

Bedale High School

Fitzalan Road, Bedale, North Yorkshire DL8 2EQ

Inspection dates

9–10 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable and is not consistently matched to pupils' needs, particularly those of the most able.
- For a significant minority of pupils, attitudes to learning are not consistently positive and behaviour in lessons and around the site requires improvement.
- Too many pupils display negative approaches to their learning in mathematics and disadvantaged pupils continue to make slower rates of progress.
- Leaders have not improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good.
- Although progress is improving in a number of areas, pupils' progress over time as reflected in their books and folders is more variable. Leaders' focus upon heightened challenge for the most able is not reflected in their work over time in books.
- New strategies to improve attendance are beginning to show impact, but disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities remain much more likely to be absent than their peers.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has led significant improvements at key stage 4. Overall levels of progress have increased and high levels of attainment have been sustained at a time of much change.
- Most pupils behave well and show a commitment to the school and community.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective and enables them to make strong progress.
- Governors are committed to the school's improvement and their increasing challenge and expertise have contributed to improvements in the rates of progress.
- Teaching is particularly strong in English, French and science, enabling pupils to make good progress and achieve good outcomes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it consistently promotes good progress, particularly for the most able, by:
 - setting work that stretches pupils
 - moving learning on when pupils are ready for new tasks and challenges
 - implementing the school’s assessment policy more effectively to support progress.
- Improve standards of behaviour around the site and in lessons, by:
 - consistently implementing the school’s behaviour policy
 - tackling low-level disruption
 - establishing clear classroom routines and expectations
 - improving the effectiveness of supervision at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Improve the quality of teaching and rates of pupils’ progress in mathematics, by:
 - setting work that meets pupils’ needs
 - building pupils’ confidence in mathematics by responding to their concerns and questions more assiduously.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher has worked successfully with leaders over a period of much change to achieve improving outcomes for pupils at key stage 4. She has raised expectations and standards of accountability. As a result, outcomes improved at key stage 4 in both 2015 and 2016. However, current progress across the school over time in books and folders is not as strong.
- The headteacher has ensured a close focus on key areas for improvement. In particular, the progress of boys and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has substantially improved. The progress of disadvantaged pupils has also improved in English and in 2015 was better than that achieved by pupils nationally.
- Although standards have been maintained in mathematics, teaching remains variable and a significant minority of pupils do not display positive attitudes in lessons. Instabilities in staffing have affected pupils' confidence and progress in the subject and disadvantaged pupils continue to make less progress.
- Leaders are aware that the most able pupils do not make rapid rates of progress. This is reflected in the school's improvement plan and in performance management targets, but actions to improve most-able pupils' progress are not having a discernible impact.
- While many aspects of the school's self-evaluation are accurate, leaders are not as aware of some of the concerns expressed by pupils and parents over behaviour and levels of challenge.
- Middle leadership has improved in a number of subjects, including English and science, where high expectations, effective teaching and assessment are contributing to improving rates of pupils' progress. However, middle leaders' actions to improve the impact of feedback have not been as effective.
- Leaders have introduced new systems to improve the quality of feedback. Where these are used effectively, they are leading to improving progress. However, they are not being used consistently across all subjects and year groups and this contributes to variability in the progress that pupils make. On occasions, leaders' judgements on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are over-generous.
- Performance management processes are rigorous and the headteacher and governing body review teachers' performance closely against challenging targets.
- Leaders have implemented a curriculum that reflects pupils' needs. An increasing proportion are now following more academic routes in science and effective alternative provision helps pupils to reach their desired destinations. Pupils develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural development awareness through an integrated general studies and assembly programme. Through charity work, community activities and international links, pupils develop a wider sense of social responsibility.
- Leaders and governors have effectively used additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium to enable them to make good progress in English, although differences in mathematics have not diminished as quickly. Funding for pupils who

have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively to enable these pupils, including those with a diagnosis of high-functioning autism, to make improving rates of progress. Year 7 catch-up funding has enabled increasing numbers of pupils to make improved progress.

