

# The Bolsover School

Mooracre Lane, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S44 6XA

<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Pupils' attainment across their best eight subjects is consistently higher than national averages, and 100% achieved grades A\* to G in 2015, which is significantly higher than average.
- Current pupils make good progress in both key stages 3 and 4, across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Attainment and progress in mathematics is consistently strong.
- Excellent leadership has meant that the progress of low-attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is consistently good.
- Disadvantaged pupils' attainment is improving quickly towards that of their peers nationally and in school in mathematics and English this year.
- Due to excellent leadership, the quality of teaching has improved; most is now consistently good or better. Weaker teaching is addressed robustly.
- Specific focus on the most able at key stage 4 has led to strong progress for this group currently, especially in English, mathematics, science and humanities.
- Pupils behave well most of the time and engage well with the school's extra-curricular activities. They enjoy school and attend regularly.
- The school's work to improve pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is wide-ranging and effective.
- The senior leadership team has delivered clear and consistent messages and successfully communicated a clear vision of high expectations and ambition.
- Reforms to governance have significantly strengthened the way governors hold leaders to account and monitor the school's progress.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While increasing, the proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics is still too low.
- The proportion of middle- and high-attaining pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds making expected progress in English and mathematics, while increasing, is lower than their peers.
- Pupils' achievement in languages is too low. The quality of teaching in this subject is inconsistent.
- A small proportion of teaching at key stage 3 does not inspire or challenge pupils sufficiently.

## Full report

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

- Raise achievement even further by:
  - increasing the proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics from their different starting points
  - strengthening the support provided for disadvantaged pupils, especially for those who enter the school mid-year, to accelerate their progress.
  
- Accelerate pupils' progress in languages by:
  - embedding core skills more securely at key stage 3
  - accelerating the progress of those pupils who start learning a language later than others.
  
- Eradicate weaker teaching at key stage 3 by increasing the challenge and support for those who need it.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have undertaken a root-and-branch reform of their systems, approaches and expectations. As a result, both staff and pupils know and understand what is expected of them. This has been a successful approach as it has led to key improvements in the quality of teaching, pupils' outcomes and behaviour.
- Leaders have rightly made improving teaching their priority to drive improvements across the school. A wide range of training opportunities, underpinned by a clear philosophy of teaching, has contributed to greater consistency and a greater proportion of high-quality teaching, especially in English and mathematics more recently. In addition, leaders' commitment to being outward-facing and learning from best practice in other schools has been a successful strategy.
- New appointments to the senior leadership team have been astute. These appointments have significantly contributed to an improved understanding of pupils' progress by teachers and high-quality continuous professional development and support. Senior leaders' monitoring activities are carried out rigorously and information from these form next-step plans for improvement.
- Leaders have acted upon the areas for development at the previous inspection to great effect. For example, subject leaders, many new to their post since 2014, have developed their leadership skills well. They have a clear understanding of the school's priorities and know what is necessary to improve outcomes in their subject. They have worked hard to secure their understanding of the demands of the new national curriculum. In collaboration with other practitioners in high-performing schools, they have devised a coherent assessment system to monitor pupils' progress rigorously.
- The leadership of special educational needs is excellent. The special educational needs coordinator is highly skilled; her leadership has contributed to greater inclusion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and consequently their significantly improved progress.
- Leaders have developed a coherent strategy to stretch and challenge the most able. The 'reach for the stars' programme encourages pupils to aim for A\*s in as many subjects as possible and wear the stars on their uniform proudly to encourage others. The reading 'ninja' groups are led by able readers and writers, who support less-able pupils to improve their literacy skills. Pupils speak highly of these programmes.
- Pupils' behaviour in the school has been a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils and staff agree. Pupils' attendance is high and fewer pupils than the national average are excluded. Pastoral leaders know and understand pupils in their year groups well. They monitor and support them to reach the high standard expected of them. Those pupils struggling to keep up or comply with behaviour rules are supported very well through the consistent application of policy.
- Leaders have engendered a strong set of values through the school. Equality, tolerance and understanding lie at the heart of the curriculum. The pastoral needs of disadvantaged pupils are supported well so that any barriers to achievement can be removed. The most able are put on accelerated pathways to help them to excel. Extra-curricular activities are broad and interesting, allowing all pupils to take part and develop their wider skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well through the curriculum. Pupils learn about other religions and cultures through celebrating religious festivals and learning about the life of children from the partner schools in The Gambia and Shanghai. Pupils develop their moral and social understanding through the wide range of charity and fundraising activities. Broadening horizons are key objectives of the school's curriculum.
- Pupils' understanding of British values is secure. They practise their democratic skills through debates and regular elections for pupil-leadership positions.
- The school has made a concerted effort to forge links with other schools and teaching school alliances. This has been a successful strategy. Astute and detailed reports from external professionals, including the school's improvement adviser, have contributed well to leaders' accurate self-evaluation.
- The provision to support disadvantaged pupils is becoming more effective. The overall attainment of disadvantaged pupils has improved year on year. However, leaders acknowledge that their strategy to accelerate the progress of this group can be improved further, especially the progress of those vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils who enter the school from elsewhere mid-year.
- Leaders' work to eradicate the small proportion of weak teaching still left continues. Their strategy to deploy their strongest teachers in key stage 4 has meant that some pupils do not receive high-quality learning opportunities frequently enough at key stage 3.

