

Inspection of Bullers Wood School

St Nicolas Lane, Logs Hill, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5LJ

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Simon Hardwick. The school is part of Inicio Educational Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Terry Millar, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Isobel Cattermole.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Bullers Wood School as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are determined that all pupils, whatever their starting point, succeed academically. Pupils typically achieve very well in a wide range of subjects and, as a result, are well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. However, some do not consistently receive the support they need to achieve as well as they could.

The school's warm and friendly ethos is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour and highly positive relationships with each other and with staff. Pupils show respect in lessons and when moving around the school site. Bullying is not tolerated, and staff are vigilant. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, are happy and kept safe in school. They trust staff to help them if they have any concerns.

The school has a well-established personal development curriculum that supports pupils to develop confidence and resilience. The school promotes equality of opportunity and diversity, for example through Culture Day and the celebration of Black History Month. Students in the sixth form quickly develop as independent learners. They are encouraged to take on leadership responsibility and to act as role models, for example as reading mentors for younger pupils.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed a highly ambitious curriculum. Pupils in key stage 3, including those with SEND, study a broad range of subjects. By the end of key stage 4, most pupils achieve well and fulfil the requirements of the English Baccalaureate. Students in the sixth form are provided with a well-rounded experience that prepares them well for the next stage of their education, employment or training.

Subject leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum content they want pupils to know and remember and the order in which it is taught. This helps teachers to draw on pupils' previous learning when tackling new ideas. For example, in English, pupils are able to draw upon prior knowledge in their use of quotations. They can make connections between different texts they have studied. Grammar is precisely taught, and teachers encourage the use of subject-specific terminology. Similarly, in mathematics, learning builds and progresses from previous topics. For example, pupils use their knowledge of shapes and angles taught in Year 7 to calculate external and interior angles of regular polygons in Year 8.

Leaders have considered how to enhance pupils' cultural development when designing the curriculum. For example, in art, pupils study a wide range of artists and artistic movements from around the world.

Assessment is used well to check what pupils can do and identify those who may need extra help. Teachers swiftly identify and address common misconceptions. However, in some instances, the tasks and activities pupils complete do not always

match the ambition of the planned curriculum. For example, pupils are not consistently expected to explain their learning and think more deeply. This limits some pupils' depth of understanding. Leaders have recognised this and put in place a professional development programme for staff to address this issue.

The school ensures that all pupils read regularly and have access to a well-stocked library. This helps them to develop their vocabulary and a love of reading. Pupils who cannot read well enough get the support they need to catch up.

The provision for pupils with SEND is improving. Many of these pupils benefit from a personalised approach that is focused on their particular needs. However, the needs of some pupils with SEND are not always well considered when adapting the curriculum. The school recognises that pupils with SEND have not always received the support planned for them. Leaders are improving the training and information teachers receive to support these pupils.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, are supportive and respectful of each other. Routines and expectations are in place which lead to a calm and purposeful learning environment. Pupils are focused, engaged and participate well in lessons. Attendance is high and systems for improving this further are well established.

The school has developed a broad programme of wider opportunities that focus on well-being, building resilience and fostering a sense of community. There are several opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests, including in competitive sports. Pupils understand how to look after their physical and mental health and learn how to keep themselves safe.

Staff, including early career teachers, feel that their workload and well-being have been carefully considered by leaders. They value the many opportunities to improve their professional practice. Knowledgeable governors provide highly effective challenge and support to school leaders, for example through regular monitoring visits.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Over time, pupils with SEND have not consistently received the specific support they need. As a result, some pupils' needs have not been appropriately met and they have not secured the knowledge they need to progress through the curriculum. The school should ensure that training and information are provided so that the needs of pupils are fully considered when making adaptations to activities.

- In some instances, the tasks pupils complete do not consistently match the ambition of the planned curriculum. This means that pupils do not fully develop the depth of understanding they need to tackle future learning. The school should ensure that the curriculum is implemented with consistent ambition.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	136709
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10255350
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,572
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	416
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Isobel Cattermole
CEO of the trust	Terry Millar
Headteacher	Simon Hardwick
Website	www.bwsgirls.org
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 May 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is part of Inicio Educational Trust.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2021.
- The school makes use of three registered alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education

Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team completed deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, languages and art. To do this, they met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, had discussions with staff and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff were considered through discussions and looking at information collected from Ofsted's surveys.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the local governing body. They also held discussions with members of the trust board.

Inspection team

Robert Grice, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Mark Jordan	Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca Drysdale	Ofsted Inspector
Gareth Cross	Ofsted Inspector
Polly Haste	His Majesty's Inspector
Daniel Burton	Ofsted Inspector
Matea Marcinko	His Majesty's Inspector

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