

Bamford Academy

Belgium Street, Bamford, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL11 5PS

Inspection dates 8–9 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- This is an improving school and achievement is now good. Standards of attainment in English are consistently above average by the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils make rapid progress in reading and writing across the school.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well and are very proud of their school. They are keen to learn and they work extremely well together when learning in small groups.
- Pupils develop a love of reading and learn to read successfully.
- The school provides a rich and diverse curriculum which captures pupils' interests well.
- Parents are very positive about the care provided for their children. They say that children are happy in school and enjoy their lessons.
- Senior leaders have an astute grasp of the academy's strengths and weaknesses and have managed effective actions to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- The Board of Trustees has a clear view of how well the school is doing. Trustees effectively challenge leaders to improve the academy further.
- Teachers with responsibility for leading subjects regularly check that teaching is helping pupils to learn and progress well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is yet outstanding and a small amount requires improvement.
- The quality of marking varies. Not all teachers show pupils the next steps they need to take to improve their work. Pupils do not always have enough time in lessons to act on advice when it is given.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to use their targets to check how well they are doing.
- There is scope for even higher achievement in mathematics as pupils' progress and attainment are not as good in this subject as in English.
- A few children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not make all the progress they are capable of because the teaching does not always provide enough challenge for them.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 17 lessons or parts of lessons, including two joint observations with the Principal. The inspectors also looked at examples of pupils' work, listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of reading skills.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils and inspectors spoke to pupils about their work. Inspectors held meetings with four members of the Board of Trustees and met with members of the school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the school's own questionnaires to parents and the 87 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to generate a summary of parents' views.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding documents, records of current standards and progress, the academy's development plan and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance. Minutes from Board of Trustees meetings were also considered.

Inspection team

Lyn Pender, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Julie Webster

Additional Inspector

Maureen Hints

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most classes are oversubscribed and the school has a waiting list for places.
- Around half of pupils are White British and one third of pupils are of Pakistani heritage. Smaller groups of pupils are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. Around one third of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the pupil premium funding is well below the national average. (This additional funding is provided for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been a significant number of staffing changes since the previous inspection.
- The academy has Investors in People status and holds the International School's Award and Artsmark Award.
- The Board of Trustees provides a before- and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching, so that by July 2014 all teaching is at least good and more is outstanding, by ensuring that:
 - all teachers' marking is as good as the best and shows pupils the next steps they need to take to improve their work
 - time is provided in lessons for pupils to act on teachers' advice
 - teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to check their work and use their targets to make improvements
 - teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage regularly provide activities that challenge all children, particularly those capable of making more rapid progress.
- Boost pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics by:
 - consistently using the best practice that already exists in the school as a model for all mathematics lessons
 - supporting teachers to develop further their skills and confidence in teaching mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children start school with skill levels broadly typical for their age. Children settle quickly and learn and play happily together. Almost all children reach a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage; however, few children do better than this because the level of challenge in the activities provided is not always high enough.
- Pupils attain well in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1. Overall standards at the end of Year 2 have been improving steadily over recent years and are now above average.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in English are consistently above average; an above-average proportion of pupils reach the higher levels in reading and writing. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is not as strong as that in reading and writing; standards are broadly in line with the national average rather than above.
- By the end of Year 6 almost all pupils make the progress expected of them in English and a high proportion do better than this. Progress is not as strong in mathematics; pupils make expected and better than expected progress that is similar to, rather than above, national expectations.
- Because of the good care and support they receive, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well and make good progress in relation to their abilities and starting points.
- The attainment of the small numbers of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium, all of whom are known to be eligible for free school meals, is below that of other pupils in the school by the end of Year 6, particularly in mathematics. However, school data and inspection evidence indicate that the progress made by this group is beginning to speed up and the gap in attainment is narrowing across the school. This demonstrates the school's successful promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as one another and those from minority ethnic groups do at least as well as similar pupils nationally. The achievement of the large majority of pupils who speak English an additional language is broadly similar to other pupils in the school.
- Reading has a high profile and standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. A large majority of pupils met or exceeded the expected level of accuracy in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- A minority of responses to Parent View indicate some concerns about the progress made by pupils. However, most parents who spoke to inspectors about their children's progress, and information in the academy's parental questionnaires, indicated that parents are happy with how their children are doing. Pupils also feel they are doing well. They say they are learning about all of the important things they need to be able to do, know about and understand to be well prepared for the future.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Leaders' concerted efforts to improve the quality of teaching are proving successful. Some outstanding teaching, and a little that required improvement, was seen during the inspection. However, most observations, leaders' records and work in pupils' books all show that the quality of teaching is typically good. Teachers are keen to share ideas and improve their practice, but are not always confident about what makes outstanding teaching.
- The most effective teaching has many common features including:
 - tasks which capture pupils' interests and take good account of what they already know and can do
 - teachers' strong subject knowledge and skilful questioning which they use to check how

well pupils are doing and to move learning forward

- clear explanations by teachers that improve pupils' understanding and clarify misconceptions
- good use of information and communication technology to develop skills and to engage and interest pupils.

