

Broadway School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103511
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	308343
Inspection dates	16–17 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Judith Matharu HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1209
Sixth form	172
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Julie Stock
Headteacher	Mr Michael Emm
Date of previous school inspection	10–13 November 2003
School address	The Broadway Perry Barr Birmingham B20 3DP
Telephone number	0121 4648834
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Age group	11–18
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Broadway School is a larger than average comprehensive school. It serves an area of significant social and economic disadvantage. The school operates over two sites: one at Aston housing students in Years 7 and 8, and the other at Perry Barr for Years 9 to 13. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above that found nationally. Almost all of the school's students are from minority ethnic backgrounds; the majority are of Pakistani origin, with a significant number from Bangladeshi and Indian backgrounds. The vast majority of the students speak English as an additional language; of these, around 80 are at an early stage of learning English. The school was awarded specialist languages status in September 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Broadway School provides a satisfactory education for its students. There are some good features to its work. Whilst standards at Key Stages 3 and 4 have been consistently lower than the national averages in recent years, students' achievement is satisfactory given their significantly below average starting positions on entry. The school leadership team is aware of the priority to raise standards, particularly in science, and has an appropriate improvement strategy under way. Current monitoring of progress indicates that students are on track to achieve better results in 2008 than in previous years.

Students say they enjoy school life and this is demonstrated in their positive attitudes to learning. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Racial harmony is a key strength of the school.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There are examples of good and outstanding teaching but it is inconsistent. Whilst pastoral care is a strength of the school, academic guidance is less successful. Opportunities to involve students in assessing their own work, or to inform them of the next steps to improve their learning, are not always taken.

The curriculum is good in the main school and the sixth form and meets students' needs well. The enrichment programme is also good and contributes significantly to students' enjoyment of learning. Pastoral support and guidance are effective. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The systematic use of assessment to inform this is inconsistent across the school. Further, the use of a whole-school system for tracking and monitoring students' progress is not yet fully developed.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher remains passionate about the school and totally committed to continuous improvement. There is a realistic and accurate understanding of strengths and areas to improve and a determined team approach to tackle any weaknesses. The middle leadership team is improving, but is not yet fully effective in monitoring and evaluating the work of individual subjects and subsequent improvement planning. The school has developed effective partnerships with a range of external partners to support students and foster their welfare and well-being.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school's capacity to improve from this point is good, given the clarity of the self-evaluation, the actions already implemented and the good understanding of the priorities for improvement.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. Standards in 2006 and 2007 were below the national averages but students' achievements, in relation to standards on entry to the sixth form, are satisfactory. Attendance and retention rates are high.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good and outstanding lessons seen during the inspection. Teachers in the sixth form know their subjects well and have a good understanding of examination requirements. Relationships are strong and expectations are high. However, teachers do not always take account of the spread of ability in their classes when planning and teaching their subject.

The sixth form curriculum is good with the school offering a variety of courses ranging from basic literacy and numeracy to advanced-level courses. The curriculum is particularly responsive to students' needs. Entry requirements are appropriate but flexible. Enrichment classes offer a range of compulsory and optional activities ranging from religious education and physical education to art and food.

Personal development and well-being are good. Students are encouraged to adopt safe practices and healthy lifestyles through a range of vocational and academic subjects including an 'Eating for Survival' course. They make a positive contribution to their community, promoting harmony, understanding and tolerance. Students have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities as well as those of others. Sixth form students benefit from the pastoral support offered by their tutors and head of sixth form. However, academic monitoring is too informal. Students are aware of their targets but less sure what they must do to achieve them. Target setting lacks rigour.

