

The E-Act Burnham Park Academy

Opendale Road, Burnham, Slough, Buckinghamshire SL1 7LZ

Inspection dates

5–6 July 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
16 to 19 study programmes	Require improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have not taken effective action to improve the school. Progress since the last inspection is limited. Support from the multi-academy trust has only recently begun to make a difference.
- Leaders do not check the impact of their actions carefully, so they do not focus on what will make things better quickly.
- Pupil outcomes are low and are not improving rapidly enough. Pupils do not achieve a broad range of qualifications at a level that prepares them well for their next steps.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not make enough progress, especially in mathematics. Leaders do not target support for disadvantaged pupils effectively, or know what difference any extra help is making to their progress.
- Teaching is not consistently good enough. Pupils' progress and attitudes towards their learning are impeded by frequent changes or absence of teachers from their lessons.
- Pupils do not behave well outside lessons. They do not respond well when challenged by teachers. Many more pupils are excluded from school than is typical nationally.
- Pupils do not attend school regularly. Actions to improve attendance have had little impact.
- Pupils, staff and parents do not have confidence in the school and its leadership.

The school has the following strengths

- In some lessons, teachers meet the needs of pupils well, which helps them make good progress over time. Pupils make good progress in English by the end of Year 11.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development well.
- The 16-19 study programme supports and raises aspirations for students, increasing the number that go to university.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the effectiveness of leadership across the school by:
 - evaluating the impact of current actions and refining them so that they focus on what will make the most rapid improvements to the school
 - ensuring that leaders' areas of responsibility are clear, so that they can be held increasingly to account.
- Embed and develop recent actions to improve behaviour and attendance, so that more pupils attend school regularly and exclusions are reduced.
- Improve the consistency of high-quality teaching across the school, so that it leads to improved outcomes for all groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged, by:
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour are consistently high across the school
 - making sure that teachers use information about prior learning to plan work that more closely meets pupils' individual starting points.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

It is recommended that the school does not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Senior leaders have been too slow in raising standards in the school since the last inspection. Leaders' current plans show that their priorities for school improvement have not changed or been achieved over the past two years.
- Leaders do not focus sufficiently on the impact their actions are having on the quality of education for pupils. Their effectiveness is diluted by trying to do too much at once, rather than focusing on what will make the biggest difference quickly.
- The executive principal and principal have taken action in recent months which has started to address a number of key priorities. However, most improvements have been small so far. Ongoing changes to staff, including at leadership level, undermine the sustainability of very recent improvements.
- Leaders are not clear about what they are individually accountable for, and do not evaluate clearly their actions and next steps. For example, middle leaders, senior leaders and members of the governing board were not able to speak with certainty about how pupil premium funding is improving the progress of disadvantaged pupils or who is responsible for monitoring it. Plans for supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not precisely focused on the areas that will improve the learning for these pupils. Progress against the targets for these pupils is not consistently evaluated, so leaders do not know what is making a difference and what is not.
- Ongoing and frequent changes to the staff in the school, including the leadership team, have damaged staff morale and eroded the confidence that pupils and parents have in the school. Staff say that they lack confidence in the multi-academy trust. However, some staff recognise the impact that the work of the new leaders provided by the trust is having on learning and behaviour.
- Pupils learn an appropriate range of subjects, but almost none of them choose to learn a language at key stage 4. Although school leaders have taken action, numbers are slow to increase.
- Pupils are prepared appropriately for life in modern Britain through citizenship lessons, a comprehensive tutorial programme and assemblies. They have an understanding of radicalisation and fundamental British values such as democracy and tolerance. The 'Personal Best' programme provides rich opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of extra-curricular activities which complement their learning in lessons and develop their wider talents and skills. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is a strength.
- Pupils receive clear and impartial careers information and guidance which is enhanced by a range of opportunities to participate in externally run careers events. This helps them make appropriate choices about their next steps after GCSE.
- Leaders of the 16–19 study programme provide effectively for the specific needs of the small group of students the sixth form attracts.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Arrangements for governance have changed over the past year, with the local governing body moving to a regional education team from the multi-academy trust, supported by a local ambassadorial advisory group. This brings greater experience and educational expertise to the governing body. The period of transition is limiting the rigour with which governors are currently holding school leaders to account. The ambassadorial advisory group is not currently in place.
 - The regional education team is beginning to monitor progress more carefully and hold school leaders at all levels more rigorously to account. However, it is too early for initial actions to have made a difference to standards in teaching, learning, leadership and management. The regional education team is not currently sufficiently well informed, for example about the progress of disadvantaged pupils and how well pupil premium funding is being used to accelerate their progress.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders take clear steps to make sure that adults working in the school are appropriately vetted and appropriate records are kept. Child protection policies and practice are sound. Staff are vigilant and proactive in reporting concerns as a result of the high-quality training and support they receive. Leaders are tenacious in pursuing support for vulnerable pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across subjects and key stages.
- Too many pupils have frequent changes of teachers or lessons where their usual teacher is absent. This impedes pupils' motivation and progress over time. Pupils and parents are anxious about the constant changes of staff. Pupils remarked that the school has inadvertently made them independent learners because of how much they have had to teach themselves.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are inconsistent across the school. This leads to pupils producing work which is of variable quality, and which is not generally presented with pride and care.
- Pupils and parents report that little homework is set. Where it is set, some pupils do not complete it, although teachers are increasingly persistent in pursuing pupils whose homework is not done.
- Teachers occasionally make errors in what they teach, or do not correct pupils' misconceptions quickly enough when they arise during lessons or in their written work. In these instances, pupils' understanding of key ideas is less secure and progress slows.
- Teachers do not focus sufficiently on the specific needs of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so they make similar progress to their peers rather than the accelerated progress necessary to ensure that they catch up.
- Pupils sometimes use derogatory language towards each other, in lessons and around the school. During lessons, most teachers act swiftly to deal with this when it happens, but this is not always the case outside of lessons.
- The quality of teachers' feedback to pupils about how to make their work better is improving. In subjects where teaching is more secure, pupils use this feedback increasingly to help them make better progress.
- Teachers have a wealth of information about the pupils they teach, but do not use it routinely to plan lessons that help individuals and groups make rapid progress over time.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers plan lessons that build on what pupils know and can do. Expectations are high and pupils use sophisticated technical language as a matter of routine.
- Teachers assess pupils accurately and track their progress along the expected steps towards their goal. Leaders work with teachers to ensure that assessments of progress remain consistent during the transfer from the old assessment model to the new one.
- Where teachers have established positive relationships with pupils and know their needs well, pupils work hard, gain confidence and make good progress over time.
- Leaders have established clear expectations for learning which help pupils to make better progress than they have in the past. This has happened too recently to have significantly improved pupil outcomes over time.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils feel safe at school, but they and their parents express concern about the frequency of bullying and the speed with which it is dealt with once reported.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and learn about issues relevant to their age, such as e-safety, the danger of drugs and appropriate use of social media. Focused work on positive relationships with Year 10 pupils is perceived by them to have reduced instances of bullying.
- Pupils' personal development is supported by an established programme of activities during tutor time. Pupils enjoy engaging in topical debates about current affairs and are aware of fundamental British values.
- Staff act appropriately to protect children whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Staff training has empowered them to be more confident about making child protection referrals.
- Pupils who attend an alternative provision are supported well. Staff understand their needs and work closely with the pupils, their families and staff at Burnham Park. Pupils learn about social skills alongside their other subjects through a curriculum that meets their individual needs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Pupils do not come to school as regularly as they should. Attendance of pupils in Year 11 and students in the sixth form is particularly low. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school remains high. Erratic attendance impedes progress over time because pupils have gaps in their learning.