- The recruitment and retention of specialist mathematics teachers have proved challenging for school leaders and contributed to the slower progress in this area.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has been enhanced since the previous inspection and their actions have contributed to much higher standards of accountability.
- Governors are closely involved in monitoring standards and have worked closely with leaders to address key areas for improvement. They track progress more closely and hold subject leaders to account, often requesting their presence at governors' meetings to explain areas of underperformance.
- Governors have worked with the headteacher to ensure a closer focus on some of the key areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. As a result, the progress of boys, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and many disadvantaged pupils has improved.
- Governors' evaluation of the monitoring of the quality of teaching is less accurate and has not always revealed some of the behavioural concerns articulated by a significant minority of pupils and parents and evidenced on inspection.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders take their responsibilities to keep pupils safe very seriously. Appropriate checks are made on the suitability of appointments, and staff training is up to date. Governors are closely involved in checking safeguarding and are trained on safer recruitment and a range of key safeguarding issues. Leaders work closely with external agencies to address any concerns over pupils' welfare. Leaders also work with the local authority to review safeguarding procedures further. The large majority of pupils feel safe in school and show an awareness of how to stay safe, particularly online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is varied and contributes varying rates of progress across subjects and year groups. Although teachers are aware of pupils' needs, they do not consistently pitch work that is well matched to the needs of all learners, particularly the most able.
- While teaching enables many pupils to display positive approaches to learning, a significant minority demonstrate more negative learning behaviours by talking over teachers and other pupils and failing to respond swiftly to teachers' requests. As a result, learning can be undermined and rates of progress reduced.

- Leaders have introduced new systems to improve the impact of feedback upon pupils' progress. When used effectively in subjects such as English, feedback helps pupils to improve their writing and develop deeper insights into texts. However, the implementation is variable as in too many cases feedback does not address common misconceptions or give pupils sufficiently clear guidance on the actions they could take to make good progress.
- Although leaders have worked hard to maintain standards over a time of some turbulence, teaching in mathematics still requires improvement. Teachers do not regularly check pupils' understanding or effectively support those who fall behind. Teaching does not sufficiently address the needs of the most able pupils for more challenging work that deepens their understanding.
- Teaching is strong in English and science where teachers show convincing subject expertise and explain concepts in ways that help pupils to learn effectively. Expectations of conduct and standards of work are high, while teachers manage time in lessons effectively, enabling pupils to learn well.
- The least able readers are able to use decoding strategies to help them to read, while the most able typically read with fluency and understanding.
- Pupils can work extremely positively when motivated, as was evident in creative subjects such as textiles and drama. In textiles, pupils combined thoughtful planning and on-going evaluation with the development of new skills. In drama, pupils showed focus and concentration in building character roles and developing self-confidence through a range of performance skills. This was further reflected in physical education where strong engagement and positive relationships supported pupils in making good progress.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. Teachers and teaching assistants complement teaching with well-tailored interventions that support improving rates of progress. The enhanced mainstream provision for pupils with a diagnosis of high-functioning autism provides effective support.
- Teachers set homework in line with the school's home learning policy. Pupils feel that homework can consolidate their learning but that tasks rarely deepen or extend their learning for the work to come.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Over a third of pupils who responded to the pupil questionnaire raised concerns about how effectively incidents of bullying were handled and these concerns were echoed in meetings and by a significant minority of parents.
- Pupils did express a knowledge of how to stay safe, and through lessons and in assemblies had been taught how to stay safe online and warned of the associated dangers of sexting.
- Through leadership activities, charity work and links with local communities, pupils

develop a strong sense of social responsibility.