Leadership and management in the sixth form are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, there has been a greater sense of direction and purpose to the sixth form. The head of sixth form has taken effective steps to act upon areas of weakness identified in the last report. Its capacity for further improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching and learning in science to raise standards and achievement.
- Eradicate inconsistencies in teaching and learning through robust and regular monitoring at all levels and sharing best practice.
- Ensure that all middle leaders have a clear focus on monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and subsequent improvement planning.
- Ensure all subject leaders use assessment data consistently to track and monitor students' progress and guide their interventions with students.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Students join the school with attainment that ranges from below to well below average. Standards at Key Stage 3 are below average. They improved in English and mathematics in 2006, but slipped again in 2007. In particular, standards in science were lower than expected, the result of a variety of staffing issues, including

difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff in science. The school is tackling the issues robustly and implementing a range of appropriate strategies to improve this situation.

Students' progress in Years 7 to 9 slipped in 2007, having improved in each of the three previous years. The school has responded by introducing closer tracking and monitoring of students' progress to identify where interventions are necessary. Such interventions are already having some impact and current working levels indicate improvements, with Year 9 students working in line with their targets, particularly at the expected Level 5.

Standards at Key Stage 4 are below average. The percentage of pupils gaining a good GCSE pass in English and mathematics remains static and is considerably below the national average. This remains a priority for the school. Efforts are currently under way to tackle this, with robust action undertaken to improve this year's results. An extensive range of strategies, including catch up sessions, individual mentoring and revision sessions at weekends and during holidays, has been implemented. Consequently, the school's current monitoring records indicate that progress in the majority of subjects is improving, including in English and mathematics, where students are on track to achieve better results in line with the school's predictions. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to other groups.

Progress in lessons observed during inspection confirmed the school's view that students are currently making satisfactory progress. Therefore, by Year 11, inspectors agree with the school's judgement that, in view of students' attainment on entry, their achievement is satisfactory overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory overall, with a number of significant strengths. Their spiritual and cultural development is strong because of well-planned activities within the curriculum and through suitable curricular enhancement. These activities promote inter-cultural respect and understanding. The school's supportive and nurturing ethos and atmosphere contribute greatly to students' personal and social development. Behaviour in lessons and around school is mostly good. Students work well together and relationships with adults are warm and mutually respectful.

Students make good contributions to the school and wider community. They support a wide range of charities and have meaningful links with several schools abroad. The use of the student voice is developing through year and school councils. In particular, sixth form students contribute strongly through various supervisory activities, visits to the elderly and running the school youth club at lunchtimes. However, there are some weaknesses. Attendance is below the national average, and some particularly poor attenders are proving hard to reach, despite all of the school's strategies to improve the situation. Healthy eating is being encouraged in school, although many students have yet to apply their understanding in their

everyday eating habits. Students are making satisfactory progress in acquiring the literacy and numeracy skills needed for their future working lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Some good teaching occurs across all subject areas with pockets of outstanding practice, but overall too much variability remains. As a result, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The least effective practice was observed in science. The school's views on strengths and weaknesses broadly match those identified during the inspection.

Typically, effective teaching is characterised by teachers' good subject knowledge, very positive relationships with students, and often, good use of interactive whiteboard technology. This maintains the pace of lessons, provides clarity and successfully engages students in learning. The majority of students respond well and enjoy their work. Lessons are calm and well managed by most teachers. Through the targeted support provided, students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in Years 7 and 8, although this slows to satisfactory in the upper part of the school because there are fewer support assistants available.

However, despite the strengths observed in teaching and learning, some weaknesses remain. In some lessons, the work does not meet the needs and abilities of all students. In particular, the work is not always challenging enough for those of higher ability. The use of assessment is insufficiently developed, both to inform teaching and to help students to understand what they need to do to improve. There are examples of good marking and useful feedback provided for students, for example in English, but this is inconsistent across all subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good, broad and balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements. There are clear pathways so that students experience a wide choice of activities, introduced in response to their varying needs. The redesigned Year 7 curriculum successfully supports transition from the primary sector. This focuses appropriately on learning skills across a number of subjects and encourages students to develop their learning styles, thinking skills and problem solving through a variety of themed projects. At Key Stage 4, there are different pathways focusing on GCSE, vocational and entry-level courses, including ASDAN and college courses. There is appropriate alternative provision for disaffected students.

