

Bradfield School

Kirk Edge Lane, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S35 0EA

Inspection dates 8–9 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students are extremely well behaved, happy and feel safe. They are justifiably proud members of the Bradfield School community. They value the help and support they receive from the adults that work with them.
- Students make good progress in a number of subjects with GCSE results comparing favourably with national figures. Students' achievements in English, geography and history are particularly impressive. Effective action to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics has seen results in this subject rise to above average.
- Teaching is typically good with some examples of outstanding practice. Consequently, students make consistently good progress in most subjects. Strengths include teachers' high expectations of their students and the ways they use questioning to challenge students and deepen their understanding.
- The school is well led and managed. Leaders and managers are committed to improving the school and are striving for academic excellence for all. Well supported by a strong governing body, they have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and are focussing effectively on improving teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is yet outstanding. Some lessons, for example in science, do not present enough challenge for more-able students or give them enough opportunities to work independently.
- Systems to share the good to outstanding practice in the school are underdeveloped.
- In a number of subjects, students' work is not marked often enough. When it is, it often does not provide clear and detailed information about what a student has done well and what they need to do to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 41 part-lessons taught by 39 different teachers. Two joint observations were carried out in partnership with one member of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors also made brief visits to a number of lessons and observed students during form time, at break and lunchtime.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, the headteacher, senior leaders and heads of subject departments. Inspectors also held meetings with a group of teachers and groups of students of differing ages.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in the 103 responses to the on-line survey, Parent View. They also considered the views of parents who communicated directly with Ofsted. Inspectors also considered the 25 responses to the questionnaire returned by members of staff.
- Students' work was scrutinized as were the school's policies, minutes of governing body meetings, the school's analysis of how well it is doing and its improvement plan. The school's analysis of the progress that students are making was also analysed.

Inspection team

Charles Lowry, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Drew Crawshaw	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jane Alexander	Additional Inspector
Sheila Kaye	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bradfield is an average-sized, mixed comprehensive school located on the edge of Worrall village in Bradfield, about five miles to the north-west of Sheffield city centre.
- The school converted to become an academy on 1 December 2012. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was previously inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good.
- Bradfield is a specialist science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) school. The school uses these subjects to help students develop important life skills such as team working and problem-solving skills.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is extra funding the school receives for students entitled to free school meals, those in the care of the local authority or the children of parents serving in the armed forces.
- Most students are of White British heritage and consequently few of them are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of students who require extra help with their learning, including those supported at school action, is below average. However, the proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- About 12 students in Key Stage 4 attend the Sheffield College one day each week to follow preparation for work courses. These courses include catering and child care.
- The school will open a sixth form in September 2013.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to drive up standards by improving teaching even more so that it is all at least good and an increasing proportion is outstanding, particularly in science by:
 - giving students even more opportunities to work in groups or independently in lessons so that they can find things out for themselves
 - making sure that teachers plan activities to meet students' individual needs, particularly those of the more-able students
 - making sure that the school's marking policy is followed by all teachers so that students receive regular feedback on their work; knowing what they have done well and what they need to do to improve
 - making sure that the good to outstanding practice that already exists in the school is shared effectively so that teachers learn from each other about what works best in the classroom.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Examination results at the end of Year 11 are good and in 2012 most students left the school with at least five *A to C grades at GCSE. This is a direct result of good quality teaching in most subjects. Students achieve extremely well in English and examination results in geography and history are high.
- In 2012, most students' performance in mathematics was well-below expectations. Senior leaders have taken decisive and effective action to improve the quality of provision in this subject. As a consequence, students are now making progress which is above national averages.
- This year for the first time, the school entered students early for GCSE mathematics. As a result of improvements in the quality of teaching and organisation in the department, current Year 11 students' results in mathematics are well-above average. Students who failed to achieve their target grade have continued with the course in order to improve their performance. Students who achieved an *A grade are now following an advanced level course in mathematics in order to prepare them for further study and deepen their understanding of the subject.
- Students who require extra help with their learning achieve better results than their peers nationally and make good progress. This is because they are well supported in lessons and teachers take account of these students' needs when planning learning activities.
- Students who are entitled to free school meals achieve higher than average GCSE results in a number of subjects including English and mathematics. In 2012, the results of this group of students were about one GCSE grade lower in both subjects than their peers in the school. This gap in attainment however, is narrower than that found nationally and demonstrates that this group of students make good progress.
- Students who attend Sheffield College and follow preparation for work courses achieve well. These courses effectively meet the needs and aspirations of this group of learners.
- When students join the school in Year 7 they are set challenging targets for achievement in each of their subjects. The school rigorously and regularly monitors students' progress against these targets. Students who are underperforming are quickly identified and given carefully tailored help so that they get back on track.
- Most parents who responded to the on-line Parent View survey feel that their child is making good progress; inspectors agree.
- Although the large majority of groups exceed expected progress in a number of curriculum areas this is not the case in science; where students achieve in line with national expectations. This is because in some lessons activities are not challenging enough for more-able students. In addition, they are not given enough opportunities to work independently so that they can find things out for themselves.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in most subjects is at least good with examples of outstanding practice. There are particular strengths in the quality of teaching in English, history and geography. Lessons are typically calm and purposeful. Relationships are strong and students find their teachers and the other adults that they work with approachable and supportive. All these factors ensure a focused atmosphere for learning and as a result students make good progress.
- In most lessons, students make rapid progress because teachers' expectations of what they can achieve are high and students are clear about what they are being asked to do. Teachers focus sharply on making sure that students are able to grasp the key knowledge and understanding of the subject material. They use questioning skilfully to challenge students, make them think and deepen their understanding.
- Effective teaching of reading, writing and mathematics means that students are able to use

these skills across the curriculum.