- Pupils benefit from independent careers information and guidance that helps the majority of pupils to progress to further study or employment.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers equip pupils with effective learning skills that help them to make progress in their learning. Where teaching is less effective, a lack of clear guidance limits their potential to work at greater depth.
- Pupils accessing alternative provision in agricultural studies at a local farm benefit from good support and value their learning. Appropriate risk assessments and checks are completed to support their safety and well-being.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Attitudes to learning are not consistently positive. In some subjects, low-level disruption interrupts the flow of lessons, disturbing teachers' explanations and pupils' responses to questions. In the pupil questionnaire, only half of pupils felt behaviour was good in lessons or around the site most of the time. These views were reflected in meetings with groups of pupils and in the views of staff.
- Behaviour around the school site is variable. While the majority of pupils are well behaved, a significant minority are over-boisterous on corridors and in playgrounds, occasionally using unacceptable language and failing to comply with adults' requests.
- Pupils willingly take on responsibility as prefects and house captains and develop responsibility as leaders. They help younger pupils at times of transition. Prefects support school events and carry out supervisory support at lunchtimes and breaks.
- Overall levels of attendance are broadly in line with those seen nationally. Leaders have intensified their actions to improve the attendance of key groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs. There are emerging signs that these new actions are reducing rates of absence, but these pupils remain much more likely to be absent than is the case nationally.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- While progress is improving in a number of areas, pupils are not currently making consistently strong progress in a wide range of subjects. The significant improvements in the progress and attainment of pupils in English and science are not matched in the progress they are currently making in mathematics.
- The headteacher has led decisive improvements in outcomes at key stage 4 over the past two years. Overall rates of progress are good and boys and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have made extremely positive rates of progress, including pupils who access the enhanced mainstream provision for pupils with high-functioning autism. Outcomes in English have substantially improved and overall attainment was sustained in 2016 over a period of staffing change.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress that is better than that of others

nationally in English but continue to make weaker progress in mathematics.

- The most able pupils make slower progress than other groups and the proportions of pupils achieving the highest grades fell in 2016. In lessons and in books there was evidence that the most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not being consistently challenged to achieve the highest outcomes.
- Pupils are making impressive progress in subjects such as English and science. Thorough planning informed by high levels of subject expertise are leading to impressive rates of progress.
- Progress in pupils' books over time varies. While clear strengths were evident in subjects such as English and French, there are instances where the level of work set did not enable pupils to make good progress. Over a third of pupils who responded to the pupils' questionnaire felt they were not consistently challenged and these views were reflected on a number of occasions in work in books.
- Pupils are increasingly better prepared for the next stage of their education, although weaker progress in mathematics limits this preparedness of some pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	121670
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10019741

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	611
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gerry Price
Headteacher	Sian Rees
Telephone number	01677 422419
Website	www.bedalehighschool.org.uk
Email address	admin@bedalehighschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 September 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about admissions arrangements, as oversubscription criteria and links to the local authority admissions policy and procedures are not clearly indicated.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average.

- The school provides specialist provision for pupils with a diagnosis of high-functioning autism.
- The school's 2015 results met the government's floor standards for pupils' attainment and progress. Unvalidated results suggest that the school will also meet the government's floor standards in 2016.
- A small number of pupils are educated for part of the week on a local farm where they follow an agricultural qualification.
- Since the previous inspection, the associate headteacher has taken up the post of headteacher. A number of other staffing changes have taken place, including the appointment of a new head of mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons or part-lessons. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors on a number of observations on the first morning.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and a wider group of staff. The lead inspector also met the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also met a representative of the local authority. Inspectors talked to groups of pupils from key stages 3 and 4 at lunchtime on day two of the inspection.
- One inspector visited the off-site provision at a local farm.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, breaks and lunchtimes and as they left the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors examined the quality of work in a wide range of books and folders. They discussed pupils' work and their learning with them in lessons.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work and considered documents including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, curriculum plans and information relating to pupils' achievement and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account 60 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey, 58 free text responses, 35 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 87 responses to the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Ann Muxworthy	Ofsted Inspector

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