The programme of personal, social and health education and citizenship sensitively covers sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. Enterprise and financial capability are supported well through the Enterprise Days. All students study a language in line with the school's languages specialism.

The school has a strong programme of extra-curricular activities, covering sports as well as music and dance. A variety of additional revision and coursework classes is provided, as well as Easter and Summer Schools. There is a well-attended youth club on the school site.

Languages specialist status is beginning to have a positive influence in the school. Specialist school targets have not all been met because of staffing difficulties. The school offers a variety of languages, including French, Spanish and Russian as well as community languages such as Urdu and Bengali. There are established links through the British Council with schools in France and Germany, as well as a lyceum in Pakistan. However, the impact of specialist school status is less evident in terms of raising standards across the school and enhancing community provision in languages.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall, with several elements being good. Statutory requirements for child protection are met and arrangements for training staff are rigorous. Risk assessment procedures in relation to school visits are conducted effectively, and in a local authority audit recently, the school gained the highest grade. Students are prepared well for a smooth transfer from their primary schools by participating in a well-planned induction programme. The Year 7 students spoke highly of their overnight 'Woodland Trip' as the best of all their many extra-curricular experiences.

The school's inclusiveness is reflected in its concern and in its endeavour to work closely with the local community to improve opportunities for all students. Outreach workers provide effective links with parents in their home language. A new initiative provides students and parents with information on career pathways and higher education opportunities. Each student in Years 10 and 11 benefited from a personal interview this year as part of the support offered towards making positive educational and vocational decisions for their future courses. There is excellent support for students outside the classroom where, as one student said, 'Teachers are very dedicated, giving up their own time.' This is valued and appreciated by students and makes a distinct contribution to students' progress in all key stages.

Pastoral care is a strong feature, promoting very good relationships between staff and students. The support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is particularly effective in Years 7 and 8, where new measures for assessment and tracking pupils' provision are in place. However, academic guidance is inconsistent across all year groups. Sophisticated use of data is emerging to allow teachers to track achievement as students move through the school, but this is in its early stages. Students know their current levels of attainment but do not always receive enough guidance from helpful marking to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher continues to provide clear vision, good leadership and direction for the work of the school. A capable senior team, who share his commitment and

resolve to provide positive learning experiences for the school's students within a safe and supportive environment, ably supports him. The senior team have a clear and secure view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Self-evaluation is accurate. Weaknesses are accurately identified, with appropriate improvement plans in place. There is a willingness to seek external support and advice when necessary, in order to secure improvement.

The school's priority to raise standards and achievement is shared, widely understood and being tackled suitably. The current renewed focus on improving the school's system for tracking students' performance through the careful monitoring of data is essential to the improvement plan. However, the whole-school analysis of achievement is in its early stages, and not yet consolidated across the school. There are examples of individual departments using data well to track students' progress, identify issues and using this information in planning learning, but this remains inconsistent across all subjects. Consequently, despite the school's undoubted strengths in nurturing and providing good pastoral care for its students, academic guidance for them on improving their performance is less effective.

The monitoring of teaching and learning is developing well, and senior leaders generally have a secure view of their quality. However, the role of subject leaders is less well developed. There is inconsistency in middle leaders' practice in departmental self-evaluation and their roles in improving teaching and learning. Similarly, teachers across the school do not yet have a shared understanding about the features of high quality teaching and learning. There is enthusiasm and commitment evident from many subject leaders to drive forward improvements, but some inconsistencies remain in practice. Middle leadership is therefore satisfactory overall. Pastoral leaders are a strength of the school. They know the students well and provide good support. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's work and issues for action, and governors hold the school to account satisfactorily.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage		
The effectiveness of boarding provision		
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

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	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
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 learners' needs?	3	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	3

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	