

# Bromley Beacon Academy

Avalon Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9BD

## Inspection dates

16–17 January 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher is a modest but aspirational leader. He is very well supported by other senior leaders, including trustees and governors.
- Leaders are totally transparent about the impact of their work. As a result, everyone, including trustees and governors, knows the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.
- Staff morale is exceptionally high. The school works collaboratively with the schools across the trust, and with mainstream schools and the local authority.
- Good practice, including in the quality of teaching and safeguarding, is shared extensively across the trust.
- Pupils are kept safe. The supportive and strong relationships with pupils, families and outside agencies, protect pupils beyond the school.
- The achievement of pupils has improved year on year since the appointment of the executive headteacher and new staff. Pupils make strong progress across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics.
- The mental health and well-being of pupils are paramount. The school helps pupils to grow and flourish in their personal development. Pupils and students are kept safe.
- Pupils in all key stages are taught well. All groups of pupils make good progress throughout each key stage.
- However, the quality of feedback pupils receive is inconsistent. The most able pupils are not always stretched in their learning. Some younger pupils do not have the opportunity to extend their learning outside.
- Transition work prepares pupils and students well for the next stage of their education, employment or training. By the end of key stage 4, pupils achieve a good range of academic and vocational qualifications by the end of Year 11.
- Students in the post-16 provision continue to make the same good progress. The focus on developing students' independent and life skills is effective. Nonetheless, a small minority of older pupils and students do not always have sufficient choice in the subjects taught.
- The school enables pupils to behave appropriately most of the time. Pupils begin to develop self-control and resilience to manage situations successfully. However, younger pupils are not always encouraged to work on their own when they are able to do so.

## Full report

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

- Secure consistently outstanding teaching and learning, by ensuring that:
  - pupils' strengths and next steps in their learning are clearly pinpointed and explained to them
  - pupils are always given work that makes them think hard about their learning
  - pupils are encouraged to work on their own when they are confident to do so
  - younger pupils' learning is enriched through regular outdoor activities
  - all groups of older pupils and students have a wider choice of subjects to study that interest them.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The executive headteacher is a highly effective leader. His commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils is commendable. He and other leaders are completely focused on making sure that pupils get their lives, academically and personally, back on track, in school, at home and ultimately in society.
- He is very well supported by other senior leaders, including trustees and governors. All staff are inspired by his passion and drive to achieve the very best for pupils. As a result, outstanding teamwork at all levels and across the two sites is a key factor in the school's rapid improvement journey.
- The school benefits through the sharing of good practice throughout the trust and with local schools. Regular cross-school and trust meetings for teaching, literacy and numeracy, behaviour, safeguarding and leadership secure strong capacity for continual improvement.
- No stone is left unturned in senior leaders' pursuit of excellence. Senior and middle leaders are outstanding role models for staff. Leaders are very evaluative about the impact of their work. They take risks and encourage staff to do so to fine-tune their practice. Hence, sustained improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, personal development and behaviour are evident.
- Monitoring of the school's work is rigorous and tightly focused on raising the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Information is sharply analysed and used meticulously to plan for further improvements. Half-termly pupil progress meetings enable leaders to spot any underachievement, close gaps in learning and hold teachers fully to account for their work.
- Improving the quality of teaching is a vital process in the school's work. Staff benefit from whole-school and tailored professional development opportunities, including coaching and mentoring. Effective practice across the trust is used to promote strong teaching.
- Senior leaders are skilled in identifying additional talent in teaching and leadership. They nurture, support and train staff, so that all flourish professionally.
- The curriculum is personalised and responsive to almost all groups of learners' needs, abilities and interests. It promotes pupils' and students' academic, vocational and personal skills, understanding and knowledge, including in the arts and sport. Learners of all ages study a wide range of subjects. All pupils and students achieve nationally recognised qualifications. Older pupils undertake bespoke work experience and internships with local companies. However, a small minority of pupils confirmed to inspectors that they would like a wider choice of subjects to study.
- Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training, as well as being well prepared to contribute effectively to society in modern Britain.
- School leaders use additional funding, including pupil premium funding and Year 7 catch-up funding, effectively to maximise pupils' outcomes. Provision comprises one-to-one support academically, including literacy and numeracy interventions. Pupils access

therapeutic approaches such as counselling, drama and music, and speech and language support. The physical education and sport premium is used to increase the range of sporting activities, all of which promote pupils' physical and mental well-being very effectively.

