

# Barnhill Community High School

## Inspection report

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|                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 137844                   |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Hillingdon               |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 395111                   |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 29 February–1 March 2012 |
| <b>Lead inspector</b>          | Meena Kumari Wood 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> | 1389                             |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 189                              |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Governing Body                   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | John Major                       |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Robert Lobatto                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 17 September 2008                |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Yeading Lane<br>Hayes<br>UB4 9LE |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 0208 839 0606                    |
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|                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>          | 11–18                    |
| <b>Inspection date(s)</b> | 29 February–1 March 2012 |
| <b>Inspection number</b>  | 395111                   |



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## Introduction

### Inspection team

|               |                         |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Meena Wood    | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Lesley Leake  | Additional inspector    |
| Desmond Dunne | Additional inspector    |
| Peter Stumpf  | Additional inspector    |
| Niel McCleod  | Additional inspector    |

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 42 teachers teaching 44 lessons, of which 7 were joint observations with members of the senior and middle leadership teams. Meetings were held with five groups of pupils, school staff, including senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and two governors. 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 number of documents, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation, case studies of students whose circumstances have made them vulnerable, the safeguarding and equality policies, and the minutes of meetings of the governing body. In addition, they analysed 201 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and others completed by students and staff.

## Information about the school

This school is larger than the average secondary school and has an average-sized sixth form. The school specialises in sports. The proportion of students entering or leaving the school other than at the usual times is higher than the national average for secondary schools. A significantly above-average number of students are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is slightly below average, whereas the proportion of those with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average, most having behavioural, social and emotional difficulties or difficulties relating to speech, language and communication. One third of the students are White British; a large number are from Black African and Indian backgrounds, with smaller numbers from Pakistani and Black Caribbean backgrounds. A high number of students speak English as an additional language and are at varying stages of language acquisition. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

**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

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Achievement of pupils</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Quality of teaching</b>            | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>      | <b>2</b> |

## Key findings

- This is a good school. The sixth form is satisfactory and improving. The vast majority of students, parents and carers are positive about the quality of the education and care it provides. GCSE results have improved year on year since the last inspection and are now broadly average. The school is not outstanding because although students start from a significantly low base and make good progress in mathematics, science and English literature, their achievement is rarely outstanding and only satisfactory in English language.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons that match students’ needs and abilities, set well-structured tasks and check learning. A few lessons lack sufficient challenge and, in these, assessment activities are employed with varying effectiveness to plan learning. In the sixth form, teaching is satisfactory with some that is good.
- Effective support for disabled students, those with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of learning English results in the majority making good progress. Attendance is now in line with the average. While the school works actively with external partners to help students stay involved in education, it recognises that it still needs to engage greater numbers of parents and carers in their children’s learning.
- Students behave very well and the vast majority are keen learners. Previous high levels of exclusions have reduced significantly, in particular of disabled students and those with special educational needs. The vast majority of students progress to post-16 education, employment or training.
- The leadership team has raised the staff’s expectations of what students should achieve. Targeted professional staff development and a personalised curriculum, along with a strong focus on interventions for underachieving students, have resulted in improving teaching and rising standards in Key Stage 4. This demonstrates good capacity for making further improvements.

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

- Accelerate the progress of underachieving students across the school in all subjects, but especially in English, by:
  - matching teacher expectations, lesson activities and tasks to students' attainment levels and needs
  - engaging more parents and carers in their children's learning
  - more rigorous monitoring by senior and middle leaders of students' work over time.
- Develop greater consistency in assessment across subjects by ensuring that:
  - all teachers build on identified good practice
  - information on students' abilities, knowledge and skills is used to plan more challenging lesson activities and tasks which extend their learning
  - the regular marking of students' class and homework consistently tells students how to improve.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Inspectors agree with parents and carers that achievement is good for the majority of students in Years 7 to 11. Over the last three years, the proportion of students attaining five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, has steadily risen and is now broadly average. Examination results in the sixth form are below the national average, but students make satisfactory progress given their exceptionally low starting points and virtually all continue into further training, higher education or employment. The school's actions in the last year are beginning to address weak performance in AS-level subjects effectively and this year's results are predicted to be broadly average.

Students make good progress overall and the majority are keen to learn when given well-structured opportunities in lessons. In some instances, even when lessons are uninspiring, students are responsive. Most are respectful of their teachers and other adults. Students settle quickly and, where lessons have clear objectives and tasks in line with their abilities, they work purposefully and are extended in their learning. Such lessons include discussions with one another and skilful questioning by teachers. In a Year 8 dance lesson for boys, students made outstanding progress owing to well-structured and well-timed activities that captured their imagination, interested them and motivated them to peer assess each other's performance.

Assessment information is used effectively to provide targeted support out of lessons for students at risk of underachieving. As a result of interventions, such as additional sessions after school and at weekends and in the learning resource unit during the school day, previously underachieving groups such as Indian, Black African and Pakistani students and those students with support at school action, are making good progress. However, the school recognises that while most White British

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students make satisfactory progress, a small number are not as engaged in their learning as their peers. This was confirmed through inspectors' observations in lessons.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is good and in a few cases outstanding. Where teachers plan lessons in line with students' needs and abilities, tasks are well structured and teachers check what students are learning. This ensures that all students are fully engaged and acquiring appropriate levels of knowledge and skills. In particular, the school's literacy strategies are having a positive impact in subjects such as food technology, drama and science through a structured focus on students' speaking and writing skills. However, this good practice is not applied in all subjects. Many lessons help consolidate the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of students' personal development. In one good Year 9 religious education lesson, students from a diverse range of religious and cultural backgrounds contributed sensitively and maturely to a 'nature versus nurture' debate.

