

Buile Hill Visual Arts College

Chaseley Road, Eccles Old Road, Salford, Greater Manchester M6 8RD

Inspection dates 23–24 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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 learn well and make good progress. Since the previous inspection attainment has risen at a rate much faster than the national average. Overall attainment is now average by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE grades at A* to C including English and mathematics has grown rapidly and securely and is now in line with the national average. The school prepares students well for future education, employment or training.
- Good teaching, with some that is outstanding, is at the heart of students' good and improving achievement. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Lessons have a sharp focus on making sure that students make good progress.
- Students behave well. They are respectful and most are well mannered and polite. The students feel very safe in school because of the good care, guidance and support they receive. Attendance has improved rapidly and is now average.
- Leadership and management at all levels, including the governing body, are driving the school strongly forward, and hence achievement is improving rapidly. At the centre of the school's improvement are rigorous procedures for checking on the quality of teaching. Leaders and managers use the results very effectively to improve its quality and its impact on students' learning and progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is yet outstanding.
- A higher proportion of students need to make more than expected progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 30 lessons. Three lesson observations were carried out jointly with members of the school’s senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders and managers; a group of teaching staff; a group of teaching assistants; groups of students; members of the governing body; and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation including: data relating to students’ progress and achievement; school records and policies relating to behaviour and safety; attendance data; minutes of meetings of the governing body; the school’s self-evaluation summary; and the development plan.
- Inspectors took account of the 44 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and of the school’s own summaries of parental questionnaires.

Inspection team

Stephen Wall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kathleen Harris

Additional Inspector

Ray Biglin

Additional Inspector

Lenford White

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Buile Hill is smaller than the average, inner-city secondary school.
- Most students are White British.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is very high.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is well above average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well above average.
- About 10 students attend part-time, off-site work experience programmes arranged by 'Works 4 U'.
- In 2012, the school exceeded the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection there have been many staffing changes, including the appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eliminate the small amount of teaching that requires improvement and increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - making sure that the work set in lessons is always hard enough, especially for more-able students
 - ensuring that teaching always involves students more actively in their own learning
 - making sure that the pace of all teaching is consistently fast and exciting
 - using questioning more effectively across different subjects to develop better students' speaking skills, requiring them to give longer and more thoughtful responses.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school with attainment that is generally below average.
- The school has lived up to the good capacity for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. Despite a dip in attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2011 caused by severe staffing disruption in key areas, over time attainment has risen rapidly and securely at a much faster rate than the national average. Attainment at the end of both key stages is now average. School data, confirmed by inspection evidence, show that the upward trend is set to continue unabated.
- The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE Grades A* to C including English and mathematics has risen very significantly and is now average because leaders and managers have been rigorous in tackling weaker teaching and setting higher expectations for what students can achieve.
- Attainment in subjects relating to the school's specialism in visual arts is consistently above average.
- The progress that students make has also accelerated at a fast pace. The proportion of students making expected progress given their starting points in the key subjects of English and mathematics is above the national figure. The proportion making more than expected progress has improved rapidly and compares favourably with the national figure. However, leaders and managers recognise that a higher proportion of more-able students should exceed expected levels of progress.
- The above average proportion of students who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress and achieve well because the school uses the funding astutely to support their learning and is rigorous in tracking their progress.
- Similarly, the well above average proportion of students with special educational needs make very good progress because the school supports their learning very effectively, for example through the specialist provision in the Learning Support Unit.
- On entry to Year 7, students who have difficulty with reading are given intensive support in phonics (letters and sounds) to develop their skills. Their progress is tracked meticulously. School data show that almost all make big strides in their reading by the end of Key Stage 3.
- Similarly, programmes to boost those who find mathematics difficult are paying dividends higher up the school as seen in the sharply rising GCSE results.
- Students apply their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics well across subjects. However, students' speaking skills are generally weaker and act as a barrier to accelerating progress at an even faster pace.

The quality of teaching is good

- Leaders and managers have worked tirelessly and successfully to improve the quality of teaching across the school. As a result, although a small amount of teaching requires improvement, the majority of teaching is of good quality with some that is outstanding. Because of this, attainment is rising rapidly and students make good and improving progress.
- Students say how much teaching has improved. 'We learn a lot more now and we like that. There's a lot less messing about now so we can get on with things much better', is a typical comment.
- Teaching is well planned. It makes good use of a wealth of assessment data about students' progress to match tasks closely to students' needs and abilities in most lessons. However, occasionally the level of challenge for more-able students is not high enough and this slows their progress somewhat.
- The majority of lessons provide students with a good range of activities to keep them interested