- In the Early Year Foundation Stage, teaching is of good quality overall, but sometimes lacks the challenge necessary to help all children achieve as well as they can.
- Teaching of reading and writing is strong. However, teaching is not as good in mathematics because teachers are less confident, particularly in lessons where they need to extend pupils' ability to use calculation skills to solve problems.
- Marking in some books is of a high quality. It directs pupils to what they need to do to improve and the teacher gives them time to respond. However, this is not consistent across all classes and marking is much stronger in English than in mathematics.
- Pupils have targets to help them understand how to improve their work. They are used very effectively in some lessons to help pupils check how well they are doing but this is not yet common practice in all classes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' excellent attendance is a clear indication of how much they enjoy school. Attitudes to learning are extremely positive. Pupils are fully attentive in lessons and very keen to 'have a go' because they know their contributions are valued by the adults and other pupils. Pupils thrive in the 'can do' ethos in the classrooms and are very supportive of each other.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. They, and their parents, are confident that the adults at the academy take very good care of them. Pupils understand the various forms that bullying can take, including cyber-bullying, and know how to protect themselves from potential dangers outside school. Incidents of bullying and name-calling, they say, are rare. This view is supported by a very large majority of parents, as well as the school's records of incidents.
- Pupils make an excellent contribution to the everyday life of the academy. A number regularly take on the responsibility of caring for the rabbits and other small animals that form part of the academy community. The student council manages the suggestion boxes that give pupils a voice in academy matters. Pupils are proud of their school and are extremely well prepared to move on to the next stage of their education when they leave.
- Older and younger pupils enjoy the opportunity to play together, especially those who attend 'Berties' before- and after-school club.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection, the Principal, ably supported by the senior leadership team, has worked with determination and success to bring about improvements at the academy. Leaders, trustees and staff are committed to continuing to move forward and the academy is well placed to continue to improve.
- Senior and subject leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and share the detailed and honest evaluations with teachers so that they know how to improve on what they do. Training to help teachers improve their skills is based on whole-school needs as well as individual teachers' performance in the classroom. Trustees ensure clear links are made between the achievement of pupils, and teachers' and leaders' pay progression.
- The correct priorities for improvement are identified in the academy's development plan and subject leaders' action plans. Leaders have a clear picture of the performance of pupils and groups of pupils. They are using this information increasingly well to quickly identify any

underachievement and target support where needed.

- The very large majority of parents feel that the school provides good information about their child's progress. Those who spoke to inspectors appreciate the Friday coffee mornings where parents have the opportunity to visit their child's class and meet with the Principal. The academy website is used to gather parental views on various topics; most recently, this summer's transition arrangements. However, the Principal and Trustees are aware that some parents have expressed concerns about how their views are listened to, and they are taking steps to address these.
- The academy's motto 'Inspiring to Achieve' is reflected in the approach to the curriculum. The teaching of performing arts is a particular strength of the school. Pupils have the opportunity to play a variety of musical instruments and develop choral singing skills. Drama and music technology are regularly taught as part of the curriculum and all pupils have the opportunity to learn Spanish.
- A wide range of events and special topic weeks also enhance learning well. Strong links formed with different schools, including many from other countries, provide pupils with a rich cultural experience. Spiritual, moral and social development is promoted well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Trustees provide strong support and robust challenge for the Principal and academy staff; holding all to account for the quality of teaching and the standards that pupils achieve. The Board of Trustees knows the academy well through first hand visits by members and reports provided by staff. Trustees work effectively with senior leaders and make a significant contribution to planning for the academy's future. Although pupil premium funding is relatively small, the Board of Trustees is watchful over how this is spent and ensures that it provides the additional teaching and resources needed to give every pupil an equal opportunity to achieve. Money from the new Primary School Sports funding, which is provided to enable pupils to become more active and follow healthy lifestyles, has only recently been received by the school. Therefore, plans for its use are at a very early stage of development. The Trustees plan to use this funding to recruit the services of professional sports coaches; whose expertise will help improve pupils' physical well-being and enable more to reach the performance levels they are capable of. Safeguarding procedures meet government requirements.

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	137471
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	426174

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	306
Appropriate authority	The Board of Trustees
Chair	Adrian Powell
Principal	Cherie Rivero
Date of previous school inspection	25 January 2012
Telephone number	01706 631496
Fax number	-
Email address	office@bamfordacademy.co.uk

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