The responses from parents, carers and students to the inspection questionnaires reflected the overwhelming majority view that teaching is good. In the few lessons where teaching is only satisfactory, this is because teachers' expectations and planning are not effectively matched to students' prior knowledge, skills and needs, and teachers do not check students' learning often enough. In these instances students are not fully challenged by the activities and tasks.

Assessment activities, including peer- and self-assessment, are of inconsistent quality across subjects. Where these activities are employed well, students reflect and understand what they have learnt and, importantly, what they need to do next. In most cases, the marking of students' work provides clear, detailed information about where students have been successful and what they need to do to improve. In the majority of subjects, teachers set realistic targets, which the majority of students know and understand. However, the quality of the feedback varies within subjects, so that in some lessons students are not clear about precisely what they need to do to attain their targets. Parents, carers and students are of the view that a more consistent approach is required to the setting of homework and to the quality of teachers' feedback.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Students reported that they feel safe in school and that most adults are approachable if they have concerns. Students behave responsibly and courteously towards one another. Despite concerns over behaviour reported by some parents and carers, behaviour is now good in lessons and satisfactory around the school, as a result of the effective sanctions and rewards system. However, if a lesson activity is not sufficiently absorbing, or if the students have not understood it, some lose attention and chatter.

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The exclusions policy has resulted in reducing incidences of bullying and anti-social behaviour. Students whose circumstances have made them vulnerable told inspectors how the school has helped them to improve their attendance and behaviour significantly. The school recognises that closer scrutiny of the zero-tolerance policy is necessary to ensure that the achievement of students who are excluded for a fixed period is not adversely affected. Notably, older students greatly value mentoring roles with younger students that help develop responsible and socially acceptable behaviour in the school. They express confidence in the school's systems for dealing with bullying, as this has resulted in a harmonious and well-integrated community.

### **Leadership and management**

Since the last inspection, the headteacher and other leaders and managers have focused effectively on the twin priorities of raising achievement and improving behaviour. The school's self-evaluation processes are thorough with input from all staff. Much has been done to improve the quality of teaching and behaviour through professional staff development which has had a strong focus on teaching and assessment strategies. However, in English, the standards of assessed work are not moderated rigorously enough. The school has a broadly accurate view of the quality of teaching in Years 7 to 11, but in a few internal observations by managers, there is less focus on students' acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Effective internal support and good partnership work with external agencies combine well to mould the positive ethos of the school. Despite efforts to involve a diverse range of parents and carers in their children's learning, the school has been more successful with some groups than with others and has recently developed a parental engagement strategy.

The impact of the curriculum on students' outcomes is good. The school has used its sports specialism and associated partnerships to raise students' aspirations through productive links with primary schools and sports leadership accredited opportunities. Personalised pathways with external providers enable students to pursue vocational courses and apprenticeships. Extra-curricular activities, including charity events, consolidate students' moral and social development. However there are missed opportunities in lessons where teachers do not draw on students' diverse cultural heritages to enhance their development. Year 7 students benefit from an access curriculum which helps them make a positive transition from primary school. Targeted provision for younger students with social emotional and behavioural difficulties has successfully reformed more challenging behaviour. In Year 8 upwards, students receive good advice and guidance on their innovative Key Stage 4 options. Sixth form students reported that the quality of course guidance and induction in Years 11 and 12 had much improved recently, enabling students to consider their choices in depth.

The governing body fulfils its statutory obligations for safeguarding and has effectively supported the leadership team in improving the attainment and progress

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of different groups of students, in line with the school's equalities plans. The school encourages adult volunteers from a range of backgrounds to work alongside students as role models. Older students are encouraged to celebrate their achievement through the 'Gold Tie'. A number of these proudly assume leadership roles within the school, for example as 'reading buddies'. Sharper monitoring of students' performance in Years 7 to 11 has resulted in attainment that has improved from a very low base to average levels. The school's leaders have demonstrated their ability to bring about sustained improvement and this has been acknowledged within the local community and by most parents, carers and students.



## 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).

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.**



2 March 2012

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Barnhill Community School, Hillingdon UB4 9LE**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons and were impressed by how courteous and polite you were and by your good attitudes towards your learning. Well done on improving your attendance and behaviour!

Barnhill Community School is a good school and the sixth form is satisfactory. Most of you enjoy your lessons, make good progress and achieve broadly average results at GCSE. In most lessons we observed well-planned tasks and activities, but in some lessons, planning was not clear enough to help you to make the progress of which you are capable and teachers were not always checking your learning. However, the school is providing those of you who need it, especially in Year 11, with good subject support outside lessons. Stimulating extra-curricular and leadership opportunities encourage you to develop as responsible citizens and you receive good guidance on your next steps. Some of you in the sixth form told us that you value the greatly improved monitoring of your academic progress and virtually all of you go on to training, university or jobs when you leave.

We have asked the school's senior leaders to:

- further improve your GCSE and A-level results in all subjects, but especially in English, by giving you more detailed feedback on your work and ensuring that teachers plan suitably challenging activities for you
- monitor your progress in lessons and the marking of your work more closely to ensure that no-one underachieves in examinations and assessments
- involve your parents and carers more in your learning so that they can support you in your studies and where necessary, help you improve your behaviour.

We wish you all the very best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Meena Wood  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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