

Bank View High School

177 Long Lane, Liverpool, Merseyside L9 6AD

Inspection dates

21–22 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Highly ambitious leaders have overseen the successful relocation, expansion and development of this school since the last inspection.
- Leaders have established a culture where staff are keen to reflect on and develop their practice. Staff share their expertise with each other, which has resulted in a highly skilled staff team.
- Teaching is consistently strong across the school. Teachers ensure that learning is closely matched to pupils' needs.
- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to their learning and make exceptional progress across a range of subjects.
- Teachers demand the very best of pupils. Teachers' high expectations of pupils are matched by pupils' high-quality work. Pupils take great pride in their achievements.
- Teachers check on the progress that pupils make. As a result, those pupils who fall behind in their learning are identified quickly. Very effective support helps them catch up rapidly.
- Staff understand the needs of individual pupils extremely well. Staff provide carefully tailored support for pupils, which builds their resilience and self-confidence.
- The school's high-quality curriculum supports pupils to develop the skills necessary to become confident young people. Consequently, pupils are ready for the next stage of their education.
- Governors bring a wide range of skills to their roles. They hold leaders to account diligently.
- Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Pupils treat each other and their teachers with the utmost respect.
- Leaders ensure that students on 16 to 19 study programmes achieve very well and become more independent. These students are successfully prepared for adulthood.
- As the school has expanded, leaders have put in place high-quality support for teachers. The least-experienced teachers continue to need this support in order to ensure that high standards are maintained across all subjects and year groups.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to check on teaching closely so that teachers new to the profession can review and refine their teaching.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders have overseen significant changes at Bank View High School. Since the last inspection, the school has moved into a new building on a different site. There has also been the addition of a key stage 2 phase. Leaders have successfully maintained the outstanding quality of education since the last inspection.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have a sharp and precise view of the school. This leads to the rapid identification of areas for improvement, which are swiftly addressed. This ensures that the very high standards in the school are maintained.
- Leaders check diligently on the quality of teaching. They use a variety of different approaches to ensure that they have very detailed and up-to-date knowledge of the standard of teaching throughout the school. The systems used to monitor teaching ensure that teachers receive support and challenge to improve their practice. The least-experienced teachers continue to require this support.
- An extensive programme of training supports staff to develop their skills. There is a clear focus on how staff training will support the improvement of outcomes for pupils. Staff feel highly valued and supported to excel in their careers. At all levels, staff share their skills and knowledge with each other. New members of staff benefit from carefully planned induction procedures, which help them to quickly settle into their new roles.
- The leadership of the school is strong at every level. Middle leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths of their departments. They are encouraged to develop their leadership skills and obtain nationally recognised qualifications. This helps ensure that the quality of leadership continues to grow.
- Leaders' effective use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils means that these pupils make exceptional progress.
- The use of catch-up funding for Year 7 pupils is also highly effective. Leaders regularly check the progress pupils are making. Well-planned and timely catch-up interventions ensure that any gaps in learning are quickly addressed.
- With the addition of a key stage 2 department, the school now receives the physical education and sport premium funding. These funds are being spent on improving outdoor provision for younger pupils. This will enable them to benefit from the use of age-appropriate equipment to develop their physical skills.
- The school's curriculum is outstanding. Leaders have a clear rationale for the curriculum. Regular reviews of the curriculum ensure that it continues to meet the needs of all learners. For example, in response to the changing needs of pupils, leaders have developed individual curriculum pathways. This ensures that the needs of pupils with a wide range of different starting points are met. As a result, teaching and learning are very closely matched to pupils' age and their special educational needs.
- Developing independence and life skills as well as academic learning provides the basis for the curriculum. The range of courses, together with the sequencing of learning in achievable steps, inspires pupils to learn. Real-life experiences strengthen learning, for

example visiting local shops to practise buying food and working out how much it will cost.

- Leaders use alternative providers very effectively to broaden the curriculum. Pupils can study subjects not available in school, for example animal care. They can also follow more advanced courses than those available in school, for example in building and construction.

