

Burlington Danes Academy

Wood Lane, London, W12 0HR

Inspection dates 21–22 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The mission to provide the very best education for every pupil within a caring and safe environment has become a reality in this outstanding academy.
- Students, staff and parents are proud to be part of this mission and speak very highly about the academy.
- The inspirational leadership of the Principal, who is well supported by all of her staff, has resulted in a relentless pursuit of excellence.
- Given their starting points students make outstanding progress resulting in above average attainment, especially in English and mathematics.
- Students who are eligible for additional government funding (the pupil premium) are supported very well both academically and pastorally. As a result, the gap between their attainment and that of other students has narrowed considerably.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary. They are courteous, polite and respectful to each other and staff. Students enjoy being at the academy and are happy and feel very safe.
- The overall quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers' subject knowledge, planning, marking and their thoughtful use of questioning are particularly strong.
- Careful monitoring and intervention systems ensure that all students achieve their ambitious targets. However, in a very few lessons there could be greater challenge for the more-able students.
- The academy's provision for the teaching of literacy is outstanding.
- The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and permeates all of their activities.
- Governors effectively monitor and support the academy's work and use the pupil premium wisely to help those eligible.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students' progress in the sixth form is outstanding as a result of highly effective teaching and the implementation of effective study programmes.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 52 lessons. A number of these observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Students' books were examined during lessons.
- Inspectors held discussions with the Principal and senior staff, including staff responsible for subjects and for the pastoral care of students. They also met with governors, including the Chair and members of the Governing Body, a representative from ARK Academies, and four groups of students.
- They took into account 59 responses to the staff questionnaire, and 27 responses to the online Parent View survey.
- They looked at key documents, including the academy's self-evaluation, minutes of meetings, information about safeguarding, the academy's own data about progress, and documentation on the management of staff performance, and records of behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Linda Austin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sian Sewell

Additional Inspector

Heather Housden

Additional Inspector

Duncan Kamyra

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Burlington Danes is an averaged-sized academy built on the values of the Church of England .It is part of the ARK Academies network.
- The students come from a range of ethnic groups including Black African, Black Caribbean and White British students.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (the additional funding provided by the government for certain groups of students) is well above the average. This includes students eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority. There are no students from service families in this school.
- The proportion of students with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- A well-above average proportion of students speak English as an additional language.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.
- The academy has an on-site unit, the Berwick centre, for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties to attend for short periods of time.
- The academy provides a daily breakfast club and a range of morning, lunchtime and after-school clubs including support with literacy, individual subjects and a range of sporting and musical activities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enable the very good practice of challenging the more-able students in outstanding lessons and homework to be embedded across the academy.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Given their starting points, students make outstanding progress by the end of Year 11. They join the academy with broadly average levels of achievement and a significant proportion speak English as an additional language. Their attainment by the time they reach Year 11 is significantly above the national average, especially in mathematics and English.
- The academy's robust internal data for this year shows that students are continuing to make rapid progress and are attaining even higher levels.
- The academy's provision for literacy is outstanding. A very clear policy makes sure that literacy skills are well woven across the curriculum, resulting in very high achievement. Students are confident, fluent readers.
- The early entry of the most able students to GCSE mathematics in Year 10 does not inhibit their attainment. It enables them to study a further mathematics GCSE course in Year 11 in preparation for the A-level mathematics course.
- The progress made by the most-able students is improving rapidly, particularly in English and mathematics and science. However, this is not yet consistent across all subjects.
- Students supported by pupil premium funding at the academy are making better progress because the money is spent effectively on extra staffing, educational resources and carefully targeted support. Consequently, the remaining gap of two terms at English GCSE between these students and their peers is closing rapidly. There is no gap between the achievement of eligible students in mathematics and their peers.
- The progress of students with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is outstanding. Effective intervention strategies and rigorous tracking ensure that students' needs are well supported. Students with behavioural difficulties who were observed in Berwick unit are making very good progress.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding is used to provide additional literacy interventions, including one-to-one tuition, for identified students. As a result, they are making outstanding progress in improving their reading skills.
- The progress of students in both vocational and academic courses in the sixth form is outstanding as a result of excellent teaching and the support they receive to meet ambitious targets.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- In most classrooms, teachers make learning enjoyable, by providing imaginative, structured and challenging activities that enable students to make outstanding progress. Teachers ask open-ended questions that create an inclusive climate for learning. They are skilled at knowing how to probe and elicit more sophisticated responses from more-able students. However in very few of the lessons observed, there was insufficient challenge for more-able students.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge and planning, combined with their high expectations, make

an outstanding contribution to students' progress and ensure students learn effectively.

