

Belvoir High School and Melton Vale Post 16 Centre

Barkestone Lane, Bottesford, Nottingham, NG13 0AX

Inspection dates 14 – 15 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The school's systems for improving teaching quality are not bringing about rapid improvement. Leaders have been too slow to focus on each teacher's training needs.
- Teaching does not result in consistently good progress for all groups of students. Variation in the quality of teachers' marking means that students are not clear about how to improve.
- The school has concentrated on achievement in Year 11. Too little emphasis is placed on improving students' skills from Year 7, and progress in these younger classes is too variable.
- The school's planning for improvement is weak. It is not clear how actions taken will make a difference to students' achievement.
- Links between the school's senior managers and subject leaders are not used well enough to drive improvement.
- The governing body does not contribute enough to the school's improvement. Challenge is lacking, especially in relation to the achievement of all year groups, and of different groups of students.

The school has the following strengths

- The predecessor school had an impressive record of achievement in English and mathematics at GCSE. This has been supported by high quality intervention, particularly in Year 11.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Relationships are strong and students feel safe and supported.
- The sixth form is good. Students are highly motivated and benefit from a wide range of courses.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 44 part lessons, of which thirteen were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors observed senior leaders reporting back on the quality of learning and students' achievements in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the executive principal, head of school, head of centre, senior leaders, subject leaders, a group of teachers and six groups of students. The lead inspector had a discussion with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspectors took account of 87 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Responses to questionnaires completed by 45 staff were also analysed and considered.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the school's improvement plan; the analysis of students' progress; records of classroom observation; students' work; and records related to the behaviour and safety of students.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Peter McKenzie

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Additional Inspector

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Full report

Information about this school

- The Belvoir High School and Melton Vale Post 16 Centre is larger than the average secondary school. The school took responsibility for the Post 16 Centre in September 2011, after a period of transition. The Centre is over twenty miles from the school.
- Belvoir High School and Melton Vale Post 16 Centre converted to academy status in October 2012. When the predecessor school, Belvoir High School and Melton Vale Post 16 Centre, was last inspected by Ofsted in May 2010, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, and students known to be eligible for free school meals, is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs identified by the school and supported at school action is below average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs, or supported at school action plus, is below average.
- Most students are White British. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is low but increasing.
- Provision for virtually all students, including those in the Post 16 Centre, is provided on site. Three students access specialist provision; one to complete a Level 1 courses at a local special school, one to meet medical needs and another to complete a BTEC course.
- The governance of the school is undertaken by a Trust Board and Governing Body. The executive principal oversees the head of school and head of centre.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 4.
- Transition arrangements are in place for the school to support a 14-19 school in Leicestershire.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching in the school by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan lessons that have a clear focus on what students are expected to achieve
 - use assessment and prior attainment information to devise and adjust tasks and activities to meet the needs of students
 - use high quality marking and feedback regularly to help students to improve
 - promote students' independent learning and literacy skills.
- Improve achievement in the school so that all groups of students make good or better progress, particularly the boys, and students known to be eligible for the pupil premium by:
 - strengthening whole school systems for tracking and analysing the progress for cohorts and groups of students in all subjects
 - using progress information systematically from Year 7 to inform adjustments to teaching and early intervention.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that those leaders who conduct lesson observations have the skills to provide accurate judgements and feedback to teachers
 - taking greater account of students' progress when evaluating the quality of teaching
 - improving the rigour with which leaders check on the school's work, particularly relating to teaching and marking
 - strengthening the quality and accuracy of the school's self-evaluation