- The school's specialism has been used effectively to develop students' team working and problem-solving skills. For example, students in each year group are given the opportunity to work on projects set in real life contexts. This gives them the opportunity to work collaboratively and link what they have learned in a range of subjects to solve a problem. For example, in Year 8, students use their numeracy, literacy and technology skills to design and market a visitor attraction based in the local Loxley Valley. The students eagerly embrace these ways of working and rise to the challenge of being given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning.
- This collaborative approach to learning has been adopted by a number of subjects, including English, and as a result, students make good progress. However, this is not always the case and in some lessons, for example in science, students' progress is slower. This is because occasionally teachers adopt a 'one size fits all' approach with all students doing the same activity. This activity often lacking challenge for more-able students. Teachers strictly control what students are learning, rather than giving them the opportunity to work either on their own or with each other to find things out for themselves.
- Some teachers mark work regularly, informing students about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. However, this good practice is not consistent. The work in some books is marked infrequently and teachers' marking can be unhelpful. As a consequence students are unable to assess their own progress or learn from their mistakes.
- The large majority of parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire feel that their child is well taught.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The students of Bradfield School are a real asset. They are invariably friendly, polite and courteous towards each other, visitors and their teachers. They are a credit to the school and their families. Consequently, the school is a well ordered and calm place of learning where relationships are warm, friendly and built upon a foundation of mutual respect.
- Students are cheerful, safe and secure; valuing the support and help they receive from the staff who work with them. They enjoy learning and are proud to be members of the school community. This is reflected in their above-average attendance and good achievement.
- There are high levels of care and support for all students. Those students who are at risk of not doing as well they might are identified quickly and given extra help to enable them to get back on track.
- Bradfield students have very positive attitudes to their studies. When they are given opportunities to work in groups, for example in English and technology, they seize the chance of taking responsibility for their own learning, supporting each other as they find things out for themselves. These lessons help the students develop their group working and problem-solving skills.
- In those lessons which are mainly teacher led and where students have to listen for long periods, students strive to maintain their concentration and respect the right of others to learn.
- The students have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take including racist and other prejudice-based bullying. They have also been well prepared by the school to enable them to use the internet and electronic forms of communication safely. When asked the students say that bullying in the school is rare but that when it does occur, it is dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Most parents who responded to the on-line Parent View survey believe that students are well behaved, happy and safe at school; inspectors agree.

The leadership and management are good

- This is a well led school. The headteacher provides visible, strong leadership and communicates to colleagues his deep seated belief that every student can achieve their best. He places academic excellence on an equal footing with students' personal development. Consequently, students feel well cared for, supported and valued.
- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate view of how well the school is doing and have correctly identified the school's strengths and areas for development. The need to continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning to further drive up achievement, especially in science, is of high priority. However, mechanisms for sharing the good to outstanding practice that already exists in the school are underdeveloped.
- Teachers' performance is rigorously monitored. All teachers are set annual targets for their professional practice and they are held accountable for the progress their students make. Teachers' pay progression is linked to the successful achievement of their targets.
- The additional money the school receives from the pupil premium is targeted effectively and students who benefit from this funding consistently make good progress and achieve well. Leaders and governors have used this additional finance creatively, for example, making sure that all students are included in curriculum enrichment activities like school trips. They have also increased the number of teaching assistants to provide additional support for students in lessons and increased staffing to reduce some class sizes.
- The school has made effective use of an external consultant to improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics. This has been a key factor in the improvement in the progress students are now making in this subject.
- The school promotes equal opportunities and robustly challenges discrimination. Equal opportunities are promoted through the curriculum and other activities. The range of vocational and academic subjects that the school offers ensures that the curriculum is broad and balanced. This, along with the school's commitment to the development of key life skills through its subject specialism, meets the needs and aspirations of the students well providing them with a sound preparation for the next stage. As a result, the number of students who leave the school to continue their education or to enter employment or training is higher than both local and national figures.
- The curriculum and multiplicity of clubs, trips and school to school activities that Bradfield is involved in promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well
- Safeguarding procedures and child protection systems meet all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school is good because:**
 - The governing body is knowledgeable, share the headteacher's vision and help shape the school's plans for future improvement. Governors hold the headteacher robustly to account for the standards achieved by the students. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, including the quality of teaching, and the standards achieved by the students. They have undertaken training with an external consultant to gain a greater understanding of how well the school's students are performing, when compared to all students nationally. They have secure systems in place to ensure that the resources the school receives, including the additional funding through the pupil premium, are used effectively. They have an involvement in the decisions made about teachers' pay progression and its links with performance management.

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	139101
Local authority	Not applicable
Inspection number	411379

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	913
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Deborah Eaton
Principal	David Conway
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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