

# Baverstock Foundation School and Specialist Sports College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	103547
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	376930
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Robert Barbour 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
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1012
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	107
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sandra Howes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Thomas Marshall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	501 Bells Lane Druids Heath Birmingham B14 5TL
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 430 7924
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 474 5313
<b>Email address</b>	info@baverstock.bham.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	22–23 February 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	376930



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Robert Barbour

Her Majesty's Inspector

Roisin Chambers

Additional inspector

Dorothy Martin

Additional inspector

Russell Barr

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 32 lessons taught by 32 teachers, made short visits to other lessons, and listened to younger students reading. Meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents covering students' attainment and progress, attendance, behaviour and safeguarding. The inspection team took account of the responses to inspection questionnaires from 150 students, 61 staff and 40 parents and carers.

## Information about the school

The school, a specialist sports college, is larger than the average-sized secondary school. Most of its students come from the area surrounding the school. A much higher proportion of students than the national average is known to be eligible for free school meals. Most students come from White British backgrounds. A small minority come from a range of other heritages, mainly from Mixed (White and Black Caribbean) and Black backgrounds. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is well above average. These students mainly have specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties or behaviour, emotional or social difficulties.

The school's last inspection in 2009 found it no longer needed the significant improvement required by an earlier inspection. However, the school does not meet the current floor standard set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has achieved National Healthy Schools status, the ArtsMark, Quality CEIAG (careers education, information, advice and guidance) and SportsMark awards. The headteacher took up his appointment in September 2010.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

### Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Changes in leadership and management in the last 18 months have led to improvements in teaching, behaviour, safety and achievement. Students are happy coming to school. The sixth form is satisfactory. It is not a good school because improvements have not yet accelerated learning to the point where students make consistently good progress.
- Students make satisfactory progress from below-average starting points and reach below-average standards by the end of Year 11 and in the sixth form. Changes in teaching mean that students are on track to achieve better results in 2012. The use of a reading programme for weaker readers and a skills-based learning programme in Years 7 and 8 have helped to raise achievement.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall, including in the sixth form, with much good and occasionally outstanding teaching. Lessons are well structured but do not always challenge students sufficiently and the pace of learning is not always fast enough. Marking gives students helpful feedback on how they can improve their work.
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- Both around the school and in lessons, students' behaviour is satisfactory, with little disruption to learning. They feel safe in school and recognise that, while some bullying takes places, the school works hard to eliminate it and deals with any bullying incidents swiftly when they occur. Support for students who are reluctant to engage with learning is good.
- School leaders, including the governing body, have a clear vision for the school's future and increasingly hold staff to account for the school's performance. A new focus on academic progress has driven the school's recent improvement. Self-evaluation has accurately identified the areas for improvement in the school's development plan. The leadership of support for special educational needs is not sufficiently focused on increasing students' rate of progress.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Improve teaching and learning, including in the sixth form, by:
  - increasing the pace of learning and the depth of challenge in students' work
  - providing more opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning.
  
- Accelerate the progress of disabled students and those with special educational needs by:
  - ensuring the strategic leadership of this aspect of the school has a greater impact on teaching and learning and on students' outcomes.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Students' attainment when they join the school in Year 7 is below average, particularly in their literacy skills and their ability to make the most of the learning opportunities the school provides. Having just exceeded the government's floor standard in 2010, the school dropped back below it in 2011, although the percentage of students obtaining five or more higher GCSE grades (A\* to C) was close to the national average. Only the school's specialist subject, physical education, showed above-average results. A similar picture in the sixth form saw students making broadly satisfactory progress from below-average starting points to reach below-average results in 2011.

Focused support to improve literacy and the skills-based learning programme in Years 7 and 8, together with satisfactory teaching, mean that students make satisfactory progress in lessons. An effective reading programme supports literacy skills for weaker readers and students are applying their skills more widely across the curriculum. In a physical education lesson, for example, students in Year 11 used specific vocabulary confidently and accurately to explore the benefits of exercise. Students generally engage enthusiastically with the task when given the opportunity to participate actively in learning.

Assessment criteria are increasingly used to support learning. In an English lesson, students in Year 9 reflected on the teacher's detailed feedback on their work and set targets for how they could improve it. The school's much stronger focus on improving learning has led to students making faster progress in the current school year. The school's assessment data indicate that students in Year 7 to 9 are making satisfactory progress. In Years 10 and 11, early GCSE results and predictions for the end of the year indicate that students are making satisfactory progress that will lead to improved performance in 2012, notably in mathematics. In the sixth form, students are continuing to make satisfactory progress over the current school year, again with predictions of better results in 2012.

Among the different groups represented in the school, girls reach higher standards than boys. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Students with statements of special educational needs make good progress in English, achieving above-average results compared with that group of students nationally. The progress of more-able students varies by subject, however. Students from Mixed and Black heritages have made better progress than their White British peers; in addition, there remains a wide gap between the performance of students known to be eligible for free school meals and other students. Most parents feel their child is making good progress at the school, but the inspection findings indicate that progress is satisfactory when compared nationally. This means that students' achievement is currently satisfactory overall.