## **Governance of the school**

- Trustees have an excellent understanding of the school's effectiveness and provide outstanding strategic direction to the school. Each trustee has responsibility and oversight of specific areas across the trust and the school.
- Some trustees are also governors. The local board of governors has responsibility for governance of the school. Its members are very well informed about the school's effectiveness. Senior leaders provide them with regular and comprehensive reports that clearly document the progress being made towards the school's priorities. Governors follow up the challenging questions they ask senior leaders, through focused monitoring visits to both sites. Governors know precisely how well leaders are meeting the school's priorities.
- Governors make sure that all funding is used prudently and wisely. Additional funding secures equality of opportunity. For example, they check that the pupil premium funding maximises disadvantaged pupils' academic and personal development. They carefully monitor the impact this has and know that there are no gaps between disadvantaged pupils' progress and that of their peers.
- Safeguarding arrangements are secure and well monitored by a named safeguarding trustee and governor. As a result, the governance of the school fulfils all its statutory responsibilities.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding policies are implemented consistently and effectively across both sites. Designated safeguarding leads and deputies, as well as the named safeguarding trustees and governor, ensure that all systems are well organised and monitored regularly.
- The school works closely with external agencies, including social care, the youth offending team and the police. All concerns are referred on, with follow-up multi-agency meetings to secure protection and support for parents and carers and their children.
- Staff know each pupil individually and quickly identify any issues pupils may have. Pupils know that staff listen to them and sort out their issues. Indeed, their confidence in staff's support extends to referring other pupils to them if they have concerns about their friends.
- Staff training is comprehensive. As a result, staff have an excellent understanding of the potential national and local dangers and challenges pupils may face. This includes gang and knife culture, extremism and radicalisation. Pupils are given good advice and guidance on how to avoid such dangers, through personal, social, health and economics (PSHE) lessons and from external agencies.

- Safeguarding of pupils who attend alternative providers is equally strong. As a result, pupils are kept safe when educated away from the school's two sites.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Strong relationships are a key aspect of the school. Staff know each pupil exceptionally well. High levels of respect and trust mean that pupils usually have positive attitudes to their learning. Good teaching secures well-motivated pupils who want to achieve their best.
- Teachers engage pupils well in their learning. They use a variety of resources effectively to support all ability groups. The Bromley site for older pupils and students is particularly well resourced. Younger pupils working at levels well below age-related expectations learn through well-structured, practical activities in class. However, the lack of outdoor resources means that pupils are not able to deepen their understanding fully.
- Those pupils who sometimes have difficulty concentrating are guided to focus on their work calmly and firmly. Teaching assistants are highly attuned to each pupil's needs and know when to support pupils or encourage pupils to take some time out to calm down.
- All teachers, including specialist staff, have good subject knowledge. They ensure that work usually builds systematically on what pupils know and can do.
- However, there are times when the most able pupils in all key stages are capable of even more. In mathematics, these pupils sometimes complete work that is too easy. Their learning is not moved on quickly enough. In some instances, pupils complete work and have no additional activities to promote their learning further, or to develop their independence. Teachers do not always ask pupils questions to make them think hard about their learning.
- Literacy, including reading skills, is promoted in lessons and across all subjects. Pupils are given time to talk about their progress with their teachers, encouraging them to become responsible for their own learning.
- Pupils are usually provided with effective guidance on what they have achieved in their writing and what they need to work on next. There are some outstanding examples of this, where teachers pinpoint precisely pupils' strengths and next steps. This helps pupils to assess their own progress, as well as encouraging independent skills. Nonetheless, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of guidance younger pupils are given to improve their work further.
- Pupils continue to follow personalised academic and vocational pathways when they transfer to the key stage 4 and key stage 5 site. Older pupils and students are well prepared for their next steps. All Year 11 and Year 13 pupils and students in 2018 transferred successfully to further education, training or employment.

## Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' mental health and the well-being of pupils and staff are at the centre of senior leaders' work. Pupils' individual needs are met exceptionally well. Staff have access to support when required.
- Senior leaders track the progress pupils make in their personal development. They review thoroughly the impact that strategies have in fostering pupils' mental health and welfare. Pupils benefit from a wide range of therapies, including psychological and speech and language therapies. This stabilises pupils emotionally when they start school. Pupils begin to thrive and develop in a safe and secure environment.
- Over time, pupils' anxiety levels diminish and their self-esteem increases. They begin to develop resilience and believe in their own capabilities. School information, including case studies, confirmed that pupils over time make outstanding progress in their personal development.
- The school's work with external agencies and parents provides an additional layer of support and guidance for families. Parents are fully informed about their child's progress academically and personally, through meetings and telephone calls. Home visits are also undertaken if required.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Respect and tolerance are evident in the strong relationships and are taught explicitly in assemblies and PSHE lessons. Pupils learn about different religions, faiths and cultures, through art projects and learning about different celebrations.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, as well as to identify and manage risks. These include e-safety, the risks of radicalisation, the dangers of drugs and gang affiliation, and relationships. Pupils feel safe and think that staff manage their behaviour fairly. Pupils say that there is little bullying and have confidence in adults to deal quickly with any concerns they may have.
- As pupils progress, a greater focus on fostering work and life skills enables pupils to become independent adults.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and wear their uniform with pride. They appreciate the help and support they receive from staff.
- Most pupils attend school regularly. The school has worked hard to raise the attendance rates on both sites, including for those pupils who do not attend school regularly. On-site welfare officers and pastoral leads work closely with the educational welfare officer, targeting those pupils who have poor attendance rates. Those pupils who do not attend school regularly are sometimes educated at home by a team of tutors. Pupils begin to re-engage in their learning. The school has striking examples of

how some pupils with a history of non-attendance now attend school regularly.

- Pupils benefit from a calm learning atmosphere, where routines and rules are understood by everyone. They respond well to the high expectations of staff. Pupils are helped to understand the consequences of their behaviour and how these affect themselves and others. Good effort and behaviour are recognised and rewarded constantly, reinforcing positive attitudes and purposeful learning.
- The expertise of staff at the primary school is having a major impact on improving the behaviour of pupils with complex emotional and learning difficulties on the Orpington site.
- Behaviour and pastoral leaders effectively provide support and guidance for staff. As a result, staff feel well supported and manage difficult and challenging behaviours well.
- Staff are very alert to situations that may result in inappropriate behaviour. They are skilled in de-escalation, diversion or encouraging pupils to take time out to calm down.
- Increasingly, pupils can manage their own behaviour or choose to leave a lesson when they feel over-anxious.
- The introduction of inclusion rooms has reduced the number of fixed-terms exclusions and ensures that pupils are kept safe. Similarly, the number of physical interventions has dropped significantly over time.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils join the school at different times throughout the year. Many pupils have not enjoyed school in the past. As a result, their previous attendance rates were low, or they did not attend school for a significant period of time. Consequently, pupils have considerable gaps in their learning.
- Leaders undertake a comprehensive range of assessments to gauge accurately pupils' starting points. School information demonstrates that all pupils are working well below age-related expectations.
- Pupils are set realistic targets based on initial assessments and prior achievement information. This enables pupils to begin to catch up and achieve what they are capable of. Most pupils are on track to meet these targets in a wide range of subjects. The gap between pupils' current levels of attainment and age-related expectations closes the longer pupils attend the school.
- Over time, this represents at least good progress for all groups of pupils in all key stages and in a range of subjects. Case studies confirm that pupils are currently making good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- The school's achievement information demonstrates that disadvantaged pupils achieved as well and, in some instances, better than their peers. However, in some instances, the most able pupils could make even more progress.
- The school rightly focuses on promoting pupils' literacy and mathematical skills. Reading and writing skills are taught daily and are given a high priority. Various strategies and resources motivate pupils to want to read for pleasure and information.
- Pupils' reading and writing skills are promoted through the effective teaching of

phonics. Older pupils with gaps in their phonic understanding and younger pupils receive regular lessons to boost their ability to read and spell unfamiliar words.