Governance of the school

- Governors are proud of and very ambitious for the school. They have a very accurate understanding of the school's strengths and have a clear focus on maintaining the high quality of education it provides.
- Governors work very closely alongside senior leaders to provide clear strategic direction. They evaluate the impact of actions on improving outcomes for pupils. This means that they can be sure that the school is providing its pupils with the best possible educational experiences.
- Governors have established strong links with middle leaders. Their accurate knowledge of each department enables them to hold leaders to account.
- Governors played a key role in the introduction of the primary department. They challenged the headteacher and local authority to ensure that the changes did not adversely affect the rest of the school.
- Governors discharge their duties with diligence. They monitor the school's budget carefully. They have a clear understanding of the impact of additional funding. They check that safeguarding arrangements are robust.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. They have established effective systems which put the safety and well-being of pupils at the centre of the school's work. Systems are in place to ensure that pupils are safe when they leave the main site to engage in learning in the community. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They take swift and appropriate action if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being.
- Pupils are confident that they can talk to staff if they have any concerns. They report that they feel safe in school, and parents and carers agree. Pupils learn how to stay safe online through the personal and social education curriculum and assemblies.
- There is a link governor for safeguarding. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities with regards to safeguarding. Governors receive regular updates about safeguarding and the actions that leaders take to protect vulnerable children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- High expectations of teaching and learning are in place across the school. This means that lessons are well planned and there is a clear focus and productive use of time. Pupils know what they must do and comply readily with the adults' instructions.
- Teachers plan lessons that are highly stimulating and capture the interest of pupils. Pupils are very focused and willing to share their knowledge and make new connections in their learning.
- Teachers and support staff work very well together. Staff record pupils' progress throughout the lesson. They use information and communication technology to photograph pupils' achievements. Pupils' progress is assessed using this information and shared with parents.
- Strong relationships between adults and pupils underpin the teaching. Adults work very carefully to give pupils the confidence to learn. Teachers and support staff create safe, supportive classroom environments for pupils to try new things. There is an expectation for pupils to work hard. Pupils respond very well to this.
- Teachers and support staff use questions very effectively to check pupils' understanding. This helps to develop and deepen their learning. For example, in a construction lesson, the teacher used well-chosen questions to check that pupils understood his demonstration before attempting a practical task. As a result, pupils made rapid progress in developing a new skill.
- Staff willingly share good practice with each other. This means that they are confident in adapting activities to meet pupils' needs. The result of this approach is that pupils make excellent progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour in class are excellent. Pupils are proud of their work and achievements. Rich and vibrant displays in classrooms celebrate this. The standard of work achieved across the curriculum is strong.
- High-quality teaching generally enables pupils to make exceptional progress across all key stages. However, some teachers new to the profession are still refining their teaching. Diligent monitoring of teaching by leaders provides these staff with very effective support. As a result, teaching in these areas is developing quickly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- This is a happy school. There is a genuine warmth between the pupils and staff. Relationships are strong, and staff know each pupil exceptionally well.
- Pupils are confident and have highly positive attitudes towards learning. They are enthusiastic learners who want to achieve. In lessons, teachers encourage pupils to work independently and in small groups. This helps to develop their confidence.
- Pupils have learned the personal skills needed to receive praise, as well as feedback on how to improve.

- There is a strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural element to the curriculum. Themed weeks provide opportunities for all pupils to work on a theme or topic. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in activities in the local community. Members of the local community also visit the school. This broadens the experience of pupils.
- Leaders encourage pupils to develop their leadership skills and contribute to the work of the school. Older pupils help younger pupils, for example with the development of their reading skills and at social times. Pupils have a strong voice through the school council. For instance, following feedback from the school council, leaders have introduced lockers for sixth-form students.
- The older pupils learn to travel independently. Through careful planning to develop the necessary skills and confidence, the most able pupils learn how to use public transport. For many pupils, this represents a significant and important achievement.
- The small number of pupils who attend alternative provision attend regularly. Leaders work closely with alternative provision staff to ensure that these pupils follow appropriate qualifications and are kept safe.
- Leaders provide excellent careers information and guidance for pupils. This enables pupils to select the most appropriate courses at key stages 4 and 5. Consequently, year on year, almost all pupils stay in education or training after Year 11.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Leaders have established the right conditions to embed exceptional behaviour across the school. Training has focused on ensuring that all staff have the necessary skills to deal with disruptive behaviour. As a result, disruption during learning is extremely rare. Consequently, no learning time is wasted.
- In lessons and around the school, behaviour is outstanding. At social times, pupils play well together, with many engaging in games. Conduct in the school canteen is excellent.
- Throughout the school, there is consistently calm and orderly conduct. Pupils move around the school very sensibly. They show consideration for staff, other pupils and visitors. Pupils are very polite and well mannered. They are thoughtful and articulate in expressing their views.
- Staff work with pupils to enable them to self-regulate their behaviour. Pupils increasingly choose to use quiet spaces to take time out to calm themselves. This is often without the need for adults to intervene.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They told inspectors that bullying is extremely rare and that, if they have a concern, they are confident to talk to a member of staff. Pupils also say that the staff are there to help them.
- Attendance is consistently better than at similar schools in both the local area and nationally. Despite this, leaders are not complacent. The headteacher is resolute in her determination to continue to improve attendance.

