

# Beauchamp Middle School

Hawk Drive, Bedford, MK41 7JE

## Inspection dates

5 – 6 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The school has improved steadily and securely since its previous inspection. Good leadership and management systems are now in place. These have become well established giving the school good capacity to improve even further.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have been very effective in improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement.
- Good teaching has accelerated pupils' progress. All groups do equally well and those that were behind have now caught up.
- Teaching staff are fully accountable for pupils' progress. They receive good training and have played a full part in making the improvements that were needed.
- Behaviour is good in and out of the classroom. Pupils are friendly, caring and supportive of each other. They have complete trust in teachers and in each other to look after them and say they feel very safe at school.
- The effectiveness of leadership at subject level is now good. Most heads of subject have a clear understanding of what their responsibilities are and of how they can continue to improve pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher, staff and governors know the school's strengths and areas for further development, and are jointly taking decisive action to make continuous improvements.
- The schools stated aim 'to create a calm and purposeful school where everyone feels valued and able to achieve their full potential' is fast becoming a reality.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is still a small proportion of teaching that requires improvement and not enough teaching that is outstanding.
- A few leaders of subjects are still developing their leadership skills.

## Information about this inspection

- This two-day inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors gathered and evaluated a wide range of evidence of the school's work. They observed 24 teachers in 24 lessons, of which four were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors carried out brief visits to a series of other activities, including reading sessions and one school assembly.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including the school's checks on its performance, plans for improvement, day-to-day health and safety arrangements, safeguarding measures and policy documents. Inspectors analysed the school's records of pupils' rates of progress across the school. They also looked at the school's use of the pupil premium funding. Inspectors heard pupils read and looked closely at their workbooks.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the senior leadership team and other staff in leadership roles. Inspectors met with groups of pupils to discuss their experiences of school. Meetings were also held with a representative from the local authority and the Chair of the Interim Executive Board.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) available during the inspection, but the inspection took account of the school's summary analysis of its parental surveys.

## Inspection team

Trevor Riddiough, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Roisin Chambers

Additional Inspector

John Greevy

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.*

### Information about this school

- The school is of similar size to most middle schools, taking pupils from lower schools across the town.
- Nearly half the pupils that attend the school are from minority ethnic backgrounds and this proportion is twice the national average, as is that of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported through the pupil premium is just above that of the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding based on the number of pupils in local authority care, from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported by school action is just above average; while the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than most schools.
- An above-average number of pupils join or leave the school during the year.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has entered into a formal partnership with a global accountancy company in order to support its leadership development programmes.
- The school does not make any use of any alternative off-site provision for students.
- When the school was last inspected in September 2011, it was found to require special measures. Four monitoring visits have been undertaken since then to evaluate its progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is always good and a greater proportion is outstanding by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to develop their independent learning skills so that they can take greater responsibility for their learning in lessons
  - ensuring that all pupils respond to the advice given on how to improve their work further.
- Develop the role and skills of subject leaders so that they match the best practice already found in the school.
- Strengthen further the effectiveness of governance by making sure that there is a smooth transition from the effective interim executive board to a governing body whose members have the skills and expertise to support the school in its future development.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- When students join the school in Year 5, their starting points are just below average. Staff work well to develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics so that they make good progress across a range of subjects and in all years.
- The attainment of pupils has risen since the last inspection and continues to rise. This is as a direct result of better teaching and students' better attitudes to learning. Past underachievement has been remedied, including in English which was previously lagging behind other subjects.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils achieve or exceed the expected standards when they leave the school at the end of Year 8.
- A tracking system is in place that gives a clear and accurate picture of the progress pupils are making in all subjects across the school. This shows that pupils' progress in almost all subjects, including in English, mathematics and science has accelerated and that pupils generally make good progress in all year groups.
- Target setting and support have improved considerably since the last inspection. All students are set challenging targets in each subject they study and their progress against such targets is regularly and carefully assessed. Pupils know what they need to do to improve. These changes have made a significant contribution to improving the progress made by different groups of students and ensuring good levels of achievement.
- The school is using the pupil premium funding to provide additional tuition in English and mathematics, booster sessions at a local university, enrichment experiences designed to improve pupils' overall achievement, tailored support from teaching assistants as well as a breakfast club.
- The pupil premium funding is having a positive impact, particularly on the progress for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. These pupils now make the same progress as their peers, whereas, in 2012, eligible pupils in Year 8 were the equivalent of around one term behind their classmates in English and mathematics. The same improving picture is seen for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school supports 34 students through the Year 7 catch-up funding, which is additional funding to support the attainment of students who are below the expected levels in English and mathematics. The school uses this funding to provide one-to-one and small-group tuition in English and mathematics. Most pupils who are eligible are making good progress in both subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make better progress than most other pupils because their needs are widely known and understood by their teachers and teaching assistants, and tailored individual support is provided for them.
- Observations in lessons support this view of improving progress across the school. In most lessons, pupils participate fully in lessons and are keen to achieve their best.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- The school uses a good range of strategies to improve and develop teaching, based firmly on sharing good practice. This has resulted in consistently good practice across the school. A very small proportion of teaching still requires improvement, and none is inadequate.
- In the best lessons, teachers skilfully ask probing questions to deepen learning. Their planning takes account of the full ability range, including the most able as well as disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding, and adjust the learning activities accordingly. As a result, pupils are actively involved in furthering their own learning and make good progress.
- Learning tasks are active, interesting and relevant to the pupils. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson on forces, pupils carried out a test to find out if the parachutes they had designed could safely land an egg when dropped from a height. The room was abuzz with excitement as pupils discovered their results and learned as much from their failures as from their successes!
- In many lessons, pupils work independently of their teachers; for example, they are given time to explore their own ideas in pairs or groups and are challenged to test out their ideas on their own. 'Star challenges' are often used to extend learning further. However, this practice is not entirely consistent and occasionally lessons are too teacher-led and do not provide pupils with as many opportunities to learn on their own.
- Marking is regular and commonly provides clear advice on the next steps in learning, which encourages students to respond and improve their own work. These positive features are not yet universal, and pupils do not always follow up on the advice that they are given.
- There is good support for literacy both within lessons and in the additional support provided through guided reading, the use of display boards and the promotion of the library. There is a good focus on engaging boys in reading through the 'boys' only lunchtime club'. Pupils enjoy their literacy work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils, staff and parents agree that behaviour has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils are typically considerate, polite and cooperative. They like coming to school and attend well. This is summed up by one pupil who said 'we all get on well here and we like our teachers as they always help us'.
- The school has effective policies for managing any misbehaviour and expectations for good behaviour are high. Pupils with particular emotional or behavioural difficulties are supported well by staff in the 'BASE', and their work with families is much valued.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school. The parents who responded to school's questionnaire agree. Incidents of bullying are now rare and pupils have faith in their teachers to help them when problems arise. Pupils have been prepared well to understand and confront any forms of bullying which may occur, including racist and homophobic bullying.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development reinforces these positive personal values further. This features regularly both in lessons across a range of subjects and in assemblies.
- Displays around the school reinforce the aspirations set by the school and inspire pupils to follow

