

Bradfield School

Kirk Edge Road, Worrall, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S35 0AE

Inspection dates

27–28 September 2017

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
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- GCSE results in Year 11 in 2016 and 2017 were not good enough. They reflected underachievement by pupils in both these years.
- In the 16 to 19 provision, AS- and A-level results were not as high as they should have been in 2016 and 2017 for relatively able cohorts of students.
- Current pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, do not make the progress that they should.
- Weaknesses in the application of quality assurance procedures by leaders and managers mean that the required improvements have not materialised.
- The use of assessment data to track the progress of individual pupils and groups has not been effective enough.
- Teaching frequently lacks challenge for the most able pupils and sometimes does not adequately cater for lower attaining pupils.
- Personal development and welfare for some vulnerable pupils are not good. Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupil premium funding are not used effectively.
- Communication with parents and carers is not as good as it should be because the website does not provide them with all the information it should. The school's responses to parents' enquiries are often too slow.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving. The recently appointed headteacher and his newly constituted senior team know what needs to be done. They have the capacity to raise the quality of teaching and ensure that GCSE and A-level results rise.
- Good teaching in languages, physical education, design and technology, geography and history enables pupils to progress well.
- The school is calm and orderly. Pupils behave well and relationships with teachers are good. Staff ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure.
- Many students are successful with university applications from the 16 to 19 provision.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that quality assurance programmes have sufficient rigour to improve teaching, learning and assessment across the school
 - improving the use of assessment data at senior and subject level so that all members of staff fully understand whether pupils are meeting their targets and provide extra support to those who fall behind
 - ensuring that the support for disadvantaged pupils diminishes the difference between their performance and that of other pupils nationally
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan adequately to enable pupils of all abilities to progress well
 - fully challenging the most able pupils and providing effective support for the least able pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - checking that teaching and the tracking of students' progress in the 16 to 19 provision enable them to achieve as they should
 - better planning to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and accelerating their progress
 - raising teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation of their work
 - using the school's most effective teaching as a model for other teachers in the school to learn from in order to help to eliminate the wide variation in the quality of teaching.
- Improve communication with parents by:
 - ensuring that the school website fully meets all requirements on the publication of information, including identifying a named person to deal with enquiries
 - responding to enquiries and concerns from parents more quickly.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers at all levels have been too complacent, believing that the school was providing pupils with a good quality of education when it was not. Quality assurance arrangements have been insufficiently rigorous to raise the quality of teaching.
- The management of subjects has been far too variable, weaker teaching has not improved and pupils of all abilities have continued to underachieve.
- The use of funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has not been effective enough. Similarly, the use of pupil premium funding intended to support disadvantaged pupils and the catch-up funding for pupils who join Year 7 below where they should be in English and mathematics has not been effective enough either. Consequently, these groups of pupils have underachieved.
- The tracking of progress of groups of pupils and individuals has not been sufficiently effective in quickly identifying those who are falling behind and providing the extra support that they require.
- The school website does not meet requirements in terms of the information that should be available for parents. A number of parents have concerns about communication with the school. Many parents say that the school is too slow in responding to their questions and concerns.
- Since the recent appointment of the headteacher, and the deputy headteacher to assist him, improvements have begun to emerge. The senior team is well aware of the size of the task that the school faces. They understand the necessity for a complete change of culture so that the good progress made in some subjects can be replicated across all the others. This team, with the full support of governors, now has the capacity to make the changes that are needed, call members of staff to account and ensure that pupils and students make better progress than previously. Leaders have placed a higher profile on professional development and training, which aims to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- The school development plan focuses on attendance, behaviour and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. There have been improvements in the first two of these areas and leaders' emphasis is now focused on teaching and learning.
- The school offers a suitable choice of subjects in Years 10 and 11 for pupils to continue to GCSE. A good range of extra-curricular experiences such as sports, music and drama augments these.
- Curriculum changes in Years 10 and 11 are beginning to enable pupils to make better progress. The number of full GCSE examinations they will take has been reduced from 12 to 9 to enable pupils to improve their grades. The introduction of double certification science is much better suited to around half of the pupils in Years 10 and 11, who were finding the rigours of the separate sciences (physics, chemistry and biology) too demanding.
- As a consequence of recent curriculum changes, pupils are now making better progress in mathematics and science than previously. Managers now have an accurate view of

pupils' current achievement. They can also identify where further support is needed to ensure that pupils reach their targets. This is because of recent improvements to the assessment of Year 11 pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science.

