



Bishop Douglass School Finchley

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101365
LEA Barnet LEA
Inspection number 283029
Inspection dates 30 November 2005 to 1 December 2005
Reporting inspector Caroline Bolton HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Hamilton Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Finchley
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		London N2 0SQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8444 5211
Number on roll	741	Fax number	020 8444 0416
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Peter Leatherland
Date of previous inspection	10 November 2003	Headteacher	Miss Angela Murphy

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	30 November 2005 - 1 December 2005	283029

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

When Bishop Douglass School was inspected in November 2003, it was judged to require special measures. The inspection of November 2005 took place within the monitoring programme by Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools in special measures. It is a relatively small school. Pupils come from homes spread across a wide area of north London. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free schools meals is above average and rising, while the percentage who have special educational needs is broadly average. The percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is not English is above the national average. Pupils enter the school with standards which are below the average. The proportions who come from minority ethnic backgrounds are relatively high. Boys significantly outnumber girls on the school roll. In recent years, the school has found difficulty in recruiting sufficient numbers of suitably qualified teachers but the staffing position is now much more stable.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Bishop Douglass School has improved significantly since the time of its last inspection and now proves a satisfactory standard of education. The leadership and management of the school are good; the headteacher provides clear direction for the school and the senior managers are effective in bringing about improvements. The managers at each level know the school well and evaluate its performance robustly and on the basis of secure evidence. Inspectors agree with their overall evaluations of the school's performance and progress. The staff work with a good range of partners to raise achievement and the quality of the provision. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and have improved a good deal over the last year. There is not enough good and outstanding provision. The pupils make generally secure progress in lessons and their personal development and behaviour are also much better than at the time of the last full inspection. Behaviour was at least satisfactory in all lessons and in most, it was good; however, the pupils are still too boisterous in their movement around the school. The school provides a good level of care and support for the pupils. Standards are below the average and the school's own data show that there was underachievement among the group of pupils who took the GCSE in 2005. Progress in lessons is now satisfactory overall because the teaching has improved. However, there is uneven progress among the more able, those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language. The curriculum is satisfactory overall but the school has rightly identified the need for a wider choice of vocational and work-related courses for pupils in the 14-19 age range. There has been a good level of improvement on the issues of concern identified at the last inspection in November 2003. The school is well led and has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form are satisfactory. The students' success rate at Advanced and Advanced Supplementary levels has been limited in recent years, in part because too many were taking courses that were inadequately matched to their needs. Since September 2005, however, almost all of the students have followed programmes closely matched to their prior attainment because of improved guidance in Year 11. Students, including those with weak literacy and numeracy skills or low GCSE results, are making satisfactory progress on their courses. While teaching is satisfactory overall, there are inconsistencies in its quality which sometimes lead to more able students being set insufficiently challenging work. The students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. They are well cared for and given good opportunities to take responsibility. Some, for example, help younger pupils with their work and, during the inspection, those applying for university received well-timed, highly pertinent advice from an undergraduate who studied in the sixth form last year. The leadership and management of the sixth form are

satisfactory. There is a clear view of what needs to be done to improve standards. A broader curriculum has been introduced and appropriate actions are being taken to extend the range of vocational options and improve the provision for students with weak literacy skills.

What the school should do to improve further

* Raise achievement by ensuring that a higher proportion of the teaching is good or better.* Continue to development the curriculum for pupils aged 14-19, to establish clear vocational pathways and provision to meet the full range of the pupils' needs and aspirations* Ensure that provision enables the highest attaining pupils, those for whom English is an additional language and those who have special educational needs to achieve consistently and well* Improve the pupils' behaviour outside lessons and around the site.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In 2004, standards reached in the GCSE examinations were below average. The progress of the Year 11 pupils concerned had also been significantly below the average during their time in the school. In 2005, the proportion of five or more higher grade passes fell slightly, but the overall A*-G pass rate rose. The school's own data show that the pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science was significantly better than their progress across the full range of subjects. Results in mathematics in particular showed a marked improvement in 2005. The school nevertheless recognises that there was a significant level of underachievement amongst this year group of pupils, largely because of the weak performance in some subjects. The achievement of girls was much better than that of boys. At Key Stage 3, the position in 2004 was similar to that in Key Stage 4 in that the progress from their entry to the school of the pupils who took the national tests in 2004 had been significantly below average. In 2005, results improved at Key Stage 3. However, the pupils' performance was better in English than in mathematics and science. The girls' achievement was again better than that of boys and some of the more able did not reach the standards of which they were capable. There was underperformance in 2005 among students taking post-16 examinations, largely because of the legacy of former sixth form provision, in which courses were not well matched to the needs of all students. There have been several changes to the staffing of the school since the beginning of the present academic year and the progress made by pupils in lessons has improved. It is now satisfactory overall. Pupils enter the school with standards below the average and most now make satisfactory progress over time.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They respond thoughtfully to their experiences in lessons, for example in listening to music or reflecting on works of art. Their understanding of right and wrong is good. They have

a well developed understanding of their responsibilities as members of the school and the wider community. They understand and respect the cultural diversity they see around them. Overall, the pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Behaviour in all lessons seen was at least satisfactory and in the majority of cases, it was good, enabling pupils to concentrate on their learning. Pupils generally show courtesy and consideration to adults. However, when moving in large numbers around the school, many lack the self-control to behave in an orderly manner and they are noisy and push their way along. Whilst their behaviour is not aggressive or ill-natured, it does on occasions constitute a safety hazard. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, although with variations between year groups. There are too many pupils who are late to school. There is a good understanding of how to eat healthily and adopt a healthy lifestyle. The pupils have responded very positively to the new menus in the canteen and to the enhanced facilities and opportunities to take part in a wide range of sport and exercise. They show satisfactory understanding of how to work safely and how to protect themselves from danger. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they are given to contribute to the school and the local community; they contribute well and work hard. Their development of skills which they will use in the workplace and their understanding of the world of work are satisfactory

