

Bishop Douglass School

Hamilton Road, Finchley, London, N20SQ

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection because of the determined drive of the outstanding headteacher, other leaders and the governors, to make sure that students achieve very well.
- From low starting points students make good and sometimes exceptional progress so that they achieve very well in their GCSEs, including in English and in mathematics.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects. Teaching is good and continually improving because teachers are committed to working together to provide the best possible learning for their students.
- The school is calm and orderly. Students enjoy coming to school, and show high levels of courtesy and respect to each other and to their teachers.
- The curriculum is innovative and flexible so that it meets the needs of students exceptionally well and promotes their outstanding social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- The sixth form is good. Students make consistently good and sometimes exceptional progress because they benefit from high-quality teaching and a relevant curriculum.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More able students are not always provided with enough challenge in lessons so that they do not consistently make as much progress as they could.
- Although students behave well and have positive attitudes to learning not all of them take control of their own learning with enthusiasm and excitement.
- Teaching does not always provide opportunities for students to work independently in order to deepen their understanding and knowledge.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 39 part lessons, 12 jointly with school staff.
- They observed behaviour around the school and in the playground, visited the library and scrutinised students' work.
- They held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, groups of staff, four members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Discussions took place with groups of students, both formally and informally.
- The inspection team scrutinised school documents, including the school's own evaluation of how it is doing, the school development plan, the school's teaching and learning observations and statistical information about students' achievement, attendance and exclusions.
- Inspectors considered 28 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) along with five written questionnaires handed in to the school by parents during the inspection and a summary of the results of a questionnaire distributed to parents by the school. They analysed 58 completed staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Ann Short, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kewal Goel	Additional Inspector
Victor Chaffey	Additional Inspector
Najoud Ensaff	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This Roman Catholic school is smaller than the average secondary school.
- Students join the sixth form from other schools so that it is large for the size of the school.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after students and those from armed service families) is much higher than average. Currently in the school there are no students from service families and four looked after students.
- A number of Year 7 students are eligible for catch-up funding which is for students who did not attain level 4 in English or mathematics at the end of primary school.
- The school is ethnically very diverse. Most of the students come from minority ethnic groups. The largest groups are from any other White and African backgrounds.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is very high.
- The proportion of students who join the school at other than normal times is well above average.
- The proportions of disabled students and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action are much higher than average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The largest proportions of these students have behavioural, emotional or social difficulties or moderate learning difficulties.
- At present, one student attends a course at Enfield College for part of the week.
- The headteacher is a local leader of education (LLE). She is currently leading on a national programme to close gaps in achievement.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching outstanding in every lesson by ensuring that all teachers plan work which:
 - fully challenges all students including those who learn more quickly than others
 - provides opportunities for students to take control of their own learning and learn independently
 - motivates and inspires students through a range of activities including discussion and group based activities so that they develop a love of learning and a desire to deepen their knowledge and understanding.

- Accelerate the progress of higher ability students so that more achieve the highest grades.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of students join the school with below average attainment. They make good and often very good progress throughout their time in school, including in English and in mathematics.
- The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE A*-C grades including English and mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection. In 2012 it was close to the national average and results rose again slightly in 2013.
- Many students join the school at other than normal times; students who complete Year 10 and 11 in the school make exceptional progress in their GCSEs.
- Overall, the proportions of students making the expected progress in English and in mathematics are well above the national averages and the proportions making more than expected progress are also high in both subjects. Higher ability students, however, make less good progress compared to national averages for this group.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress and exceptional progress in some subjects, for example in BTEC courses and in Advanced level courses in physics, chemistry, biology and further mathematics
- Students who are eligible for pupil premium funding make very good progress from their starting points. In 2012 the gap in GCSE grades for these students and others in the school was very small and in English and mathematics these students did better than other students. School information about 2013 achievement indicates that the gap in the percentage achieving five or more GCSE A*-C grades including English and mathematics has narrowed further.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported through small group teaching and a curriculum which is well matched to their individual needs. Students who speak English as an additional language also make good progress because of helpful and well planned programmes and careful checking of their progress.
- A small group of White British students do not make as rapid progress as their classmates.
- The school encourages students to read widely, both fiction and non-fiction. They develop good skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- The Year 7 catch-up premium is used effectively to help students to acquire the skills they need to be successful. Students benefit from small group teaching which is closely matched to their needs.
- Some students are entered early for GCSE examinations in English and in mathematics. Students who are ready to take the examinations are carefully selected and if they do not achieve as well as they could are given another chance to achieve their goals.
- The very few students who take courses with an external provider achieve well and the school monitors their progress carefully.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection because teachers have been well supported to develop their skills. Teaching is good or better in the majority of lessons.
- During the inspection more outstanding teaching was seen in the sixth form than in the rest of the school.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and plan lessons carefully, using a variety of teaching methods and resources which help students to learn well. In examination classes there is a good focus on the requirements of the examinations so that students are very

clear what they have to learn. In some lessons teachers do not provide enough challenge for the most able students so that they do not always make the progress they could.

