

# Burnside Secondary PRU

Burnside Avenue, London, E4 8YJ

**Inspection dates** 19–20 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b> <b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Students make good progress during their time at the school, particularly in English and mathematics. All are prepared well for the next stage of their education or reintegration into mainstream schools.
- Year 11 students follow a range of GCSE courses at both sites and achieve well.
- Those at Forest Pathway College, whose skills in the English language are weak on entry, make good progress. They follow a range of appropriate courses which enables them to move on to further education at the end of the year.
- Key Stage 3 and Year 10 students are reintegrated successfully into mainstream schools and other specialist or alternative provision.
- Teaching is good. Planning is effective, there is a good range of resources and work is matched well to students' abilities.
- Students' behaviour is good and their attitudes to learning are particularly positive in lessons. This is as a result of the school's high expectations and highly effective management of behaviour.
- Students say they feel safe at the school and appreciate the opportunities they are given to help them move on to the next stage of their education.
- The senior associate head and his senior staff have a strong focus on improving all aspects of the school's work in order to make sure that students move successfully to the next stage of their education.
- The management committee, led by an experienced chair, has quickly got to grips with the new regulations for this type of school introduced from 1 April 2013, and is implementing these changes effectively.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough focus, in all lessons, on improving students' key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
- Staff who support learning in lessons are not always effectively deployed.
- The management of improvement planning and the analysis and use of information on students' progress are not being drawn together to provide a full picture across the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, taught by 11 teachers, at both sites, seeing each class at least once. One lesson was also observed at Brooks Farm in Leyton. Five of the lessons were observed jointly with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with small groups of Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 students. Meetings were also held with the senior associate head, members of the senior leadership team, others with posts of responsibility, the chair of the management committee, the safeguarding officer who also sits on the management committee, and the executive head of the Waltham Forest Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Provision.
- The lead inspector took account of three responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own recent parental questionnaire, and 35 responses to the staff questionnaire. In addition, a small number of parents from Forest Pathway College phoned the inspection service provider to submit their views and a carer had a discussion with one of the team inspectors.
- The inspectors observed the school's practice and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's checks on how well it is doing and its improvement planning, information on students' progress, documents used by senior leaders to check the school's work, management committee documentation, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

James Bowden, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jackie Blount

Additional Inspector

Liz Bull

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school, was formed in September 2011 as a result of the amalgamation of the Burnside Key Stage 3 PRU, the local authority's Key Stage 4 PRU and the Forest Pathway College, which was part of the local authority's alternative provision for Year 11 students. Overseen by the executive head of the local authority's pupil referral units and alternative provision, the school is lead and managed by a senior associate headteacher.
- At the Burnside site, the school educates Key Stages 3 and 4 students who have been permanently excluded, or are at risk of permanent exclusion, from mainstream schools.
- At the Key Stage 3 section, students spend on average no more than two terms and are taught in mixed age ability groups prior to returning to mainstream or other special schools. At Key Stage 4, the focus in Year 10 is on re-integration to mainstream schools, whereas Year 11 students stay on roll and follow a range of GCSE and vocational courses.
- Forest Pathway College, some 2.5 miles away, is based at the Asian Centre in Walthamstow. It provides education to Year 11 students who are new to the local authority or have experienced significant disruptions to their education. These include new arrivals from overseas who have some use of English, students in the very early stages of learning English, students with very limited previous schooling, United Kingdom-born or overseas-born students who already speak English but have a pattern of disrupted education, students who need to improve their basic skills and students who for a variety of social or emotional reasons are not suited to a mainstream school.
- Currently, the large majority of students are boys. The majority of students are of White British or White European background. A small minority are from Black or minority ethnic groups, with a few of Pakistani background. A few are at school action plus of the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. The majority of students, particularly at Forest Pathway College, are from families where English is not the home language. Numbers on roll vary as students join the school at different times during the year.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and children from service families, is broadly in line with the national average. Currently, there are no children from service families. A few are in local authority care. Although there are a number of students eligible for support through pupil premium funding, the funding has only just been recently allocated.
- The school uses alternative off-site provision throughout the week for vocational courses at Brooks Farm in Leyton, the Beckton Business Park and the Floor Train in Walthamstow for Years 9 and 10 students.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning by making sure that:
  - staff have the expertise to support students more effectively to improve the important skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) in all lessons
  - all adults who support students in lessons are deployed effectively in order to ensure students make the best progress possible.
- Make sure the management of improvement planning and the analysis and use of students' progress data provide the full picture across the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- For almost all students, attainment on entry to the school is well below that of their classmates in mainstream schools. Many have been underachieving. This is as a result of missed schooling, often because of exclusion, negative experiences of mainstream schools and, for many students, difficulties in settling comfortably into school life. In addition, those new to the country often have a poor grasp of English, which makes learning difficult.
- Good quality support for all means there are no particular differences in the rates of progress made by those with different levels of learning difficulties, boys and girls, students from different ethnic backgrounds, or those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- In Key Stage 3, after careful checking of students' abilities, the school provides individual support plans and a mentoring programme, as well as keeping students up to date with their subjects. After a stay of up to 26 weeks, most are reintegrated successfully back to mainstream or other specialist provision. Similar provision also enables Year 10 students to follow the same routes.
- In Year 11, whatever time of the year they arrive, students attend full time until the end of the school year. At the end of the last school year, at the Burnside site, a small minority of students achieved A\* to C grade passes at GCSE and most students achieved a number of passes at grades A\* to D, including English and mathematics.
- At Forest Pathway College, in 2012, most students with higher level skills in English achieved GCSE passes at grade E or above and the majority of those students in the middle group achieved a similar proportion of passes. For some of those for whom English is an additional language, this represents remarkable achievement as they spend only one year, at the most, preparing for the examinations.
- In almost all lessons, progress is good. In a mathematics lesson, students with lower standards of English language made good progress in learning the various words used to describe the main mathematical 'signs' used in calculations. This prepared them well for their forthcoming examination. In a geography lesson, students improved their understanding of the effects of volcanic activity on populations.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching throughout the school promotes good learning for all. Teaching in English and mathematics is good and has improved since the unit opened. However, teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for students to practise the important skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT in all lessons.
- Notwithstanding this, a key strength is the high expectations of teachers and how well they plan tasks that are suitable for all abilities, as well as matching the requirements for the examination courses older students follow. This was particularly evident in an English lesson where students were reading text aloud and then identifying nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs before producing a piece of descriptive writing.
- Teachers know their students well and ensure they provide a good range of resources to make learning lively and interesting. In a starter activity in a religious education lesson, students reviewed beliefs such as 'an eye for an eye' and 'turning the other cheek' through a quiz looking at different religions. This resulted in them gaining a good grasp of the topic and learning well throughout the lesson.
- Teachers and other adults supporting in lessons generally work well together. Praise and encouragement are used appropriately, which keep students motivated throughout the lesson. This was particularly effective in an ICT lesson on three-dimensional design where the teacher gave an on-going review of students' work throughout.
- On occasions, however, support staff are not directed well enough to check that all students