- Most teachers use data very effectively and know their students' strengths and weaknesses. Books are clearly marked and students are aware of what they need to do to improve. They act promptly upon the advice they receive. In a very few books, the work set was insufficiently challenging for more-able students.
- The development of literacy skills across all subjects, in tutor time and additional classes is strength of the academy. All students are expected to read every day and are given additional support if they need it. The careful employment of subject specific words together with the development of extended writing and students' speaking skills permeates across all subjects. The opportunities for students to take part in debating and writing competitions prepare them well for their next stage of education or employment.
- Student feedback about their learning is overwhelmingly positive as seen in comments such as, 'Learning is brilliant at this school (Year 8),' and 'Teachers really support us to meet our ambitious targets (Year 11),' and 'We are given so many opportunities to really prepare us for the best universities (Year 13).'
- The commitment of all staff in this academy to the continuous improvement of teaching and learning is exceptional. They are keen to learn from each other, to share good practice and to quickly respond to feedback.
- Teaching and learning in the sixth form is outstanding. The challenge for more-able students, combined with a relentless focus on improving literacy, is having a significant impact in accelerating the progress of all students.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students behave extremely well both in lessons and around the academy, showing high levels of respect and maturity for their teachers and peers. Student leaders are proud to represent student views, which are listened to and taken seriously.
- Students talk very positively about how the academy, while reinforcing Christian values, recognises all faiths and cultures and is committed to being an equal opportunities academy where all opinions are valued.
- Students were able to talk confidently about the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and e-safety, and feel very safe during the school day. There are very few examples of bullying and no examples of racism or prejudice. The peer mediation scheme, whereby older students help younger students to resolve conflict, is highly valued by all students.
- All the parents and carers agree that their children are safe, happy and well looked after.
- Students' attendance is improving from an already high base. Imaginative initiatives including a breakfast club, trips to a farm, financial incentives and a boxing club have reduced the persistent absenteeism rate of some small groups of students.
- The Berwick centre, which offers courses in anger management combined with academic catch-up classes, has helped to further reduce the low level of fixed-term exclusions.

- Sixth form students model impeccable behaviour for the rest of the school. They are keen to take up opportunities to lead assemblies, to support students lower down the school with their studies, to lead the school council and to represent the school at significant events.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The academy's mission to ensure that every student receives the very best education in a caring supportive environment is at the centre of everything it does.
- The Principal is driven by the belief that every student can achieve, however disadvantaged their background, and sees the school as a family where everyone 'looks out for each other'. She has been successful in securing commitment to this vision from everyone within the academy community.
- There is a relentless drive to improve any areas that are not performing to the high standards set.
- The performance of teaching staff and the objectives they are set to improve their performance are linked well to students' progress.
- Subject and pastoral leaders make a strong contribution to the ambitious vision for the academy. Their high expectations combined with rigorous monitoring of lessons and students' progress results in outstanding student achievement.
- Self-evaluation is sharp, strong and accurate and helps to clarify strengths and areas for development. Senior staff and inspectors were unanimous in judging teaching quality after joint observations of lessons.
- The academy's work in training its own staff and its involvement in the training provided by ARK is excellent. Particularly noteworthy is the way that teachers regularly observe each other's lessons to improve on their weaknesses.
- Since the last inspection, the curriculum has been tailored to meet the needs of all learners. The highly effective, finely tuned pathways ensure a high level of motivation and ambition to succeed from students of different academic abilities.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities, including drama, music and sport, and trips abroad significantly enrich the curriculum.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strength of the academy. For example, a daily period of reflection for students and staff sets the tone for the day. Programmes such as the Year 10 community service week, combined with activities that include tea dances for the elderly, reinforce the caring values of the academy.
- Leaders at all levels are relentless in their pursuit of good outcomes, including for those who have special educational needs, those in receipt of pupil premium and those who are supported in Year 7 by catch-up funding. The use of this funding to support reading and reduce class size is a testament to the focused leadership of the Principal and her team.
- Leaders of the sixth form exhibit a real drive to raise the aspirations of all students. Every student has an individualised study programme which links their courses to future pathways.

Initiatives such as bespoke work experience, the Oxbridge project, assertive mentoring and close links with Imperial College are enabling a greater proportion of students to attend the most prestigious universities. Other students are able to resit GCSE English and mathematics. Students following vocational pathways are given sound guidance about routes into higher education or employment.

- The quality of guidance and support for future careers, including independent advice, information and guidance, are of high quality.
- Parents and carers are now showing a growing engagement with the academy. Although responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire) were few, the academy's internal questionnaires had a much higher response rate. Parents confirm that their children are well looked after, happy and safe.
- ARK representatives provide regular monitoring reports which help the academy to improve further. They also support the academy through sharing good practice across the ARK network and in ensuring strong governance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are totally committed to the mission of the academy. They have a good grasp of how well the academy performs, and are prepared to use their various skills and expertise to support students to reach even higher levels of success. They regularly receive information about achievement, attendance, behaviour and the quality of teaching. They play an important part in the management of staff performance and in making sure that pay reflects how well each member of staff performs. There is astute and rigorous financial management. The allocation of the pupil premium is well thought out, and is conspicuously successful in supporting the enhanced progress of eligible students.

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	131752
Local authority	Academy Contact
Inspection number	428937

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy Sponsor Led
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	1019
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lord Stanley Fink
Headteacher	Dame Sally Coates
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2009
Telephone number	020 8735 4950
Fax number	020 8740 5659
Email address	bda.school@burlingtondanes.org

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