

## Bartley Green School, Birmingham

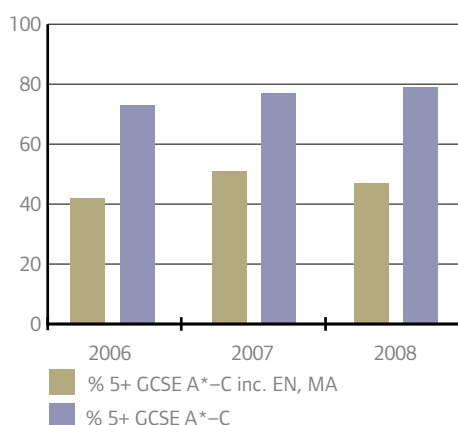
'At Bartley Green, we serve one of the most deprived wards in the city. Many of our pupils have never visited the countryside, an art gallery or even, in some cases, Birmingham city centre.' For these pupils, the Bartley Green School invests heavily in providing resources and activities so as to raise their aspirations and engage their learning. The headteacher, Mrs Chris Owen OBE, who has led the school for nearly 15 years, identified her first priority on arrival as supporting the teachers by establishing and maintaining good discipline. In this neighbourhood, with high levels of social and economic deprivation, getting a critical mass of parents on side was a considerable challenge. 'You have to be brave!' She was determined that staff and pupils should know and come to appreciate that the school would not be bullied or diverted by antagonistic elements in the predominantly White British community, which lacked a positive and authoritative community ethos. When the headteacher arrived, only 9% of the pupils achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C. Over the past 15 years, Bartley Green School has almost doubled in size and is heavily oversubscribed.

The headteacher inherited a long-established staff when she arrived; changing the school culture and the collective mind-set was a priority. 'Our kinds of kids don't...' became a heresy. Setting challenging targets and expecting them to be achieved have been key to success. This can be seen, for example, in the progress

made by pupils with communication and language difficulties, a third of whom recently achieved five or more A\* to C GCSE grades. An additional tutor group was introduced to allow for small-group teaching for pupils struggling to clear academic hurdles. The most skilled teachers work across the academic spectrum. All members of the senior leadership team now teach at least one GCSE/BTEC group so that they too are working to personal targets and are as accountable for the school's success rate as others. Regular external monitoring complements the school's self-evaluation. This provides an objective view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and helps leaders develop strategies to deal with persistent concerns. From the moment pupils arrive in Year 7, they are encouraged to think about pathways to future careers. Fifteen years ago, only 33% of pupils went on to further or higher education; now almost all of them do.

Clear and practical principles are consistently applied within the school and wherever the school connects with the surrounding community. Alongside the discipline runs a strong current of care and encouragement, for pupils and staff. It comes as no surprise to see that expectations and academic standards have risen and that the upward trend at GCSE continues in this wide ability school. In 2006 and 2007, the school's relative attainment and CVA progress measures were in the highest 1%.

### School data



2007 data		Student profile
Roll:	865	83% White British
Age:	11-16	8% White and African Caribbean
CVA:	1,078.7	
FSM:	36.50%	
Inspection judgements and quote (Sep. 2007)		
25	Outstanding	'An outstanding school that is very well placed to improve further... a sustained history of continuous improvement.'
1	Good	
0	Satisfactory	
0	Inadequate	