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly over the last year. Inspectors agree with the school's view that it is satisfactory overall, with some that is good. Rigorous monitoring of lessons and carefully targeted support for teachers are increasing the amount of good and very good teaching, although there is still not enough. Thorough planning is a strong feature of most lessons, with clear learning objectives for different groups of pupils which enable them to develop their knowledge and skills appropriately. However, this good practice is not consistent and the progress of specific groups of pupils is uneven. These include more able pupils, those whose first language is not English and those who have learning difficulties. Usually, the electronic whiteboards are used effectively to motivate and engage pupils. In the main, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, even when it is challenging, because they apply the school's behaviour policy consistently. Questioning techniques are used effectively to assess the pupils' learning. The staff mark work regularly, but generally include too little guidance to enable the pupils to improve their performance. As a result, too few pupils, particularly the more able, are clear about what they need to do to meet their learning targets. The school makes good use of assessment information and the systems for analysing data are well developed. Class teachers and subject leaders have access to detailed information about their pupils and the use of assessment in planning to meet the pupils' differing needs is generally developing. Senior staff and subject leaders analyse the results of external tests and examinations in detail, enabling them to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the provision and to take appropriate action to improve the pupils' progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum in key stages 3 and 4 is satisfactory and there is appropriate curricular provision for pupils who have special educational needs. Information and communications technology (ICT) is taught as a subject in its own right but the school is aware that the use of ICT across the curriculum is in need of further development. Steps have been taken to broaden the curriculum for the pupils in the 14-19 age group for whom traditional academic programmes are unsuitable. Further development is planned but the work-related learning programme remains limited. The range of activities available beyond the teaching day is well attended and appreciated by the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good, because there are clear links between the academic mentoring of the pupils and the support they are given in their personal development. A good level of guidance is given to pupils who are in danger of under-achieving or whose attitudes are limiting their progress. Pupils whose behaviour has resulted in their being excluded from school are given well-planned support on their return. The strenuous efforts which have been made to emphasise to pupils the importance of regular attendance have been successful. The school makes considerable efforts to meet the needs of the recently increased numbers of pupils from abroad, but is hampered in its work by having no teacher with specific responsibilities in this area. Most teachers have a good understanding of the standards and needs of pupils who have learning difficulties.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 3

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides clear direction and the senior leadership team has shown itself to be effective in bringing about beneficial change. Pupils report favourably on the ways in which the climate for learning has improved in recent time. The senior staff know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and evaluate its performance rigorously and on the basis of sound evidence. The school's priorities for development are well understood by the staff. Lines of accountability are clearly drawn so that subject leaders and other teachers assume responsibility for the achievement and progress of their pupils. The quality of subject leadership has improved significantly, particularly in terms of the skills of the middle managers in evaluating work in their areas and in taking action to remedy weaknesses where they are identified. The governing body has found some difficulty in recruiting new members but governors are well informed and the records of their meetings show that they are conscientious in monitoring the work of the school and holding it to

account for the pupils' achievement and progress. The school works with a good range of external partners to improve the quality of the provision. These include the local college of further education, two other secondary schools and the London Challenge initiative, through which a group of Year 11 pupils is targeted for specific support to raise their standards at GCSE level. There are effective links with the main primary schools from which the school draws its Year 7 intake. The school has a budget deficit but a sensible recovery plan has been agreed and its implementation is carefully monitored; it is on course to enable the school to emerge with a financial surplus in the academic year 2007-8. The school's capacity to improve is good; this is evident from the significant rise in the quality of the teaching and learning since the last full inspection and in the much more positive attitudes of the pupils.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

After our visit to inspect your school, we should like to tell you of our findings and to thank you for contributing to the inspection by talking to us about your work and your life in school.

Many of you told us that the school is much better than it was in the past and that you feel safer because behaviour has improved. We agree with you and we saw positive attitudes to learning in most of the lessons we visited. You were very courteous in greeting us and in helping us to find our way around the site. However, you are often still too boisterous on corridors and staircases; some of you need to show more self-control. Your school is well led and managed by the senior staff and the governors. The teaching and learning have improved a great deal in the last two years and are now satisfactory, although more needs to be good. Your progress is also satisfactory overall, although sometimes the most able pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language could do better if their work were more closely matched to their needs. Standards in GCSE are below the average for the country as a whole. The curriculum you follow is sound and the staff have worked hard to provide more courses relevant to the world of work. More could still be done to extend these opportunities for those of you in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form.

We have asked the senior staff to continue to improve the school by dealing with the areas which we believe still need to be changed for the better. We are confident that they will do this because we know that a great deal has already been achieved.