## ■ The governance of the school

- Governors have acted upon their external review and skills audit to form a governing body that is now fit for purpose. Members are skilled and committed to the school's vision of high aspiration and ambition for all.
  - They hold leaders to account effectively. The governors' 'score card', containing important progress information for all groups of pupils, helps them to keep abreast of the school's progress towards its targets. Governors use first-hand evidence and external reports to verify what leaders are telling them.
  - Skilled oversight of financial management by governors has meant the school has been able to withstand the challenges of cuts to its central funding. Governors ensure that government funding, including pupil premium funding and special educational needs capitation, is spent well and evaluated thoroughly.
  - Governors monitor the school's performance management system well to ensure that it is fair and effective to drive improvements. The headteacher's performance is also managed well.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Recruitment and vetting procedures are carried out diligently and follow safer-recruitment guidance. Child protection is taken very seriously by staff. Staff, including governors, have undertaken extra training to ensure that they are properly skilled to address the risks posed by threats to keeping pupils' safe such as extremism, female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation. Pupils have also received guidance as to how to keep safe online. The curriculum supports the school's vigilance towards safeguarding issues well. Pupils say they feel safe in school. The few incidents of bullying reported are dealt with swiftly by teachers. A very small number of parents expressed concerns about bullying in the online survey. However, inspectors found no evidence to suggest that staff did not deal with all incidents effectively.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The school has invested heavily in training and development. A core set of expectations has encouraged greater consistency in teaching. For example, all teachers identify pupils' seating arrangements according to the prior-assessment information. Literacy development is encouraged regularly.
- The teaching of mathematics is successful. Teachers have developed the curriculum to enable pupils to reinforce their basic mathematical skills regularly, while also deepening pupils' understanding of more complex calculations. Teachers provide meaningful feedback to pupils which helps them to improve.
- Where teachers are very knowledgeable about their subject, learning gains are quick and pupils' interest is captured successfully. For example, in a food technology lesson, boys spoke enthusiastically about their plans to prepare two courses in one practical lesson. They did not shy away from the difficulties because the teacher had set up the challenge so well. In a science lesson, the teacher was able to engage pupils in high-level discussions about the morality of stem-cell research because pupils' prior knowledge about the subject was secured so well.
- Teachers' questioning is becoming more targeted and effective, especially at key stage 4. When posed successfully, teachers' questioning takes pupils' prior learning into account successfully. The most able are given more open questions and form hypotheses. By doing so, the questioning allows them to deepen their understanding.
- Teachers' assessments are more reliable than previous years. This is because they have moderated their judgements with other professionals throughout the year. In addition, subject leaders have conducted thorough question-level diagnoses of mock examinations. They have received training from chief examiners to hone their assessment skills further.
- Support for those pupils who need to catch up is effective. Teaching assistants are deployed well in the classroom and help targeted pupils to learn more quickly. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English are supported well. Polish-speaking teaching assistants offer translation and guidance in lessons for the growing number of pupils from Europe. As a result, low-attaining pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language make consistently good progress.
- Teaching assistants support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities extremely well. Pupils' different additional needs are well understood. Intervention sessions outside lessons are highly effective.
- The teaching of reading is good. As a result of a well thought-out reading strategy, pupils improve their chronological reading age considerably.
- As a result of leaders' decisions to deploy their stronger teachers at key stage 4, a small proportion of teaching, across key subjects at key stage 3, is weaker than the rest. Teachers in these classes do not

