

Upper Batley High School

Blenheim Drive, Batley Field Hill, Batley, West Yorkshire WF17 0BJ

Inspection dates

15–16 December 2015

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have relentlessly tackled the weaknesses that previously led to a decline in standards. As a result, the quality of teaching and the level of achievement across the school are now good.
- Pupils currently in the school are making good progress in English and mathematics. Across a wide range of subjects, rates of progress are improving.
- Pupils apply themselves well and work diligently in all subjects. They take great pride in their work and strive to attain the aspirational targets the school has set for them.
- The school is now fully staffed with subject specialists. Teachers plan interesting lessons that engage and motivate pupils. As a result, pupils hold positive attitudes and are keen to do well.
- Good progress has been made against the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. For example, the quality of marking and feedback is now of a high order and contributes effectively to pupils' progress.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful of one another. Incidents of low-level disruption are rare. Pupils are punctual to school and attendance is rising.
- The governors know the school well. They are rigorous in their work to ensure pupils are kept safe. They have put in place effective systems to hold leaders thoroughly accountable.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some pupils, particularly the most able, are not consistently challenged. As a result, some more-able pupils do not make enough progress in English or mathematics.
- Arrangements to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are not consistently effective across all subjects.
- The curriculum does not fully meet some aspects of pupils' personal development. For example, pupils only receive limited sex and relationships education.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve levels of achievement, particularly for the most able and for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, by:
 - ensuring teaching consistently stretches and challenges the most able
 - ensuring the proportion of pupils attaining the English baccalaureate is comparable with that seen nationally
 - ensuring emerging good practice for supporting disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is applied consistently across all subjects.
- Strengthen provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, so that pupils are more fully prepared for life in modern Britain, by:
 - ensuring there are more regular opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs that inform their perspective on life
 - Provide more effective sex and relationships education and raise awareness about the risks of child sexual exploitation.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and senior leaders have successfully communicated high expectations and raised the bar for the quality of teaching in the school. Members of staff, pupils and parents share the school's drive for improvement. Rigorous checks on all aspects of the school's work have ensured leaders have an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses and have correctly prioritised the most important areas for improvement. As a result, this is an improving school in which standards are rising.
- Inadequate teaching, which led to a decline in standards at the time of the last inspection, has been robustly tackled. A period of transition in staffing has been managed effectively and good recruitment has ensured the school is now fully staffed with subject specialists. Ongoing checks on the quality of teaching identify where additional support and challenge are required. As a result, training for teachers is increasingly tailored to meet individual needs and leads to improvement.
- The performance of teachers is well managed. Teachers are set very clear and measurable objectives linked to pupils' progress. The impact of their teaching is reviewed regularly and informs decisions about salary progression.
- Strong lines of accountability ensure middle leaders are effective in their role.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. In Key Stage 3, there are effective strategies in place to help lower-attaining pupils to catch up. Good additional teaching of literacy and numeracy helps pupils to quickly address gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Teaching in other subjects contributes effectively to helping pupils improve their literacy. For example, all teachers rigorously check spelling, punctuation and grammar and provide pupils with good resources that help them to understand subject-specific terminology. At Key Stage 4, leaders have successfully tackled historic weaknesses in some subject areas. There are good extra-curricular learning opportunities and the school places a strong emphasis on developing pupil leadership and enterprise.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity well. They review outcomes data systematically and target resources at those pupils or groups where outcomes are weaker. The school's most recent tracking information shows its current emphasis on accelerating the progress of the most able and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has begun to be effective.
- Although the curriculum caters for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, a recent audit of provision has identified some aspects that need to be strengthened in order to better prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. This systematic approach to reviewing the effectiveness of the school's work indicates the school has good capacity for further improvement.
- The school communicates well with parents and has fostered good relationships with the wider community. For example, leaders collaborate with senior representatives of local mosques to keep pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism. The school's own surveys of parents indicate that parents now hold the school in high regard.
- Leaders take appropriate steps to safeguard pupils. There is a culture of vigilance in the school. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and are confident to approach any member of staff, if they have concerns.
- Leaders have made good use of the pupil premium to narrow gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. Gaps in attainment are small and continuing to narrow. A strong feature of the school is the mutually supportive relationships fostered between pupils of different abilities within lessons.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Following a review of the effectiveness of the governing body, governors have increased their presence in the school. They make regular, well-focused visits, to probe the quality of the school's work. As a result, they are well informed about what is working well and what needs further improvement. They supplement this first-hand knowledge with the effective use of performance data to benchmark the school's performance.
 - A Strategy Group, established after the last inspection of the school, holds the headteacher and other leaders accountable for the impact of their work. Members of the Strategy Group have developed rigorous methods to check on the quality of teaching and to monitor in-year pupil progress information.
 - Governors are actively involved in decisions about teachers' pay progression. They only award salary increases when there is clear evidence that they are deserved.

