

Bredinghurst School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100874
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	354907
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Jo Curd

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Lyons
Headteacher	Andrew Ramsey
Date of previous school inspection	3 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. Eight lessons were observed, taught by seven different teachers, and meetings were held with parents and carers, students, governors and staff. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at reports and records, including the students' books and the school improvement plan. She analysed 19 questionnaires from students, 18 from staff and 10 from parents and carers.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at the following.

- How high are levels of attainment in the context of students' significant special educational needs and/or disabilities, and are they all making enough progress throughout the school?
- How well does the quality of teaching and the curriculum across the school help all groups of students to make consistent progress?
- How effectively are leaders and managers at all levels contributing to school improvement?

Information about the school

All the students have a statement of special educational needs for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The vast majority also have further special educational needs and/or disabilities including dyslexia, attention deficit disorders, autistic spectrum disorders and a variety of medical issues. They come from a very wide geographical area. Over half the students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A small proportion speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Student mobility is higher than the national average because many students start after the beginning of Year 7 and several have time in various care settings and young offenders institutions. The school closed its residential provision in 2008. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have both been appointed very recently.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

This is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. It has undergone several significant changes in recent years including changes in headship, senior leadership, staffing and organisation. Recently appointed leaders are providing new drive and direction and the school is well placed to become even more stable and effective. Progress has improved over recent years because, despite some continuing inconsistencies, teaching and the curriculum are increasingly appropriate for all students. Nearly all of the students speak positively about the school and really appreciate the high levels of support they are given. One said, 'The school is there for me, there are so many teachers to care for us,' and a parent said, 'It is a happy school ♦ A caring school with kind teachers.'

Although the current headteacher has only been in post for a few months his extremely clear understanding of the school, ambitious vision and strategic actions have already brought about positive developments. One recent improvement is the creation of a 'Student, Family, Community Professional' to bring together all parties working with each student. This is already improving the way individual students are supported, the coordination of professionals and the engagement of parents and carers. Another improvement is adjustments to the timetable and school day to provide more opportunities for extra-curricular activities. Students report that they appreciate these opportunities to develop their interests and skills such as sport and other leisure interests in the school's safe, supervised environment. A third improvement is the reorganisation of classes, which has increased school unity and equality of opportunity. Leaders are quickly and proactively developing partnerships with others including external consultants, specialist staff from other schools and a few very keen parents and carers to help them decide and forge a strong path for school improvement. Although a very few members of staff have found some of the recent changes challenging, the vast majority are supportive and eager to take on new roles, approaches and expectations. ♦

There are still, however, some inconsistencies in provision and outcomes. Although progress is improving, it varies between subjects and classes. The curriculum has some strengths, including a range of particularly relevant and practical courses. Nevertheless, it is not yet sufficiently cohesive to bring subjects together meaningfully, or sufficiently well adapted to consistently meet and build on all students' needs, capabilities or interests. Teaching has improved and in the best lessons planning is effective, clearly showing appropriate learning objectives, tasks are varied to meet students' different learning levels and styles, and students understand how they can improve their work. In other lessons aims are not always clear and planned activities not sufficiently well matched to individual pupils' ability levels and styles of learning. Staff support students well but occasionally do too much for them. This reduces their potential for developing independence and responsibility, and the contribution they make to the school and wider community.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Improvement since the last inspection is good. The track record of recent developments has been particularly strong. Nearly all the staff are supportive and insightful partnerships are contributing to accurate self-evaluation and clear direction for the future. These good features mean that the school's capacity for sustained improvement is also good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that by July 2011 the majority of lessons are good or better, by ensuring that: staff provide regular feedback in and between lessons so that students are clear about how they can improve their learning further.
 - learning intentions are always clear to all students
 - teachers make effective use of assessments to ensure that activities are appropriately challenging for all
 - staff provide regular feedback in and between lessons so that students are clear about how they can improve their learning further.
- Ensure that the curriculum brings subjects together in a meaningful way that builds progressively upon what students already understand, know and can do.
- Increase opportunities for students to take responsibility and contribute to the school and wider community. ♦♦

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Progress is satisfactory but improving. In 2010 many students made good progress from Key Stage 2 to the end of Key Stage 4, particularly in English and science. There were no significant differences in the progress of any groups and no significant underachievement. The vast majority of the students at the school have severe cognitive difficulties that limit their attainment. However, achievement has risen steadily over the past three years. In 2010 the grades in the very few GCSE examinations which a small number of students took, rose, and more students achieved accreditations in vocational courses such as sports studies and employment skills. The progress seen in the lessons observed was variable, but satisfactory overall for all groups of students. In a lesson where students were creating advertising campaigns for charities, progress was particularly good because support was effective, tasks very open-ended and questions varied to meet students' different needs. In an information and communication technology lesson, however, the same worksheet was given to students of very different ability. One student finished quickly and waited, while another struggled to read or understand the text.

Relationships among students and with staff are typically warm and supportive. Nearly all the students behave well in and out of lessons. They particularly enjoy participating in recreational activities such as computer games, table football and pool at break times and after school. They engage well and high levels of support ensure that relationships remain fairly stable even when emotions rise. Some behaviour is highly volatile, though. In order to maintain a generally calm, safe school environment about a fifth of the students are currently taught at home and some are excluded for short periods while appropriate care plans are put in place. Attendance levels for students receiving education from the school are satisfactory.