understand what is expected of them and the progress they are making towards the learning outcomes set by teachers. As a result, progress for some students is, at times, not as rapid as it could be.

- Parents feel their children are taught well. Students say teaching is good because the range of teaching styles makes learning interesting.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Behaviour is good in and around the school because of consistent routines and the high expectations that are made abundantly clear to students. At the Burnside site, students are searched on arrival in line with the school's policy on zero tolerance to drugs and weapons, which is reinforced by weapons and drugs awareness programmes as part of the curriculum.
- Students also respond well to the school's zero tolerance to assaults on staff or other students, including verbal threats or threatening behaviour. Many who arrive with a record of poor behaviour settle quickly into the life of the school. There have been no recorded instances of racism, homophobia or bullying. There have been no permanent exclusions and the number of instances where students have not been allowed to go to the school for a short period of time because of poor behaviour is falling. Students are aware of different kinds of bullying and potential pitfalls of gang culture, saying that the school would deal with these issues if they occurred.
- Students rekindle their interest in education and want to do well, most Year 11 students intending to continue to further education or training when the leave. A student proudly told an inspector that he was looking forward to attending an interview the next day at a local college, adding, 'I want to make something better of my life!'
- Attendance for most at the Burnside site improves considerably at the unit. However, punctuality at the start of the day remains an issue for a few.
- Students say the school is a safe place to learn and that they get on well together, as well as with their teachers. One student commented, 'This is the best place. It is like a family, teachers talk to you and they listen!' Parents, too, comment on how well students are looked after and how their behaviour improves, which contributes well to students' all round strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attitudes to learning are generally very positive. In lessons, students work as pairs or small groups and listen to one another's comments and opinions. During an arts award course lesson, students responded keenly to the thought-provoking and probing questioning about their work.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The senior associate head and his senior staff are effective leaders and committed to sustained improvement. However, improvement planning and analysis and use of students' progress data are not yet managed coherently to provide a full picture across the whole PRU. Nevertheless, staff and members of the management committee are committed to helping students achieve as much as possible and recognise what needs to be improved for the school to become outstanding.
- Senior leaders regularly and carefully check the quality of teaching, setting teachers targets to improve the quality of their work. At the end of the year, recommendations will be made regarding additional responsibilities and training opportunities.
- All students, regardless of their circumstances or needs, make good progress in their learning and personal development. This is underpinned by the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all. There is no discrimination of any kind.
- The subjects and topics studied by students are similar to mainstream schools and tailored to their individual needs. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education or re-integration to other mainstream settings. A range of extra activities in the school and opportunities for off-site visits and alternative placements during the week contribute further to

students' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- The school's highly effective work with a broad range of other professionals and community organisations supports students' wide-ranging needs well. Parents appreciate the school's work, which is reflected in their positive responses to the school's questionnaires and their telephone comments to the inspection service provider.
- The local authority, fulfilling its statutory duties at that time, has supported the school well since the amalgamation through an appropriate and moderate level of support for this good provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The management committee's overall contribution to the governance of the school is very effective. It provides strong challenge to ensure continuing improvements in all aspects of the school's work. It is involved in monitoring the performance management of teaching staff, checking decisions about how they are working, any action that may be needed, training and pay. In addition, it makes sure safeguarding procedures are robust and highly effective. The experienced chair and committed members have come to grips quickly with the new regulations and responsibilities devolved from local authorities to schools of this type since 1 April 2013, despite the delegated budget having only recently been announced. In addition, it has only been very recently informed as to the amount of pupil premium funding allocated to the school. Planning as to how this can be used to best effect is under way.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137328
<b>Local authority</b>	Waltham Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	400296

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	128
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Senior Associate Head</b>	George Collins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	NA
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