them. In a Year 5 display, for example, pupils considered what challenges they have faced at the school and talk openly and give advice to those who may face similar situations.

- Pupils are given good opportunities to take positions of responsibility in school. Year 7 pupils are trained to become 'Beauchamp Leaders' and support younger pupils at break and lunchtimes. Pupil librarian monitors assist the librarian. A 'pupil teaching and learning' group provides opportunities for pupil feedback on lessons, homework and marking.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. He is ambitious for the school and wants it to develop even further. He has worked hard to make sure that staff, pupils and parents understand, sign up to his vision and can achieve it. This has been extremely effective.
- The senior leadership team supports the headteacher well and works closely with him to drive improvement. Monitoring and evaluation are highly effective in the early identification of strengths and weaknesses which lead to clearly defined actions for further improvement.
- There have been no quick fixes or sticking plasters. The school, local authority and interim executive board have invested heavily in strategies that are geared to have long term and lasting impact. This gives the school a strong capacity to improve further
- There has been an intense and largely successful focus on getting the leadership of subjects right. Now the priority is to ensure that all subject leaders are equally expert at improving the work of their teams and the quality of teaching and learning.
- The performance of staff is carefully managed and is closely linked to pupils' progress. Around one quarter of the teachers are on the upper pay scale which appropriately reflects the experience and age profile of the staff. Performance systems ensure that only good or better teaching is rewarded.
- Information on how well different groups and individuals are doing in all their subjects is analysed in great depth to ensure that any concerns are quickly identified and action taken to bring about improvements. Consequently, the school actively promotes equal opportunities.
- The school's systems for observing lessons and monitoring the quality of teaching are good and provide teachers with accurate feedback on their performance. This information is used well to provide a relevant programme of staff training which has been highly effective.
- The curriculum consists of individual subjects with a new emphasis on active learning, good quality planning and meeting the needs of all pupils. There is a varied programme of enrichment activities such as through termly 'memorable days', workshops for gifted and talented pupils and links with outside bodies such as the local art gallery and university. These recent developments have deepened pupils' enjoyment of learning.
- Since the previous inspection the school has received very effective and valuable support from the local authority. This has included intensive support to set up and maintain the interim executive board. The local authority has assisted with areas identified for improvement, especially the improvement of teaching and the raising of achievement in English, and has provided priority access to personnel support. The level of this support has rightly tailed off as the school develops.

### ■ The governance of the school:

- The school has received invaluable support from the interim executive board. It has maintained a close eye on day-to-day matters and has addressed the issues raised at the last inspection carefully and thoughtfully. It is now establishing a shadow governing body to take on its role. Members of the interim executive board know the strengths and development needs of the school, including how quickly the quality of teaching is improving, and what still needs to be done to increase students' achievement further. They hold the headteacher and all other members of staff to account for the school's performance. They carefully analyse outcomes, including examination and test results, and they are fully involved in ensuring that there is a close link between salary progression and the effectiveness of classroom teaching. Members know in detail how the school is spending additional funding and what difference it has made. All statutory duties, including those relating to safeguarding, are met.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109692
<b>Local authority</b>	Bedford
<b>Inspection number</b>	410239

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9–13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	430
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Teague
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ian Evason
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 September 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01234 300900
<b>Fax number</b>	01234 300900
<b>Email address</b>	beauchamp@beauchampschool.co.uk

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