- Pupils do not behave as well as they should when not in lessons. Adults in the school do not always act promptly or effectively when incidents occur outside lessons. A significant proportion of pupils, parents and staff feel that the behaviour of pupils is a concern.
- Alternative strategies for managing behaviour are not effective. The number of behaviour incidents is high, although partly because of the recently raised expectations that leaders promote. A large proportion of learning time is lost due to fixed-term exclusion from school. There has been a very high percentage of permanent exclusions this year.
- Racist incidents are not logged accurately, which prevents leaders from tracking how frequently they occur. This means that they are less able to take action to pre-empt further problems.
- Where teaching is less effective or lessons are not taught regularly by the same teacher, pupils do not behave as well as in other lessons. Poor behaviour is not managed consistently using the clear systems that have been introduced recently by school leaders.
- Where learning is stimulating, pupils engage readily and work well with their teachers.
- Most pupils are polite and friendly to visitors and engage willingly in conversation.
- Leaders have put new systems in place to address poor attendance, including employing their own education welfare officer to help the school work with families. There are some early signs of improvement as a result, but monitoring is not as precise as it needs to be to make a difference more rapidly.
- Pupils who are based at an alternative provider generally attend well and are supported appropriately in managing their behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- The proportion of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs at grade C or above including English and mathematics has declined over the past three years. In 2015, the school did not meet the floor standards.
- In 2015, results in a wide range of subjects were significantly below the national average. For most subjects, few or no pupils achieved the highest grades of A* or A.
- The proportion of pupils who access and achieve the English Baccalaureate is slowly increasing but continues to be small. This limits the extent to which pupils are likely to move on to further study after their GCSEs.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not consistently make as much progress as their peers across the school. The proportion achieving five or more GCSEs including English and mathematics at grade C is increasing but is still well below that of other pupils in the school and nationally. In English, the gap between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils is small in Year 10 but widening in other year groups. In mathematics, the progress of disadvantaged pupils in 2015 was well below that of their peers, and this gap is set to widen in 2016, although it is closing in other year groups.
- Pupils who arrive at the school needing to improve their literacy do not catch up as quickly as they need to. The impact of the extra help they receive is variable.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make the progress that they should. Their progress in English and mathematics is improving, but they achieve well below their peers, and a very small proportion are expected to achieve five or more GCSE grades at grade C or above including English and mathematics this year. During key stage 3, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make stronger progress in Year 9 mathematics and science and in Year 7 science, but their progress is well below that of their peers in English and mathematics in Year 7 and across all three subjects in Year 8.
- Where the quality of teaching is improving, gaps in pupils' learning are closing and their rate of progress is increasing. Gaps in learning remain where there are weaknesses in teaching or frequent changes of teacher.
- The proportion of Year 11 making expected progress in English is in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils making greater than expected progress in English is just above the national average but declining. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils making or exceeding expected progress is improving and becoming close to the national average.
- The school's own information shows that the percentage of current Year 11 pupils expected to achieve five or more GCSEs at grade C or above, including English and mathematics, is set to rise this year from lower starting points than the previous Year 11. Leaders have checked the accuracy of their assessments with support from the trust.