- Relationships between students and between students and teachers are very good so that classrooms have a positive atmosphere in which students work well together and can share their learning with each other. In many lessons students are motivated by the enthusiasm of their teachers but in some they are not as actively involved as they could be.
- Many teachers use questioning well to check knowledge and understanding and review learning during lessons and adapt their planning if necessary.
- Some examples of rigorous and helpful marking which give students clear guidance about how to improve were seen but this is not consistent in all subjects. Students are not always given opportunities to respond to written comments. When asked to assess their own and each others' work they do this carefully and sensibly.
- Homework is purposeful and parents receive clear guidance about how it contributes to learning.
- Teachers plan many additional activities and support programmes to help students to make very good progress.
- In some lessons where teaching is outstanding students are given opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and deepen their thinking. For example in a Year 13 English lesson students could use a range of well-rehearsed strategies to analyse a poem. In a Year 10 technology lesson students asked searching questions in order to develop their product designs. However, in a few other lessons, opportunities are missed to challenge students to further develop their ideas and extend their knowledge through independent learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students behave well in lessons and around the school. They have positive attitudes to learning so that they make good progress and teachers waste very little time managing behaviour. Students are proud of their school and are polite and respectful to each other, to staff and to adults.
- In a few lessons some students, while they behave well and follow instructions do not take as active a part in their own learning as they could.
- Behaviour has improved because of the careful work done by the school to support students who have difficulties so that they are able to succeed. As a result, the number of fixed-term exclusions has been reduced.
- Students are very clear about how the school expects them to behave. They report that behaviour in school is usually good and the school behaviour policy is applied fairly and consistently. Parents and staff all agree that behaviour is well managed.
- Students feel very safe in school and report that bullying of any sort is very rare. They say that if it happens it is dealt with quickly and effectively. They are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example when travelling and using the internet.
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance which is now above average. There are strong systems in place to ensure that this continues. Students enjoy coming to school and arrive at their lessons on time.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is an outstanding and inspirational leader with a clear and purposeful vision to keep improving the achievement of all of the students so that they have the best possible chances in the next stages of their lives. She is ably supported by other strong leaders and governors who share her ambition. Staff and parents agree that the school is very well led.
- Leaders and managers at all levels have a collaborative approach to improving teaching

which combines the sharing of ideas and good practice with rigorous monitoring and a determined focus on improving students' progress.

- Teachers' professional development is matched to their individual needs and their progression up the salary scale is linked to their success in raising students' achievement through good or better teaching. Leadership at all levels has been strengthened by participation in professional development programmes and leaders with particular responsibility explain that clear written guidance ensures consistency across the school.
- The school has very effective systems for checking students' progress in all year groups. All staff have a responsibility to take action quickly when students fall behind; they provide additional, sharply focused support when this is necessary. This makes a strong contribution to the good and sometimes outstanding progress students make.
- The school promotes equal opportunities for all students and introduces well-planned strategies to support any groups of students who are doing less well than they could. Staff are proud to work at the school. They create a learning environment where everyone is respected and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the work of the school work and have clearly identified the areas for further improvement. Decisive action and consistently applied procedures have resulted in continued improvements since the last inspection in achievement, quality of teaching, behaviour and attendance.
- The curriculum is broad, and balanced throughout the school. It has been designed to be flexible and inclusive so that each student can enjoy their learning and achieve well. An innovative approach allows students some choice from the start of Year 9 so that there are mixed-age groups in some option subjects. There is a wide range of vocational and academic choices both in the main school and in the sixth form. The sixth form offer provides opportunities for students who are not yet ready for advanced level courses to continue their studies.
- There are many additional activities on offer beyond the school day, including extra classes on Saturdays and in the holidays, residential trips and visits, and a good variety of sports, musical, academic and cultural clubs and activities at lunch times and after school. The school's promotion of students' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is outstanding. This is furthered by the vision and ethos shared through the curriculum, in assemblies and on prominent wall displays.
- Because the curriculum is so inclusive only a tiny number attend an alternative education provider. These students achieve well because of good communications and careful monitoring.
- Students are benefiting from a recent, stronger, and successful focus on developing students' reading, writing and communication skills across different subjects and in a coherent way.
- The school works hard to engage parents in their children's learning by inviting them to many different consultation and information evenings as well as to celebrations of achievement. Imaginative approaches are used to try to engage the small numbers of parents who remain reluctant to come to the school. Attendance at parents' evenings is high and the vast majority of parents report that their children enjoy school and are well taught. One parent wrote 'I would recommend this school to every parent. It was the best choice I ever made for my daughter.'
- The school science specialism has contributed well to the school's improvement. Students can choose from a good range of science courses and the proportion of students taking the separate science subjects at GCSE is above average. Students make progress in science which is better than average both at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. Students participate in various challenges which contribute to their interest and enjoyment.
- The involvement of the local authority with this good school is light touch. The authority has confidence in the ability of the leadership to bring about further improvements.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are very committed to the vision that the school will always strive to provide the best possible educational experience for all of the students. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well. They understand how to use information about student achievement to judge how well the school is doing. They are given detailed information by the headteacher about the school's performance and about the quality of teaching and they ask challenging questions and hold school leaders fully to account. They oversee the tight links between appraisal targets for all staff and their salaries. They monitor the use and effectiveness of resources, including the funding allocated for students eligible for the pupil premium and ensure that statutory requirements are met. They review the impact of what they do and undertake training to improve their own effectiveness.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	113269
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	400515

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary Aided
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	869
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Christine Haugh
Headteacher	Ms Angela Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 October 2010
Telephone number	020 8444 5211
Fax number	020 8444 0416
Email address	schooladmin@bishopdouglass.barnet.sch.uk

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