- Governors take their responsibility to safeguard pupils very seriously. Frequent visits are made to check on procedures, and the designated leader for safeguarding is required to report to governors on a regular basis.
- Governors have acted to address the deficit budget. A restructure of teaching and support staff has been handled sensitively. The school is on course to have a balanced budget in the near future. Governors can also demonstrate a good understanding of how additional funding has been used and of the impact it has had.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Inadequate teaching, which led to a decline in standards at the time of the last inspection, has been fully addressed. Evidence from the school's own checks and those made by external partners indicates the quality of teaching has improved steadily. Pupils now show consistently positive attitudes towards their learning.
- The school is now fully staffed and teachers show good subject knowledge. They ask probing questions to check pupils' understanding and reshape tasks in order to ensure key points of learning are fully understood. Teachers pay attention to developing and extending pupils' oracy. Consequently, pupils have good opportunities to speak and formulate ideas before committing to writing. This approach ensures their literacy skills are developing well.
- The quality of marking is a strength of the school and there are many examples of excellent practice. Work is marked regularly, both for accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar, and for depth of understanding. Pupils routinely improve their work in response to the teachers' feedback.
- Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. This is because most teachers hold high standards and do not accept work that is not of the necessary quality.
- Pupils apply themselves well and work enthusiastically because most teachers make lessons enjoyable and thought-provoking. However, some teachers settle for superficial responses and miss opportunities to develop higher-order thinking and reasoning, particularly among the most-able pupils.
- Good teacher training, delivered largely in-house by the best teachers and middle leaders, is contributing effectively to improving teaching. This training is now effectively tailored to meet identified needs.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is much improved and standards have risen in both subjects. Programmes to support pupils that enter the school with lower levels of literacy and numeracy are effective, with many pupils making rapid gains in reading skills. Teaching in English develops pupils' analytical skills well. For example, inspectors observed Year 10 pupils skilfully analysing character descriptions from Victorian novels. In mathematics, teachers have begun to ensure the curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to new and unfamiliar problems.
- Teachers have a sound understanding of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. They increasingly use this information to set work that is appropriately challenging. On occasions, however, the work is not adapted sufficiently to stretch the most-able pupils.
- Pupils told inspectors that the quality of teaching is much better now than in the past. The school's own surveys of parental views also indicate that parents feel the quality of teaching is much improved.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are very polite and courteous, and hold positive and respectful relationships with members of staff. Pupils of different cultural backgrounds integrate well with one another. As a result, the school is a harmonious community in which to learn.
- The school's focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills is contributing to pupils' growing confidence. Pupils readily answer questions and many are prepared to come to the front in lessons and demonstrate for the class how they have gone about their work.
- The physical education (PE) department actively promotes good physical health. Pupils enjoy PE and take part in lessons with real enthusiasm.

- Leaders and governors ensure all staff are well trained in safeguarding and child protection. Staff are vigilant for the signs of neglect or abuse. Where concerns have been identified, swift action is taken and referrals to external agencies are followed up in a timely manner. Leaders are quick to recognise any signs of radicalisation or extremism and work effectively with the police to safeguard pupils of concern.
- On the whole, the school caters effectively for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. There are good opportunities woven into the curriculum and within tutor time to consider topical issues. In some lessons, however, opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life, are not explored fully enough. In addition, some specific areas of learning, such as sex and relationships education and the risks from child sexual exploitation, are underdeveloped.
- The school makes stringent checks on the quality of provision for the small number of pupils that spend part of their time on different sites.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They settle quickly in lessons and apply themselves diligently. They are respectful of their classmates and listen attentively to one another's contributions. The vast majority of pupils arrive at lessons with the necessary equipment. The pupils are very respectful of the school site and do not drop litter. All adhere to the school's uniform policy.
- Because teaching is good and captures pupils' interest, few pupils are referred to the school's inclusion room for poor behaviour. Over time, the number of pupils that have received a fixed-term exclusion has fallen considerably. Since the last inspection, there have been no permanent exclusions.
- Last year, the overall level of attendance improved to be close to that seen nationally. So far this year, overall attendance has improved further. Some effective work to target particular families has reduced the number of pupils that miss school regularly. Leaders have taken a zero tolerance approach to lateness and, as a result, punctuality is much improved.
- A new facility which supports a small number of disengaged pupils is having a positive impact. For example, the attendance of these pupils has improved by 40% so far this year.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying and they trust members of staff to deal with it effectively. Derogatory language is dealt with quickly. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and treat each other respectfully. One pupil told inspectors, 'There are no racial tensions in the school because there is no difference between us really. The only difference is where you were born.'