- Leaders are now increasingly looking at ways to ensure that the curriculum best suits the needs of all the pupils. They have started to provide an increasing range of opportunities for pupils to participate in vocational courses with other providers. These include courses in farming, motor vehicle repair, and health and beauty.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has a positive effect in helping to underpin their confidence-building and an increase in the knowledge of the world around them and its cultures. Discussions about British values enable pupils to gain a good grasp of topics such as democracy, the rule of law, tolerance and respect for others.
- Newly qualified teachers are enthusiastic about the quality of support and guidance they receive from their colleagues and more senior staff. They enjoy teaching at the school because they find that pupils are receptive and eager to learn.
- The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis because members of staff consistently apply the behaviour code when appropriate and pupils respond well.

Governance of the school

- Governors are passionate about the school and supportive of the headteacher.
- They clearly understand that pupils have not made enough progress and that GCSE results are too low. Some governors suspected that the school was not doing well enough, but were to some extent confused by external reports that said pupils' outcomes were good. They now recognise that considerable improvement is necessary if the school is to provide a good standard of education.
- Governors provide a good level of challenge to the headteacher and now constantly seek reassurance that improvements are materialising. They ensure that statutory safeguarding requirements are met and that performance management arrangements follow school policy.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective because there are clear systems in place that members of staff follow consistently.
- Effective checking on the suitability of all adults who work with or have access to pupils is firmly embedded into the daily life of the school. A very robust system of checking visitors at reception adds to the security of pupils. Records relating to the full checking of everyone working in the school meet all requirements.
- There are plenty of adults on hand at break- and lunchtimes. All members of staff are aware of their role in ensuring pupils' safety and welfare. Records show that they have all received the required training.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is of an inconsistent quality and far from being good overall. Consequently, pupils do not make good progress across a range of subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- Some teaching, especially in mixed-ability classes, fails to match work to pupils' differing needs because the planning of lessons does not cater for all abilities. Sometimes work is directed towards the middle- and lower ability pupils and does not fully challenge the most able, who find it too easy. On other occasions, teaching stretches the most able, leaving the lower ability pupils in the class struggling to cope and becoming frustrated. Teachers do not consistently plan to cater for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- There is insufficient emphasis on the development of extended writing in science. This means that pupils are not well prepared to answer GCSE questions involving precise, accurate and extended responses, for example in physics, chemistry and biology.
- Teachers do not always insist that pupils set their work out neatly and take a pride in it. Consequently, the presentation of pupils' work is variable. Many pupils take a pride in their work so it is set out well and useful to them for revision purposes. However, other pupils' work is untidy and difficult to follow, particularly in mathematics and science where there are often poorly executed diagrams and many crossings-out.
- Teaching in some subjects is strong and enables pupils to learn quickly. Evidence from design and technology lessons shows that pupils often produce work of high quality. Geography, history and languages lessons are planned in ways that enable all pupils to progress well so they make good progress in a relatively short time. Learning is often rapid in physical education.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and sometimes provide pupils with interesting activities, which develops their learning well. Classrooms are calm and productive because teachers manage their pupils well and insist that they listen and concentrate.
- Some teachers provide pupils with an accurate analysis of what they have done well and how they should make improvements. These teachers frequently provide pupils with extra tasks to address gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Recent improvements in assessments and data collection mean that managers at all levels are beginning to have a much better idea than previously about the progress that all groups of pupils are making. Very recently introduced assessment tests in Year 11 are based upon previous GCSE questions and provide leaders with an accurate picture of what pupils know and understand and where they need further help.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. This is because it does not make good enough use of its pupil premium funding to provide the disadvantaged pupils with all of the personal support they need.