- ensuring that whole school improvement planning leads to a clear sense of direction and shared understanding about priorities
- formalising links between middle leaders, senior leaders, the head of school, executive principal and the governing body to strengthen accountability
- arranging an external review of governance in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The achievement of students requires improvement because of too much variation across the school, and between the school and sixth form. The emphasis on improving students' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills is not consistent across lessons in the school. Opportunities are often missed to develop students' independent learning skills.
- In 2012, in the predecessor school, the proportion of students to achieve five A* to C grades in GCSE including English and mathematics was well above average. This represented good progress overall in English and mathematics from students' average starting points in Year 7, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The school has continued an effective strategy from the predecessor school for boosting performance in English and mathematics in Year 11. This includes close analysis of tracking data. Additional classes to target specific teaching, selective use of re-sits in mathematics, and focused revision sessions have been successful. The school does not enter students early for GCSE.
- When students' best eight GCSE subjects are taken into account, the pace of progress is more variable. Girls make good progress in English, mathematics and science, and this boosts overall results. Boys make less progress over time; the gap in performance between the girls and boys is much wider than found nationally.
- A system to track students' progress has been introduced this year for Years 7 to 10 to provide an overview of performance. This is not used effectively to check on the progress of different groups of students, or to influence teaching plans or early intervention for students who are falling behind.
- Students eligible for pupil premium funding achieve well compared to similar students nationally in English and mathematics. The group do less well when compared to their peers. Students eligible for pupil premium funding achieve half a grade lower in English and one grade lower in mathematics. The achievement gap is even wider in science.
- The school is yet to identify the needs of students eligible for the pupil premium to determine the most appropriate ways to boost achievement. The same is true of the progress of students who are targeted for the Year 7 'catch-up' programme. Funding is currently supporting personal needs and access to school visits for a wider group of students. It is not possible to see how this spending is making a difference to the achievements of the target groups.
- The achievement of disabled students and those with special educational needs is dependent on the quality of teaching, which is too variable. Tracking systems do not check progress in Years 7 to 10. There are good individual examples of students who benefit personally and socially from the care and support they receive. This is not matched by a detailed analysis of their progress over time. Reports on the few students who access specialist provision off-site indicate that they are achieving well.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress. Robust tracking of progress, high expectations and effective intervention for individual students have led to a notable improvement this year. Rigorous analysis of results is used effectively to inform developments.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies between the school and sixth form. Sixth form teaching is good; this is confirmed by detailed monitoring records, observations by inspectors, progress information and feedback from students. Although there is much good teaching in the school, there is a lack of consistency, and too much requires improvement.
- The quality of lesson planning in the school is mixed. In too many lessons, expectations are not clear about what students are expected to achieve. The same task is frequently set for all, despite the range of students' abilities or needs. Adjustments are not made to enable more able

students to progress at a faster rate, or to consolidate the learning for students who require additional support.

- Teachers in the school have a good range of assessment information. This is not used well enough to plan and deliver lessons to accelerate learning and progress. Teachers do not always check out what students already know to inform their teaching. This means that time is sometimes wasted and the pace of learning is slow.
- The quality of marking and feedback varies considerably across the school. Too much marking is of poor quality. Feedback is limited on how students could improve. This is a barrier to students' progress. Stronger examples were noted that provided detailed feedback and guidance but these were rare.
- Good relationships between staff and students in the school ensure that the vast majority of lessons get off to a prompt start, and proceed well. In lessons observed, students displayed positive attitudes to learning and worked well together. Not all teachers encourage students to work collaboratively; in some lessons, students are seated apart. Students did report that disruption to learning does take place occasionally when lessons fail to interest the class.
- In the good and better lessons in the school and sixth form, high quality interactions between the teacher and students ensure that everyone is engaged. Carefully planned tasks, clear guidance and high expectations support good progress. The teachers' expert use of questioning deepens students' understanding. Feedback from students in the school and sixth form indicate that they value this interactive approach to support their learning.
- The quality of teaching for disabled students and those with special educational needs requires improvement. Excellent practice was observed in a BTEC science lesson. The lesson was carefully structured to guide students to learn about different sources of energy. Students made decisions about the best sources, and justified their choices. The teacher and teaching assistant worked effectively together to sustain a high level of motivation and learning. This is not typical. Lesson planning does not routinely focus on the skills and needs of students, or the sequence of tasks required for good progress. Teachers do not always make good use of teaching assistants.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The students are highly motivated and willing to learn. They are polite, courteous and respectful to each other, especially when they work together to share ideas. Behaviour around the school site at break-time and lunchtime is good. The atmosphere around the school is calm.
- Attendance is above average. Where there are individual cases of poor attendance, the school works hard to put solutions in place, for example alternative provision. The school's attendance would be even higher if the number of term time holidays was reduced.
- Not enough is done to analyse patterns of attendance by different groups of students, such as those known to be eligible for free school meals, or those with special educational needs, so that action can be taken to support improvement, or to explore links to achievement.
- Students feel safe and well cared for in school and parents overwhelmingly agree. Students are well informed about the dangers and damaging effects of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Bullying is taken seriously by the school and there are few incidents of bullying or racism.
- Students are overwhelmingly positive about their experiences in the sixth form. The strong community spirit and positive ethos promote high expectations and an enthusiasm for learning. Outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning are shown in respectful relationships and a strong desire to do well. Teachers are excellent role models; students appreciate the high quality support and guidance they receive.
- The wide range of enrichment opportunities in the school and centre makes a good contribution to students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Visits linked to different subjects and residential trips broaden students' experiences. Links with schools in Sri Lanka, Japan and China help students to understand and appreciate different cultures.
- Younger students in the school are enthusiastic about leadership opportunities. They assume responsibility for roles within the house system, or as form representatives or mentors. Older