and fully involved in their learning. Students are expected to work hard and do not let their teachers down. However, in the small number of less exciting lessons the pace of some teaching is sometimes too leisurely with the result that progress slows.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge. Most of them use it well to pose open, challenging questions that make students think deeply and give reasoned and lengthy answers. However, on some occasions, teachers provide answers too readily or ask questions that require simple, short answers. Thus, opportunities are missed occasionally to develop students' speaking skills and their confidence in expressing themselves clearly.
- Much teaching uses pair work and group work effectively to give students opportunities to develop their skills as independent learners. Students enjoy this and work productively and with good interest. However, some teaching is too teacher led with the result that opportunities for students to learn without the support of adults are limited.
- Where teaching is outstanding, students really fly and make very rapid progress. In a Year 7 history lesson, for example, the tremendous pace and range of activities kept students thoroughly engrossed in their work. The teacher used questioning expertly to make the students think deeply and to explain their answers fully and at length. Information and communication technology (ICT) was used expertly to add enjoyment. As a result, students made outstanding progress in their understanding of how to conduct a historical inquiry.
- Support for students who have special educational needs and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium is consistently of very good quality. Their progress is checked on and extra help is provided when the need becomes apparent. As a result, these students make good and improving progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students behave with respect towards each other and the adults working with them. They are polite and welcoming to visitors.
- School records relating to behaviour show that incidents of poor behaviour have reduced significantly over time. Students themselves are quick to say how much behaviour has improved both inside and outside classrooms.
- Students are proud of the vibrant art displays on corridors. They treat them with great respect.
- Students say that incidents of bullying of any kind have reduced dramatically. 'It just doesn't belong here anymore', is a typical student comment. School records of bullying incidents confirm a steep reduction in the number of incidents and that appropriate action is taken when isolated incidents happen.
- Students say they feel very safe in school. They talk knowledgeably about what might be unsafe situations and how to avoid or deal with them. They are fully aware of the potential dangers of using the internet. The school's programme of personal, social and health education is much valued by students.
- Students' attendance has improved significantly because they are enjoying learning much more and want to be in school. The link between good attendance and academic success has been firmly established in the minds of students.
- The school is meticulous in taking all necessary steps to ensure the safety and well-being of the small number of students who follow part-time courses off site. Comprehensive risk assessments are undertaken and attendance is checked every day. Regular visits by staff are also made to the off-site provision. The progress of the students is checked and recorded regularly.

The leadership and management are good

- At the heart of the school's rapid improvement lie highly effective leadership and management.
- Leadership has not shirked from taking difficult decisions to tackle weaker teaching and to

improve the quality of teaching. Expectations have been raised and the majority of staff are pulling together to put into practice the clear vision for improvement that leaders and managers provide.

- Self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate. The results of the evaluation are used shrewdly to identify where the school could and should be doing better. This forms the basis of high quality development planning that has improvement at its core.
 - Performance management has been used effectively as a tool to drive up standards. There is a clear link between pay progression and meeting targets for members of staff. Performance management targets are being made more challenging with a sharper focus on increasing further the proportion of students expected to make more than expected progress.
 - The school's policy of entering a small number of students early for GCSE English has a specific purpose of motivating those capable of achieving a Grade C to do so. The entry policy does not disadvantage students but rather spurs them on. Those who attain the Grade C are given every opportunity to take the examination again in Year 11 to boost the grade further.
 - Leaders and managers use pupil premium funding effectively. Funding is targeted specifically to provide extra support for students known to be eligible for free school meals. The average capped points score for attainment at the end of Year 11 indicates that the achievement of this group of students compares favourably with that of students not known to be eligible for pupil premium funding.
 - The curriculum is broad and appropriate to students' needs and abilities. It offers a number of pathways for students of differing abilities with a wide range of courses and options. The range of enrichment activities is very broad in the arts and sports. The proportion of students taking part in community activities is high. Such activities make a valuable contribution to the good quality of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - The local authority has provided effective support to leaders and managers and has helped to bring about significant and rapid improvement to students' achievement, especially in English and mathematics.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is supportive of the leaders' and managers' drive for improvement. It holds them rigorously to account. The governing body is fully aware of the improvements that have taken place in the quality of teaching and the impact this has had on students' achievement. The governing body understands fully how performance management operates in the school and is fully aware of and deeply involved in the operation of salary progression and promotion issues within the school. The governing body has tight financial control procedures in place. It has approved a plan to reduce a significant budget deficit inherited by the headteacher and is scrupulous in overseeing its implementation.
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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

Unique reference number	105974
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	405014

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	711
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ben Rockliffe
Headteacher	James Inman
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2010
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