- There is a gap between what the school provides in terms of its dialogue with parents and what they expect. For example, when contacted by parents, the school's responses are often too slow and there is a general concern by parents about not being able to contact subject staff.
- Other aspects of the pupils' personal development are strong. For example, supervision arrangements operating during the school day keep pupils supported and safe. Most pupils are confident young people. They show respect for others and have positive attitudes to school, their peers and staff.
- Independent careers advice, together with school guidance, enable pupils to make appropriate choices about the next steps in their education and their future aspirations.
- Citizenship and religious studies lessons enable pupils to gain a good grasp of a range of different faiths and beliefs, together with an understanding of the cultures that make up modern Britain.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe and healthy and keep fit. Teachers and their assistants teach them how to recognise risks and keep themselves safe online.
- The school's records show that bullying and other threats to pupils' welfare are quite infrequent. Pupils confirm that they have few concerns in these respects and that members of staff deal with incidents effectively when they do occur.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are well behaved in lessons, when moving around the site and when socialising at break- and lunchtimes. They are polite, welcoming and helpful. The good behaviour in lessons means that pupils can concentrate on their work or listen to the teacher with almost no possibility of interruption. Occasionally, when the pace of learning is too slow or when work is too difficult for pupils, a small minority will lose focus on their work.
- Since the beginning of the autumn term, pupils' attendance has improved and is approaching higher targets than were previously set, in response to efforts made by leaders through the application of the school development plan. Pupils attending vocational courses behave and attend well. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also improving.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- GCSE results in 2016 and 2017 were not good enough and represented underachievement by pupils. This is accepted by school leaders and governors and has led to much greater demands of teachers in an attempt to improve the amount of progress that pupils make. There is now compelling evidence to suggest that progress of all groups of pupils is accelerating, especially in Years 10 and 11.
- Although results in geography, history, languages, and design and technology indicated that pupils had achieved in line with national averages for their abilities, those in

science did not. Mathematics and English results in 2016 reflected adequate progress for pupils over five years. However, this was not the case in 2017.

- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils by the end of Year 11 in 2016 and 2017 showed that they had underachieved compared with other pupils nationally starting from the same points in Year 7. There was a large difference in performance between this group of pupils and others in the school in both years. The main reason for this was that the pupil premium funding intended to support them was not used effectively. Insufficient demands were made on them in class, they were absent too often and there was insufficient tracking of their progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make variable progress across subjects. They now make better progress than they previously achieved in English, but much less so in mathematics and some other subjects. This is because support staff are not effectively deployed and teaching is not well planned to meet these pupils' needs. Furthermore, weak attendance for some of these pupils has reduced their opportunities for learning.
- Typically, pupils join Year 7 with above-average attainment but they have been gaining only average GCSE results compared with the national average. These average results gave the impression that the school was comparing well with the national picture, but actually, they reflected underachievement for above-average ability cohorts of pupils.
- Although there is still much variation in rates of progress across individual lessons and the subjects that pupils study, there is a considerable amount of evidence to suggest that leaders are getting to grips with an underachieving school. They are making changes that are clearly putting greater demands on staff and pupils in an effort to improve attainment and progress.
- Where GCSE results in 2016 and 2017 indicated that pupils had not done well enough in mathematics and science, leaders are taking action to address these areas. More regular assessment with GCSE practice questions in Years 10 and 11 is raising pupils' aspirations and indicating clearly to them how close they are to some quite demanding targets. Curriculum changes are starting to help teachers to tailor work much more closely to pupils' needs so, for example, there is more evidence of the highest ability pupils being challenged more than previously. The increase in expectations is raising attainment for all groups of pupils.
- The school's work to develop pupils' reading is strong. Year 9 pupils, including the lowest ability pupils, can read at the level necessary to understand work in Years 10 and 11. Pupils generally express themselves adequately on paper in terms of extended written English, especially in history and geography. However, in science, there is still insufficient opportunity for pupils to write at length, for example in explaining scientific phenomena. In this subject, pupils are not fully developing the necessary skills of writing with precision for GCSE.
- The small numbers of pupils who attend vocational courses with other providers of education speak very positively about their experiences because they can see how the certification they expect to gain will help them into employment in their future careers. They are mostly making good progress on these courses and can explain in some detail the practical tasks they can accomplish, for example changing worn-out brake pads and shoes on cars.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Students' AS- and A-level results in 2016 and 2017 show that they had underachieved. In 2016, the underachievement particularly applied to girls. In 2017, there was no difference in the performance of boys and girls. Results in 2017 were similar to those of 2016 and not good enough, given the GCSE results that the students had gained in 2015.
- Part of the reason for the underachievement in 2017 was that the monitoring of students' progress in the subjects they were studying was not rigorous. It did not identify quickly enough the students who were falling behind and so the extra help that they needed was not provided. Consequently, the proportion of students achieving A* to B grades fell quite sharply in 2017.
- The quality of teaching is variable. Although many groups of students make strong progress, there are some subjects where they do not. The stronger teaching leads to results that compare favourably with national averages for attainment and progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge. However, some teachers do not take sufficient account of the wide range of abilities of students in their groups. This means that the most able students are sometimes not being fully challenged, while the weakest pupils do not always have a clear understanding of the topics they are studying.
- Leadership and management require improvement because students have not made good progress in the past and the tracking of students' performance has lacked rigour. Leaders are now fully aware that in the recent past, students have underachieved. New developments recently put into place are intended to give students a better opportunity to succeed. The school has increased the amount of teaching time in each subject, set targets that are more challenging for students and introduced a far more rigorous tracking system designed to identify and support those requiring help. These measures are beginning to have an effect, and recent assessments indicate that students' progress is beginning to accelerate.
- Students are relatively content with the quality of education they receive. They are mature and sensible and can be frequently found studying on their own in various locations in the school. In the absence of their teacher, a group of art students were producing some quite stunning portrait drawings without any assistance. Students have sufficient knowledge and understanding of English and mathematics to enable them to study a full range of A-level courses. They are eager to do well and most know where they wish to continue their studies after leaving school. Most students who start in Year 12 persevere and complete their A levels in Year 13. A good range of extra-curricular activities helps them to gain confidence and widens their horizons.
- Careers education and guidance very successfully assist students in planning for the future. The school has a good record in terms of liaison with universities to enable students to choose carefully those that will provide them with the best route to their chosen careers. Teachers justifiably celebrate the successes of their students in gaining university places by detailing their results and destinations in displays around the school. These do help to motivate younger pupils who begin to understand what is possible if they work hard and progress well.

School details

Unique reference number	139101
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10036527

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,144
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	178
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Deborah Eaton
Headteacher	Ian Gilbert
Telephone number	0114 286 3861
Website	www.bradfieldschool.net
Email address	enquiries@bradfield.sheffield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 May 2013

Information about this school

- Bradfield School is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school became an academy in 2012.
- There is an expanding 16 to 19 provision.
- The current headteacher was appointed from 1 January 2017 and the deputy headteacher from 1 September 2017.
- Most pupils are White British.
- There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups. Very few speak English as an additional language.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils supported through pupil premium funding is below that found nationally.
- A small number of pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow vocational courses one day a week at Sheaf Specialist Vocational College, Syreeta's Make-up Academy, Whirlow Farm and Doncaster, Rotherham and Districts General Technician Association.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about how to contact the school, details about what pupils will study in some subjects, Year 7 catch-up funding and the impact of its spending of pupil premium funding on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish, in relation to details about what pupils will study in some subjects, Year 7 catch-up funding and the impact of its spending of pupil premium funding on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 35 lessons, six jointly with senior leaders. They observed pupils in all year groups being taught and looked at a wide range of written work in English, mathematics, science and other subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, middle leaders, governors, the special educational needs coordinator, the head of 16 to 19 provision, members of staff responsible for safeguarding and groups of pupils, including those who attend vocational courses with other providers.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's review of its performance, records of pupils' progress, attendance records, incident logs and safeguarding procedures.
- An inspector listened to some Year 9 pupils reading.
- Inspectors also took account of 154 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 153 free-text messages from parents.

Inspection team

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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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