

East Barnet School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136658
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	395328
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2012
Lead inspector	John Meinke

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,350
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Mottershead
Headteacher	Nick Christou
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 February 2007
School address	Chestnut Grove Barnet London EN4 8PU
Telephone number	020 8440 4162
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Meinke	Additional inspector
Elizabeth Bull	Additional inspector
Beverly Dobson	Additional inspector
Evelyn Riley	Additional inspector
Jalil Shaikh	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 45 lessons taught by 45 teachers, of which four were joint observations with members of the school's senior leadership team. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to a number of other lessons. They held meetings with three groups of students, members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle leaders. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, minutes of the governing body and school policies. They also analysed responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 267 parents and carers and others completed by students and staff.

Information about the school

East Barnet School is a larger than average-sized secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The students come from a wide range of socio-economic, ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. The majority of students are White British, with a minority from minority ethnic backgrounds including other White backgrounds and Black African and Indian heritage. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is higher than that found nationally. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average. The school has technology college status and is a Leadership Partner School and National Support School. It has gained various awards relating to its provision, including Investors in People Gold Award. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

The school moved into new, purpose-built facilities in March 2011 and converted to academy status on 1 April 2011.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is a good school. Behaviour is exemplary. Students' academic progress is good and in 2011 the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE passes at grade C or higher, including English and mathematics, was above average. It is not yet outstanding because teaching across the school is not yet strong enough to ensure that almost all students make rapid and sustained progress in most subjects and targets set for students' progress are not always as challenging as they could be.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students make excellent progress during Key Stage 5 and attainment is above the national average.
- The quality of teaching is good, with some outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. In a small minority of lessons the tasks set for students were not always well matched to meet the needs of all learners and marking and feedback did not clearly inform students about how to improve their learning.
- The behaviour and safety of students are outstanding. Exceptional care, underpinned by strong values, results in the very large majority of students being happy to come to school. Students are enthusiastic about their learning and show a great willingness to participate in lessons. Consistent approaches to behaviour management, along with rewards that are valued by students, ensure that the school is calm and orderly and that lessons proceed without interruption. The school provides outstanding opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher and his team, along with the governing body, have high ambitions for students, underpinned by the school's 'I want to learn' philosophy. School leaders have been effective in maintaining high standards of achievement in the sixth form and of behaviour and safety since the previous inspection. However, they have not yet raised the quality of teaching to outstanding. Leaders have a good awareness of the strengths and areas for development in teaching and there is a determined drive to further raise its quality to outstanding.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure outstanding achievement for all students and further increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - setting even more challenging targets for all students and systematically monitoring their progress towards reaching these targets
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information more effectively to plan tasks which closely meet the needs of individual students to enable them all to make even better progress
 - improving the quality of marking and feedback to students so that they are consistently as detailed, informative and developmental as the best in the school.

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Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students show great enthusiasm for learning. The 'I want to learn' philosophy of the school is very apparent in the great willingness that students have to engage with lesson activities. The best learning and progress happens when tasks set during lessons are expertly pitched to stretch and challenge students and they are given the opportunity to demonstrate their creativity. Students work together well and are extremely supportive of each other's learning. Outstanding achievement was observed in a number of sixth form lessons where the activities planned enabled students to lead their own learning, with this being skilfully facilitated by the teacher.

The attainment of students when they enter the school in Year 7 is in line with the national average. In 2011, the attainment of students in public examinations at the end of Key Stage 4 was in line with national averages and in some cases, including for the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE passes at grade C or higher including English and mathematics, above average. This reflects good progress overall by students. In 2011 the percentage of students making expected progress in English was below average. Decisive actions have been taken to address this. Lesson observations, scrutiny of students' work and the school's monitoring show that achievement and progress in English are rapidly improving. Students acquire literacy skills well across the curriculum and there is good support for students who enter the school with low prior attainment in English. Achievement and progress in mathematics are above average. Aspirational targets are set for most students, however, sometimes these are not sufficiently challenging. During the inspection a number of students indicated they felt they could achieve above the targets set for them and this was confirmed by inspectors' evidence from lesson observations and scrutiny of students' work. The very large majority of parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire felt that their child was making good progress at the school and inspectors agree.

Students in the sixth form make better progress than students in Key Stages 3 and 4 due to teachers' consistently high expectations and the support they receive to develop as independent learners. Students enter Key Stage 5 with attainment that is in line with the national average. They make excellent progress and achieve A-level results consistently above the national average.

Good provision and support have been put in place for disabled students and those with special educational needs. While the progress of these students has been uneven in the past, the school is increasingly ensuring gaps are closing rapidly and these students, on balance, make good progress. Some target setting for disabled students and those with special educational needs has been insufficiently challenging. Students who speak English as an additional language are also well supported and make good progress.

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Quality of teaching

Lesson observations, discussions with students and the quality of work in students' books indicate that the quality of teaching is good with examples of outstanding practice. The very large majority of parents and carers felt that their child was well taught and the inspectors agree. Approaches to teaching are often imaginative and engaging, with teachers using their good subject knowledge to plan engaging lessons related to real-life experiences. Very good relationships between students and adults lead to a climate of mutual respect and ensure a purposeful and productive atmosphere for learning. Learning objectives clearly explained by teachers enable students to understand what they will be learning and why. Questioning is used to challenge and extend learning and check students' understanding, reshaping tasks when necessary. Support from additional adults is appropriately focused on developing independence and makes a significant contribution to disabled students and those with special educational needs increasingly making good progress. The planned curriculum makes a good contribution to students' achievement and provides excellent opportunities for promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Regular homework extends and supports students' learning well.