### **Quality of teaching**

Most students, and their parents and carers, were positive about teaching in their responses to the inspection questionnaires. Although inspectors saw much good teaching, teaching is satisfactory overall because expectations of what students can achieve are not high enough. Most teaching, including in the sixth form, is the result of thorough planning in which lessons are carefully structured and learning objectives clear. Relationships between students and teachers are generally purposeful, although occasionally more time is spent dealing with off-task behaviour than should be the case. Teachers regularly check on students' understanding of what they have learned. In many good lessons, students used assessment criteria well to focus on how to achieve target examination grades. For example, in a chemistry lesson in Year 12, students assessed each other's work very effectively. Marking is thorough, and feedback seen in students' work helps students understand what they need to do to improve their work. Particularly in the sixth form, students value the regular and detailed feedback they received on their progress and the next steps in their learning.

Good teaching helped students to make rapid progress. For example, in an English lesson in Year 8, the teacher expected students to justify their views at length, think creatively and work in groups to solve problems. In satisfactory lessons, however, the pace was slower and the planned activities were not sufficiently challenging. Teachers' questioning did not always extend students' thinking as some required students only to give a short answer without explaining their reasoning. Students relied too heavily on their teacher in these situations and were not able to develop the skills they need to work independently and take responsibility for their learning. The curriculum meets students' needs, and cross-curricular skills from the learning programme in Years 7 and 8 are used effectively in other lessons. Teachers often provide time to reflect, supporting the spiritual aspect of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The teaching of disabled students and those with special educational needs shows similar variation to that of other students. Although in some cases activities were well matched to students' needs, teachers did not do enough to tailor their questioning to engage students effectively and some support did not follow the strategies set out in students' individual education plans.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students are positive about behaviour in the school, and the very large majority felt that it is good in lessons. In discussions, they noted recent improvements in behaviour, and linked this to the impact of the school council's recent focus on mutual respect and courtesy. Parents are less positive about students' behaviour but inspection evidence supports students' views, as inspectors found students to be calm, friendly and respectful. The introduction of a new behaviour policy has also had a positive impact, although its implementation is not yet entirely consistent in all classrooms. The school's 'LEAP' facility in Years 9 to 11 has had an outstanding impact on students in Year 11 who were previously not engaged with learning, with its focus on achievement as well as re-integration into mainstream classes when behaviour has improved. In the last school year, these students all achieved five or more higher GCSE grades. A similar 'Focus' facility in Years 7 and 8 provides good support. Exclusion rates have fallen dramatically in the last year as the school's leaders have focused on improving behaviour, with no permanent exclusions this school year. The exclusion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs has also seen a dramatic drop in the last two years. Although attendance rates are below the national average, students' attendance is also improving.

Students recognise different forms of bullying and are well aware of the school's strong stance on bullying. In discussions, they generally felt this is dealt with well and that only a limited amount takes place. Parents had a similar view. Students are well aware of the risks associated with the internet and are aware of how to keep safe when surfing the web. They feel that any racist behaviour is dealt with swiftly by staff and that the use of inappropriate language of any sort is not tolerated. As a result, students feel safe in school, a view echoed by the large majority of parents and carers.

## Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the school, while satisfactory overall, have a number of strong features. The headteacher refocused the school's priorities on his arrival, in line with governing body's concerns about students' achievement and behaviour. He has set out an ambitious vision for the school and high expectations for what students and teachers can achieve. A reorganisation of leadership roles has led to increased accountability through robust performance management system, and there has been a sustained improvement in progress, behaviour and safety. In a similar way, the governing body now holds the school to account for the school's performance more rigorously, and brings a greater degree of challenge to its work with senior and middle leaders. Middle leaders' roles have been enhanced, too. With senior leaders, subject leaders conduct regular reviews of their departments with a focus on promoting faster progress through improved teaching and learning. This more collaborative approach has been successful, especially in challenging weaker teaching, but is too recent to show major gains in students' progress. These successes indicate the school has at least satisfactory capacity to bring about further improvement. In a few areas, particularly in special educational needs, leadership does not focus sufficiently on the strategic role of bringing about improvements in students' outcomes through better teaching. The school's arrangements for

safeguarding are of good quality and are fully implemented.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and includes, in Years 7 and 8, a clear focus on quickly gaining the skills needed for independent and collaborative learning. The range of GCSE and vocational courses in Years 10 to 11 meets the needs of students. The sixth form curriculum has similarly been shaped to meet the needs and aspirations of its intake in Year 12, with fewer students than average continuing to A2 courses in Year 13. The way the school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, both through lessons and enrichment activities, is satisfactory. The school tackles all forms discrimination effectively. Students from minority ethnic backgrounds do as well as, and sometimes better than, their White British peers. However, the school's promotion of equality is satisfactory.

## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



24 February 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of Baverstock Foundation School and Specialist Sports College, Birmingham, B14 5TL**

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We spoke with many of you in discussions, while looking at your work and while hearing some of you read. Your views were very valuable in helping us reach our conclusions. We were pleased to hear that you feel safe at school.

You go to a satisfactory school, and one that is improving. Our main findings are as follows.

- You make satisfactory progress and are on target to achieve higher standards than students previously.
- Teaching is satisfactory and marking helps you to improve your work.
- Your behaviour round the school and in lessons is satisfactory.
- The school's leaders have focused well on improving teaching, behaviour and the progress you make.

To carry on this process of improvement have asked the headteacher and staff to do a few things. We have asked them to:

- plan more activities that challenge you and make you think, so you make better progress
- give you more opportunities to take more responsibility for your own learning
- focus more on the progress those of you with additional needs make.

You can help the school improve by attending regularly, always getting on with your work in lessons and behaving well at all times. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robert Barbour  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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