consistently follow the school's marking and feedback policy. In addition, their lessons are characterised by elements of off-task behaviour, which are largely caused by resources and activities not being well-matched to pupils' ability.

- The quality of teaching in modern foreign languages is too variable. Teachers do not consistently engage pupils in their learning effectively. Consequently, some pupils switch off the subject and make little progress. Basic skills are not embedded well enough at key stage 3 for good progress to be made at key stage 4. Leaders' decision to provide extra literacy support for pupils who need to catch up during languages lessons in Year 7 has meant that these pupils are sometimes too far behind others to catch up sufficiently by key stage 4.

## 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 develop their personal and social skills well. They show sound attitudes towards others different to themselves. The school's links with schools in Africa and Asia have helped pupils to understand the effects of poverty in the developing world and have empathy for others less fortunate than themselves.
- Bullying incidents are few and dealt with firmly by staff.
- Pupils are required to fulfil a 'citizenship passport', which is used to encourage pupils to undertake key activities which promote their personal, social and economic skills. These requirements, which develop pupils' core values, include high participation in school activities, public speaking and charity work, to name but a few. Since its launch in September, over 500 pupils have already demonstrated two core values on the passport, which is challenging indeed. Commercial educational agencies and local schools have expressed interest in using this model to develop pupils' wider skills; one has formally endorsed the school's initiative because of its success so far.
- Pupils are given excellent guidance to prepare them for the next stage of their education. Impartial advice and guidance are delivered through external professional support and regular trips to colleges and universities. Pupils have a good understanding of the available choices to them post-16. For the last three years, no pupil left the school not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well through the curriculum. Pupils show a good understanding of the key features of other cultures and religions. Pupils express tolerant views and respect other people's way of life. Moral issues are discussed openly. Positive attitudes are encouraged through the curriculum – in assemblies, in tutor time and in dedicated personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lessons.
- British values are well understood and embedded in the school. Pupils practise their democratic skills in debates in lessons and elections for school councillors.
- Pupils understand the various risks they face as they grow up. They are aware of how to keep safe on the internet, especially when using social media, and older pupils have been taught to recognise the dangers of extremism. The provision for pupils attending alternative provision is well chosen and effective. Pupils who attend make good progress.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves sensibly in corridors and around the school. The vast majority respectfully listen to and follow instructions given by adults in the classroom. Pupils say that the behaviour policy is applied consistently by teachers.
- Pupils' behaviour since the last inspection has improved so much because the new policy balances incentives with sanctions well. Pupils regularly receive rewards for excellent conduct and participation, which they value.
- Work to improve attendance has been successful. Pupils' attendance rates are above the national average. Those pupils who are absent more regularly are supported well to improve their attendance.
- Behaviour incident logs show a declining trend. Pastoral leaders, mentors and the family resource worker work closely with those with persistent challenging behaviour to modify their behaviour, and this is making a difference. Fixed-term exclusions are below the national average.
- Pupils who enter the school mid-year from elsewhere are represented disproportionately in behaviour incident logs and in concerns about absence. Often this is because their previous experience of school has not been positive. The school understands the need to develop a clear strategy to help integrate these pupils more successfully.

## Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' attainment has been on a rising trajectory since the previous inspection. In 2015, the attainment of pupils' best eight subjects was significantly above the national average. Attainment in English and mathematics is close to or above the national average. All pupils achieved grades A\* to G, which was significantly better than national figures. Attainment for current pupils continues to improve; the proportion set to achieve five GCSEs, including English and mathematics, in 2016 is above the current national average.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics is consistently strong; the progress they make is improving quickly. They grasp mathematical skills quickly and deepen their understanding so that they can tackle more complex problems in higher years because teaching is consistently good.
- Leaders took swift action to address the weaknesses in progress outcomes from the 2015 examinations. More-sustained high-quality teaching and robust moderation of assessments, across a range of subjects, have led to more positive projections for 2016 and beyond. Pupils' progress in both Years 10 and 11 is good, although fewer pupils make more than expected progress than the current national average.
- Boys' achievement is rising quickly, which marks a significant improvement to their outcomes in 2015. Currently, boys are making better progress than girls in most key subjects.
- Pupils' current progress in Year 9, the first year of their GCSE course, is rapidly improving to meet the challenges of the new curriculum. Pupils make good progress towards age-related expectations in Years 7 and 8. Work to improve pupils' transition from Year 6 contributes to quick learning gains in Year 7.
- Pupils who have low prior attainment and need to catch up make consistently good progress in this school. This is because leaders have devised effective interventions and keep aspirations high in the classroom.
- The most able pupils' attainment is consistently in line with national averages and improving. Their progress in English and mathematics, currently, is rapidly improving; the proportion making expected progress exceeds national averages. More pupils exceed expected progress than in previous years, although lower than the national average. Pupils' progress in humanities and science is also rapidly improving.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. These pupils are given specialist support to help them learn alongside their peers. They enjoy their learning and have high aspirations.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. The school's strategy of 'everyone reads in class' (ERIC), has made reading high-profile in the school. Pupils read confidently. Those whose reading skills are weaker make good progress to catch up as a result of effective intervention sessions during tutor time. These weaker pupils have made excellent gains in their reading skills over the past year, nearly all improving their chronological reading age by 12 months since September.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported well. This group of pupils' overall attainment is improving year on year towards the attainment of their peers both in school and nationally in English and mathematics. Their overall progress is sometimes hindered by poorer attendance and behaviour by a few, especially those who start at the school mid-year. Leaders understand the need to devise a clear plan to support and challenge these pupils more effectively, so that they can make good progress.
- Too few pupils who study modern foreign languages make the progress they should. Attainment in German and French was significantly lower than national averages in 2015, although projected outcomes for 2016 suggest some improvements. The progress pupils make remains low this year and is further hindered by inconsistent teaching. Some pupils who did not study languages in Year 7 do not make the progress they should.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138836
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10011761

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	768
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gordon Inglis
<b>Telephone number</b>	01246822105
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bolsover.derbyshire.sch.uk">www.bolsover.derbyshire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@bolsover.derbyshire.sch.uk">info@bolsover.derbyshire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24–25 June 2014

## Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized secondary school. The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium and the proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is higher than average.
- A very small minority of pupils follow alternative courses at Hasland Support Centre, run by Derbyshire local authority.
- In 2015, the school met the government's floor standards for achievement at the end of key stage 4. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement.
- The school has had a significantly increased number of mid-year admissions from pupils over the past two years. The majority of these pupils are in receipt of pupil premium funding.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 52 parts of lessons. Sixteen of these were jointly observed with senior and middle leaders. Inspectors visited an assembly and registration time with tutors.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of school leaders, including the headteacher and senior leadership team, the special education needs coordinator, the leader of teaching and the leader for behaviour and welfare and the designated safeguarding leader. The lead inspector also met with five members of the governing body, including the chair and the vice-chair.
- Three groups of pupils were interviewed by inspectors. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour and conduct during break and lunchtime.
- The inspection team evaluated a range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation documents, behaviour logs, safeguarding records, governing body minutes, monitoring of teaching records, pupils' achievement information, external reviews and reports of moderation activities carried out by other schools.
- Inspectors took account of 62 responses from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including free text responses, 14 responses from the pupils' questionnaire and 40 responses from the staff survey.

## Inspection team

Zarina Connolly, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Nigel Boyd	Ofsted Inspector
Tracey Ydlibi	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Tanya Wiles	Ofsted Inspector



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2016