students in the school would welcome more opportunities to take responsibility.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- In the last two years, the school has gone through significant change. Priority has been given to the transition to academy status, work involved in taking over the Post 16 Centre and discussions to support another school. There has been limited use of external support.
- There is a lack of clarity about how the school and Post 16 Centre operate together. An overview of effectiveness that covers the 11 to 19 age range is not produced by senior leaders. In the Post 16 Centre, judgements about the quality of provision and the performance of students are accurate.
- Judgements in the school are over-generous, including the assessment of teaching. Not enough attention is given to the progress of students. General training about aspects of teaching, such as questioning, is not supplemented by input to meet the specific needs of individual teachers. Senior and subject leaders have not had recent training on observing teaching to support accurate judgements. This means that evidence gathered to assess teachers' effectiveness is not sufficiently rigorous to inform decisions about performance and pay.
- Leaders have identified priorities, such as specific subject areas, and the achievement of boys, but action plans to drive improvement are lacking. This limits the school's ability to measure progress. Priorities are not shared sufficiently well across the school to provide a clear sense of direction.
- The school's subject leaders complete a range of activities to check on the quality of work. Each subject leader has a different system for tracking progress; some are of good quality, others require improvement. Links between senior leaders and subject leaders are informal. Too little emphasis is placed on checking quality and progress, or on improving teaching.
- Leaders and other staff have been successful in making improvements to behaviour, and creating a friendly and attractive learning environment. Data is collected on aspects of behaviour, including attendance and exclusions. Analysis is limited to support further improvement. This reduces the school's effectiveness in tackling inequality.
- Leadership of teaching and learning in the sixth form is good. A high priority is given to sharing best practice. The work of the teaching and learning team has been effective in increasing the proportion of good and better teaching. There is a strong link between monitoring, performance management and training for staff. This is evident in improving progression rates.
- The curriculum across the school and sixth form is good. It has been successfully broadened to meet the needs and aspirations of students. It is especially strong in promoting students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Students are well prepared through citizenship lessons and other activities to participate in modern British society, and to appreciate and respect diversity in the wider world.
- Feedback from parents, through Parent View and the school's own surveys, indicates strong support for the school. One aspect that is slightly less positive is the way the school listens and responds to concerns. This echoes feedback expressed by older students in discussions with inspectors. This stems from a desire to work more closely with school leaders and staff to make improvements to the school.
- Safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

■ The governance of the school

- The governing body is supportive but does not provide enough challenge to school leaders. The role of the governing body is evolving to meet the demands of academy status and the complexity of overseeing two sites over twenty miles apart. Lines of accountability and communication are not fully developed. Governors do not contribute to judgements about the quality of the school's work. There is limited evidence that governors ask probing questions related to students' achievements, particularly across year groups or for different groups of students. Their understanding is related to key attainment measures in Year 11. There is too

little focus on students' progress from their entry to the school. Governors have not been involved in discussions about pupil premium spending to enable them to check on progress. They are involved in discussions relating to the management of teachers' performance, including pay awards to reward staff. However, there has been too little attention given to checking that systems for monitoring teaching quality and students' progress are robust.

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	138819
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	413300

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	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1097
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	470
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Lovegrove
Principal	Jonathan Sherwin
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01949 844920
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