- Leaders' commitment to meeting the needs of each pupil has meant that there have been no fixed-term exclusions during the last three years.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils' attainment on entry is almost always well below that expected for their age. From these very low starting points, pupils progress rapidly. This enables pupils to achieve outstanding outcomes.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum and teaching are very precisely matched to pupils' individual needs. As a result, pupils are very well supported in making the steps needed to move forward in learning.
- Leaders use a highly effective system to set challenging targets for pupils. The school's meticulous approach to assessing pupils' progress means that teachers are able to identify swiftly those pupils who fall behind. Carefully targeted interventions are used to support pupils when they fall behind.
- Evidence in pupils' workbooks, along with that on display around the school, substantiates teachers' and leaders' records. These records show high levels of progress across all year groups in a range of subjects.
- In key stage 4, pupils begin to develop key employability and life skills. They become confident and resilient learners.
- All pupils leave school at the end of key stage 4 or following study in the sixth form with a range of awards and qualifications. All pupils achieve a GCSE qualification in art. Pupils also achieve GCSE or entry-level awards in English, mathematics, science and design and technology.
- All pupils move into the sixth form or gain places at local colleges. The move to a new provider is carefully managed. Pupils are carefully supported so that they can quickly settle into a new environment.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils in all areas of the curriculum is as good as, and often better than, that of other pupils in the school.

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- The sixth-form leader is ambitious and has high aspirations for students. Staff have developed a strong and purposeful curriculum. This promotes the development of students' academic, personal, social and independence skills.
- Students are safe. They learn in an environment where risk is balanced well with encouraging students' independence. Travel training helps the most able to develop independence and access new experiences.
- Students learn about the practical use of literacy and numeracy skills. There is also a strong focus on developing employability skills. Students learn and practise these skills at school and during regular visits in the local community.

- Effective teaching and detailed assessment arrangements ensure that students improve their communication skills and develop their confidence. Students move successfully to a wide range of destinations after school.
- Teaching is outstanding because the staff know students very well. Teachers plan work which meets students' needs and interests, and which provides challenge to enable them to learn. As a result, students make exceptional progress.
- The school is part of a pilot project for supported internships. This programme is in its second year. Students are able to develop employability skills in the workplace. Last year, some students gained paid employment as a result of this programme.

School details

Unique reference number	133441
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10057892

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	7 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	33
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Sibbald
Headteacher	Juliette Gelling
Telephone number	0151 330 5101
Website	https://bvhs.co.uk/
Email address	bankview-ao@bankview.liverpool.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 June 2014

Information about this school

- Bank View High School is a special school for children and young people with complex learning difficulties. Some pupils have additional needs such as autism spectrum disorder. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Since the last inspection, the school has relocated into a new building on a new site, which it shares with Redbridge High School.
- The current headteacher was appointed in March 2015.
- A key stage 2 department opened in September 2017. This is located on the main Bank View site and at Croxteth Primary School, a local mainstream primary school.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The school uses alternative provision for a small number of pupils at the following providers: Active TT Schooling Ltd, Cornerstones Vocational Training, Everton Free School, Greenbank College, Harmonize AP Free School, Myerscough College and West Derby Tuition.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited parts of lessons across a range of subjects, involving all year groups and the sixth form. Joint observations were carried out with the headteacher and senior leaders. During visits to lessons, inspectors spoke to pupils, looked at their workbooks and spoke to staff.
- Inspectors observed and spoke with pupils arriving at school, at breaktime and lunchtime and as they moved between lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders, other staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss all aspects of the school's work.
- Inspectors considered 16 responses to Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors held a meeting with seven parents. Inspectors considered 35 responses to the Ofsted online staff survey. There were no responses to the Ofsted online pupil survey.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils from each key stage.
- A wide range of school records, documents and information were reviewed and discussed.

Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Maggie Parker	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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