing consistently good learning. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are good. The school accurately judges the quality of teaching and learning which is clearly linked to performance management.

Governors discharge statutory duties effectively. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school, are very knowledgeable and bring a wealth of expertise to their work. They are increasingly involved in school life, listening to and acting upon parental views, and are well placed to challenge the school and seek further improvement. The school has a positive relationship with parents with appropriate systems in place to ensure that parents and carers are informed of progress. The views of parents are sought at parents’ evenings and the annual survey. The e-portal is a useful tool but still in its early stages of development. There has been some positive feedback from parents registered to use it.

A range of strong partnerships contribute to good well-being for students, helping to improve their achievement, motivation and attendance. The school works with a range of agencies and partnerships which extend opportunities for students via the curriculum or provide them with support. Safeguarding procedures are exemplary and every aspect rigorously applied. The recent delay to students’ return from a visit to the United States of America was very well managed and letters from parents support this judgement. The school is very committed in its focus on promoting equality of opportunity for every student. This is evident in the improving progress students are making and the work to tackle underachievement. The fact that there are no significant differences for different groups indicates that this has been effective. The school is keenly aware of the nature of its community and has forged many links with local, national and global communities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities	2

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met	
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

The sixth form is increasingly offering a range of courses and options at various levels to match the needs and abilities of its students. An effective collegiate partnership with other schools and sixth forms provides further opportunities for students to tailor their learning needs to specific courses. This is an effective partnership that is currently expanding provision further, incorporating more opportunities for students to access broader gateways to employment as well as further and higher education. Although satisfactory overall, outcomes are variable across subjects. The weaker performance and low attainment in some subjects and variable rates of progress in others fall short of those expected nationally. The care and support students receive lead to good retention rates and most students move on to higher or further education, work or training. There is strong pastoral support and a positive environment for students to engage in personal study. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers are increasingly making effective use of assessment and tracking data to plan their lessons. However, they sometimes miss opportunities to extend students’ thinking because insufficient time is given for students to reflect on, share or extend their own learning.

Students are provided with good guidance and advice about options when transferring from Year 11 and they say that teachers are considerate and attentive to their needs. Students take on personal responsibilities and contribute well to the school and local community, for example by mentoring younger students. There are good opportunities for them to visit local primary schools to support younger children. Leadership and management are satisfactory; refocused leadership has brought fresh energy and ambition to the sixth form in the last year. Senior staff monitor and track the performance of teachers and students. This improves the consistency of practice and is raising attainment, although staff evaluations of lessons do not take sufficient account of students’ learning or identify points for improvement in order to accelerate learning further. Diligent attention is given to meeting the welfare needs of individual students and there is a good rapport with both students and their families.

These are the grades for the sixth form

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Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	3
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

The number of questionnaires returned was relatively low. Most of the responses were supportive of the school. The majority of parents and carers agreed that the school keeps their child safe and they are kept informed of their child’s progress. A small minority expressed some disagreement about healthy lifestyles and behaviour. Inspectors agree that the school could do more to improve students’ understanding about health and food. The inspection team judged behaviour to be good and the school has worked hard to reduce the number of exclusions. The lead inspector had a detailed discussion with the headteacher about the results of the questionnaires to inform the school’s future work around the e-portal.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bournville School and Sixth Form Centre 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 138 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1237 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	29	81	59	14	10	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	42	31	87	64	3	2	3	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	66	48	61	45	9	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	36	72	53	13	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	34	25	94	69	7	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	22	88	64	19	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	13	94	69	23	17	1	1
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)	30	22	87	64	8	6	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	25	81	59	17	12	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	21	83	61	19	14	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	15	91	66	16	12	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	28	20	91	66	11	8	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	31	73	53	14	10	4	3

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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



Friday 30 April 2010

Dear Students

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

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome at your school. We all enjoyed talking with you and you helped us to find out about the school. The school provides you with a good quality of education overall and has some notable strengths.

- The school is an inclusive community.
- Good care, guidance and support ensure staff know each student well.
- The school curriculum offers a wide range of curriculum options. There are many strong partnerships with local schools, colleges and other agencies which enhance the provision available for to you.
- You enjoy school and feel safe. You are particularly pleased that the trips and visits include travel abroad. Safeguarding is outstanding.
- You make a good contribution to the school and wider community through the student council, sports leadership, and performances in music and the arts.
- During your time at school you make good progress and attainment is improving especially in English and mathematics.
- Leadership and management are good. The school is well led at all levels. Staff are very committed to improvement.
- The school's specialist status in business and music has been very beneficial to you. High quality music performances, strong business links and enterprise days enhance your personal development and prepare you well for the future.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.

We have asked the school to make the following improvements.

- Improve the progress made by students in the sixth form.
- Increase your understanding of healthy lifestyles.

We wish you all the very best in your studies and every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Davinder Dosanjh
Her Majesty's Inspector

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