In a history lesson, outstanding teaching was demonstrated as targeted questioning was used to challenge students and check their understanding, as well as provide feedback on how to improve their learning. In a Key Stage 5 photography lesson, students made excellent progress because of the teachers' very high expectations and the very good level of engagement of students in their work. Very precise feedback enabled students to achieve the highest standards of work.

In the small minority of lessons where teaching was satisfactory, planned activities were not well matched to the different ability levels of students in the class and some learners were not appropriately challenged. While examples of exemplary practice for marking and feedback were seen during the inspection, this is not consistent across the school, meaning that students were sometimes unclear about how to take the next steps in their learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

'My daughter has blossomed in this nurturing but demanding environment.' This comment reflects the very positive responses made by parents and carers in the inspection questionnaires. Almost all parents and carers indicated that their child felt safe at the school and students agreed. A number of parents and carers praised the high level of pastoral care provided by the school and commented on the good support given to individual students when in difficult circumstances. A small minority of parents and carers expressed anxiety about the impact on learning of poor behaviour. Discussions with students, observations during the inspection and the school's own behaviour records indicate that such behaviour is very rare and is dealt with effectively on the few occasions it happens. The excellent behaviour seen during the inspection is typical of that over time. Students demonstrate very high levels of

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courtesy and cooperation both in and out of lessons. They make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. They have excellent attitudes to learning and take ownership of their behaviour, supported by consistently applied systems for managing behaviour.

Incidences of bullying and racism are extremely rare and dealt with very effectively and the very large majority of parents and carers and students feel that bullying is dealt with very well if it does happen. Anti-bullying campaigns, including those led by the student body, have had impact and students are very aware of the different types of bullying and the steps that they can take to prevent it. Discussions with students indicated that they always felt that they could raise any concerns and be listened to. Older students, especially those in the sixth form, support younger students very well through peer mentoring. The school supports students to be aware of how to keep themselves and others safe. Very good systems promote attendance and punctuality and attendance is well above average.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and his team, along with the governing body, have a clear vision for the school to be a place where learning for all takes place both in and out of the classroom. This philosophy of 'learning without walls' has informed the planning and development of the school's new building and it is an exciting and dynamic environment that stimulates creativity. Detailed improvement plans, based on thorough self-evaluation, ensure that leaders are focused on improving achievement over time. The governing body knows the school well and is effective in challenging leaders appropriately to improve further. Assessment data are used to set school targets, track progress and improve outcomes, as well as to ensure that there is equality of access to provision and discrimination is tackled. Along with senior leaders, governors ensure that arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and procedures for child protection are exemplary. Given the sustained above average achievement and outstanding behaviour and safety, the capacity for further improvement is strong.

The school has developed a positive and cohesive programme for improving the quality of teaching. This includes regular observations, opportunities for professional development and a coaching programme. Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and there is a clear drive to further improve the quality of teaching. Performance management is robust and ensures accountability.

The rich and purposeful curriculum is broad and balanced and provides many opportunities for memorable, high quality learning. Review and evaluation ensure that it meets the needs of learners exceptionally well. An extensive extra-curricular programme provides outstanding opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. This includes a large number of opportunities for trips, visits from guest speakers and lecture programmes and entry to national and international competitions. Support for transition between key stages is very well supported and students are very well prepared for the next stages in their education. The school

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uses a range of strategies to engage with parents and carers, and parents' evenings and other events are very well attended.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.

27 April 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of East Barnet School, London, EN4 8PU



Thank you for the warm welcome that you gave to us when we inspected your school recently. On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for sharing your views of the school and how well it prepares you for the future. You were very positive about your school and you told us what a fantastic place it is. We agree and judge it to be a good school with some outstanding features.

Most of you told us that you learn a lot in lessons and we agree that teaching is good. The good progress that you make in lessons, along with the support you receive, means that GCSE results are above the national average. We were impressed by your enthusiasm for learning, supported by the school's 'I want to learn' philosophy. Students in the sixth form make especially good progress and we felt that the sixth form is outstanding.

Most of you told us that you feel very safe at school and that behaviour is very good and we agree; the behaviour and safety of pupils at the school are outstanding. A number of parents and carers commented on the very good pastoral care you receive and few expressed any concerns. You told us that bullying is very rare and dealt with very effectively if it does happen.

You were very positive about the school's new building and we agree that it provides you with an exciting and stimulating environment for learning. You also praised the extensive enrichment programme provided by the school and the plentiful opportunities it provides for your personal development.

We have suggested some improvements which will help to make all aspects of your school outstanding. Some of you told us that the targets set for you were not as challenging as you would like them to be, so we have asked the school to address this. We would like the quality of teaching to be raised to outstanding by making sure that the tasks set during lessons are better matched to what you need to learn.. We have also asked all teachers to make sure that marking is clear and detailed and the feedback tells you exactly how to take the next steps in your learning.

We wish you all at East Barnet School a happy and successful future.

Yours sincerely

John Meinke
Lead inspector

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