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils join the school with below-average attainment in English and mathematics, but leave with standards that are broadly average.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils that attained five or more GCSE A* to C grades including English and mathematics improved sharply on the previous year to be in line with the national average. The school's assessment information shows that pupils currently in the school are on track to attain similar outcomes in 2016, despite having lower starting points.
- Across different subjects, pupils currently in the school are making strong progress. Following an analysis of last year's GCSE examination results, leaders have specifically focused all staff on the progress of the most-able pupils and those with special educational needs. This is because not enough of these pupils made good progress in English or mathematics last year and not enough pupils attained the top grades in GCSE examinations. Better planning and support for these groups are beginning to have a positive impact and the most recent tracking data indicates that they are making better progress. Nevertheless, the quality of lesson planning for pupils with special educational needs remains variable and they do not always get the support and guidance they need. Furthermore, some teachers still do not challenge the most-able pupils sufficiently.
- In the past, weak teaching of humanities subjects led to underachievement in history and geography. This led to the school withdrawing the GCSE history course for a year, until better-quality staff could be recruited. As a result, few pupils attained the English baccalaureate in 2015. This area of underperformance has now been addressed and history has been re-introduced into the curriculum. School leaders recognise the proportion of pupils attaining the English baccalaureate has been too low.
- Historic data show that disadvantaged pupils make better progress in English and mathematics than similar pupils nationally. In 2015, the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school

was small. This was because leaders provided good support for disadvantaged pupils that fell behind. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making good progress across most subjects. Indeed, in some subjects, such as English, disadvantaged pupils are making better progress than other pupils in the school. Leaders ensure the progress of all pupils is tracked very carefully and they hold teachers tightly accountable.

- Pupils that enter the school with lower levels of attainment in English and mathematics receive good support. Reading programmes introduced last year have successfully engaged pupils and the use of the library has increased. Checks made on pupils' reading skills indicate that targeted pupils are catching up quickly.
- Outcomes for the small number of pupils that attend alternative provision have been variable in the past. As a result, fewer pupils are now educated off-site and the school curriculum is being developed to better meet their needs. In 2015, all pupils leaving Year 11 found places in further education colleges or local sixth forms, or took up apprenticeships.

School details

Unique reference number	107767
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10005394

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.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	541
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Geisler
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Ms Samantha Vickers
Telephone number	01924 326343
Website	www.ubhs.co.uk
Email address	office@ubhs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 October 2014

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized secondary school which caters solely for boys.
- Over 90% of pupils are from Indian or Pakistani heritage, with the remaining few of mainly White British heritage. A higher than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Around a third of pupils are disadvantaged and entitled to support through the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- Alternative provision is provided off-site for a small number of pupils at the Brian Jackson College and at Ethos.
- The school operates an inclusion room on site in conjunction with two other schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which are the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, the school has received support from the Local Authority and from Batley Girls High School, a local outstanding academy.
- On site there is a small animals' farm, which is managed by the pupils.
- The school provides a free breakfast club every day for pupils.
- The school curriculum includes outdoor learning opportunities for pupils through its forest school provision.
- Since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses, it has received two monitoring visits from HMI prior to this inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 part-lessons, of which the majority were undertaken with senior leaders. During lesson observations, inspectors sampled pupils' books and talked to pupils in order to evaluate the quality of current work. Inspectors also attended form time and undertook a number of shorter visits to lessons to gauge the climate for learning and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors observed the climate around the school site during social times and during the transitions between lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, a group of subject leaders, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and with the co-headteachers of the local academy that has provided support since the school's last inspection. In addition, inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including school policies, assessment information, records of checks on the quality of teaching, the school's own self-evaluation and its plans for improvement. The minutes of governing body meetings and a range of safeguarding information were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors took account of Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and of the school's own surveys of parental views.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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