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Students feel safe because they know that adults are there to support them. They eat well and have lots of opportunities for sport and exercise at school. They do not always choose to continue such positive approaches out of school. Most students need relatively high levels of supervision and support, but staff sometimes do too much for them rather than encouraging and enabling them to do things for themselves. Opportunities to develop responsibility, independence for later life and learning, and to contribute to others are sometimes limited. ♦

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	*
Pupils' attainment ¹	
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

How effective is the provision?

High ratios of staff lead to good care and support in lessons, around the school and in the students' wider lives. This successfully underpins students' safety, enjoyment and good behaviour around the school. Links with the parents and carers of students whose circumstances make them most vulnerable are particularly frequent and increasingly valuable in students' overall development. The newly appointed 'student, family, community liaison worker' is extremely astute, sensitive and supportive of all. Effective partnerships with others such as the art therapist, police, other schools, colleges and social workers also contribute well to increasingly positive outcomes for all.

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The curriculum is particularly relevant in Key Stage 4, where students undertake vocational courses that help to prepare them for later life and employment. Students find relatively new lessons in 'learning to learn' at Key Stage 3 interesting and relevant. Those in Year 8 enjoyed learning about and discussing different newspapers during the inspection. This successfully helped them to develop their literacy, speaking and listening skills, learn about current events and extend interests and experiences for the future. Information and communication technology is often used well to support learning. But, the curriculum is not always sufficiently well adapted to meet each student's needs and does not always build on what they already know or can do. Planned links between subjects to consolidate key skills such as literacy and numeracy are at a relatively early stage of development. Schemes of work for some subjects are embryonic, leading to a lack of clarity of learning aims within and between lessons.

Teaching quality varies considerably between lessons. Sometimes they are carefully planned and well prepared, with clear aims for learning, varied tasks that suit the learning levels and styles of all the students, and effective use of all available support staff. Progress and behaviour are usually good in these lessons. Learning objectives are not always clear and work is not always sufficiently well matched to students' needs because teachers do not make sufficient use of their knowledge of students' learning levels and styles or have sufficiently clear aims for how learning should progress. ♦

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Effective leaders and managers, ambitious for all the students, are successfully raising progress and improving outcomes for all groups. The headteacher has already improved the way resources, such as staff, are organised and deployed throughout the school. Some changes have been difficult for a very few staff and students, but the vast majority have embraced them. All the students are valued and treated equally, but inconsistencies between classes mean that some students do not always make as much progress as they could. Leaders are now explicitly committed to an inclusive ♦ and ♦ therapeutic approach to caring for, supporting and guiding all students.

The governing body, particularly the highly experienced chair of governors, is supportive and challenging. It is particularly vigilant in ensuring that policies and procedures for safeguarding students' health and safety are effective and fully meet national requirements. These are thorough and robust, contributing well to the safety of all. Not all positions on the governing body are currently filled and it is not always effective in

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monitoring the school's work regularly and systematically. Effective partnerships with other agencies and individuals contribute well to effective care. Engagement with parents and carers is slowly improving through leaders' proactive and concerted efforts and increased opportunities for them to visit the school. The school has a satisfactory and increasingly positive impact on community cohesion. A community celebration and student performances this term proved to be popular opportunities for families and the local community to come together and experience positive features of the school. Links with a school in South America are helping the school to have beneficial effects elsewhere. ♦

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Although the proportion of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire was below average for a special school, the vast majority were positive about all the areas investigated, particularly those relating to safety, behaviour and their overall satisfaction with the school. The question which brought the least positive response was about whether their sons were developing healthy lifestyles. The inspector found that students had a good understanding of the need for a healthy diet, exercise and lifestyle and ate healthily at school. However, students reported that they did not always choose to follow this outside school. Parents and carers expressed a range of views and experiences during the inspection, reflecting the inconsistencies in provision and outcomes found across the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Breedinghurst School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 10 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 47 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	4	40	6	60	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	4	40	6	60	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	4	40	6	60	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	3	30	6	60	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	3	30	6	60	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	3	30	7	70	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	1	10	5	50	2	20	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	1	10	6	60	1	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	4	40	6	60	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	20	8	80	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	50	5	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	5	50	4	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	6	60	4	40	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be. ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



26 November 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Bredinghurst School, Peckham Rye SE15 3AZ

◆ I enjoyed visiting your school recently. Thank you for making me so welcome and for telling me so many things. I was very pleased to see that nearly all of you are calm, friendly and polite and that behaviour is satisfactory. I was glad to hear that most of you like Bredinghurst, especially because you find staff kind, helpful and very supportive. I know that you like opportunities for clubs and activities after school and the new monthly trips such as the one to Thorpe Park.

Your school is satisfactory, which means that it does some things well but also has some things to improve. The progress you make in your learning is improving greatly. This is largely because behaviour in and out of lessons is generally good, you are supported and cared for well and lessons are becoming more suitable for you all. I agree with those of you who said that the quality of teaching and what you learn vary a lot between classes. In some lessons work is suitable for you all, activities are interesting and you understand what lessons are covering. Sometimes the aims of a lesson are less clear and tasks are either too difficult or too easy for you. Staff help support you all well but sometimes do too much for some of you. You told me that you would like to help around the school more and to take more responsibility.

I have therefore asked the school's leaders to improve three things. These are to:

- improve teaching by making sure that the focus of lessons is clear, that activities are always suitably challenging for you all, and that you always know how to improve your work
- ensure that the curriculum brings learning from different subjects together in a meaningful way and builds on what you already know, understand and can do
- provide more opportunities for you to take responsibility and help yourselves and others in the school and in the wider world.

You can help by continuing to behave well, working hard in lessons and taking on all the opportunities that will be offered to you in and out of class sensibly and well.

Yours sincerely

Jo Curd Lead inspector

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