- In key stage 3, pupils are well supported in choosing academic and vocational subjects and qualification routes suited to meet their individual abilities, needs and aspirations. This is linked to an effective careers guidance and advice programmes from key stage 2 onwards. The careers lead works closely with external agencies to provide well-tailored support.
- In 2018, all pupils achieved a range of nationally recognised qualifications by the end of key stages 4 and 5, including level 1 functional skills and/or a GCSE qualification in mathematics and English. Senior leaders review this regularly and adopt more suitable courses and qualifications for individual pupils if required. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training.
- School information verifies that outcomes are improving year on year in all key stages.

### **16 to 19 study programmes**

**Good**

- Senior leaders know the strengths of the sixth form, as well as areas that require further focus. Incisive monitoring and evaluation inform plans for improvement very well.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. The quality of provision in this key stage builds effectively on students' prior learning. There is a strong focus on preparing students for the world of work through additional qualifications, pathways and internships.
- Teaching is characterised by positive relationships. Teachers are very effective at spotting exactly what individual students understand and can do and plan for their next steps in learning accordingly. Where learning is strongest, teachers capture the interest of students, such as in music, cookery, motor mechanics and construction. Students make great gains in their learning in these areas.
- Students continue to make good progress academically. In 2018, all students left with qualifications and accreditation matching their needs, interests and aspirations.
- Students behave responsibly and develop mature attitudes to their work. They are excellent role models for younger pupils. Students support them in their learning, which in turn boosts their confidence enormously. They make outstanding progress in their personal development.
- Students know the importance of keeping themselves healthy and know how to stay safe, including when online. Key stage 5 students are equally well prepared for the next stages in their education, employment or training. Leaders liaise with other providers and agencies to secure bespoke work experience that is well suited to their needs, interests and abilities.

## School details

Unique reference number	141989
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10058824

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

Type of school	Special school
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	28
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mark Burnett
Executive Headteacher	Neil Miller
Telephone number	01689 821205
Website	<a href="http://bromleybeaconacademy.org.uk">http://bromleybeaconacademy.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@bromleybeaconacademy.org.uk">office@bromleybeaconacademy.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Bromley Beacon Academy is part of the Bromley hub of four schools, including a primary and secondary pupil referral unit (PRU). The school is also part of the London South East Academies Trust.
- Governance of Bromley Beacon Academy is delegated to a local governing body, which is held to account by a board of trustees. Several governors are also trustees.
- The school opened in February 2016. There are two sites. The Orpington site provides an education for pupils in key stages 2 and 3, aged from seven to 14. The Bromley site provides an education for pupils in key stages 4 and 5 (Years 9 to 13).

- All pupils attending the two sites have an education, health and care plan. All pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school is led by an executive headteacher, who is supported by two heads of school, one on each site.
- All pupils are on long-term placements on a full-time basis.
- Four out of five pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding on both sites. The school receives pupil premium funding for these pupils and Year 7 catch-up funding.
- A small minority of pupils receive their education off site, on either a full-time or part-time basis. Provision consists of two of the PRUs within the Bromley Trust, Hayes and Midfield, and an external provider, The Archway.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across all key stages and a range of subjects. All observations were undertaken jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils to obtain their views. Inspectors met with two parents. There were insufficient responses to Parent View, Ofsted's questionnaire for parents. Inspectors reviewed 48 responses to the staff survey and two responses to the pupil survey.
- Meetings were held with a range of senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also met with a group of trustees, including the chief executive officer and the chair of the local governing body, as well as an education adviser to the trust board. Telephone conversations were held with a national leader of education and the local authority's head of special educational needs.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of pupils' work and examined school policies, as well as a range of documentation relating to the school's self-evaluation, development plans, pupils' achievement and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Mary Hinds, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gary Pocock

Ofsted Inspector

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