- Work in books across a range of subjects for pupils currently in Year 10 shows that they are making better progress than pupils previously.
- In key stage 3 overall, progress in English is stronger than in mathematics and science. The progress of pupils currently in Year 7 is better than in Years 8 and 9 for all of these three subjects.

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- Only around a third of Year 11 pupils choose to stay on into the sixth form, which restricts the range of subjects that students can follow at key stage 5.
- AS and A-level results have been below the national average for the past three years. They are showing signs of improvement for the 2016 cohort but not for the students that will complete their courses in 2017.
- Improvements to results and progress in academic and vocational courses have not been consistent over time.
- Students do not attend school as frequently as they should and some do not attend all of their lessons. Consequently, there are gaps in their learning and teachers are prevented from making the best use of learning time as previous teaching is repeated.
- Students who did not get a grade C or above in English or mathematics by the end of key stage 4 do further work to improve in these subjects. While students make progress in these subjects over the course of key stage 5, a number of them do not achieve a level 2 qualification by the end of their 16–19 study programme.
- Students typically have low starting points when they join the sixth form and many lack confidence and high aspirations for the future. Their established trust in their teachers helps them to move smoothly from key stage 4 to key stage 5, gain confidence and make some progress in their learning.
- In 2015, students on vocational courses made better progress than those on academic courses. This is also the case for students currently in year 12. Vocational qualifications provide an effective alternative for those students whose needs are not met by traditional courses.
- Leaders know students well and provide a study programme that nurtures them and raises their aspirations. The mixture of vocational and academic courses on offer meets the needs of the students who choose to stay on into the sixth form.
- Careers information and guidance which starts in Year 11 provides impartial advice to help students decide what to do when they finish their GCSEs. Sixth form students understand their future options, including apprenticeships. Students are supported in making university applications. School leaders use strong links with Bucks New University to encourage students to consider their next steps. As result, increasing numbers of students move on to university.
- School leaders have acted decisively by choosing not to recruit into the sixth form for the next academic year, while other priorities for the school are addressed. Sixth form leaders are planning, appropriately, to relaunch a stronger curriculum for the following year, which will be even more closely linked to the needs of those pupils who choose to stay at the school after their GCSEs.
- Students on vocational courses enhance their learning with regular blocks of work experience, coordinated by a local company. Those on non-vocational courses have the chance to fit work experience around their academic commitments, but do not have the same rich opportunity to learn about the world of work.
- Students develop their wider skills through regular enrichment activities which are delivered by credible experts from the community working alongside teachers. Students learn about topics which are relevant to their age, such as personal finance and the dangers of illegal drugs. They know about radicalisation and other current affairs topics. Students contribute to the life of the school, for example through completing the sports award or volunteering award, or helping out in lower school lessons.
- Students are safe. There are clear systems in place for when students arrive at and leave the school so that staff know when students are on the school site.

School details

Unique reference number	137864
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10012257

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	525
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	55
Appropriate authority	Regional Education Team
Chair	Matthew Flannigan
Principal	Russell Denial
Telephone number	01628 662 107
Website	www.e-actburnhampark.org.uk
Email address	info@e-actburnhampark.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	28–29 January 2014

Information about this school

- The E-Act Burnham Park Academy is a smaller than average secondary school with a small sixth form attended mainly by pupils who stay on at the end of Year 11. The main school has 140 places in each year group, with 60 places offered for Year 12. Pupils' prior attainment in all year groups is significantly below the national average.
- The school became an academy in April 2012 and is sponsored by the E-Act multi-academy trust.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school after the start of Year 7 or leave before the end of Year 11 is much higher than is typical nationally.
- More than half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and more than a quarter of them speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average.
- The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is twice the national average. The proportion who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is broadly in line with the national average.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of specified information about the curriculum, Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium and governors' information and duties on its website.
- A small number of pupils attend an alternative provision at The Wycombe Grange Pupil Referral Unit or Haybrook College.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 36 lessons, including five visits carried out jointly with school leaders. Inspectors visited seven tutor sessions and attended an assembly.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal and principal, and spoke with the new principal who is joining the school in September. Inspectors had meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders, other staff and pupils. An inspector met the regional education director from the multi-academy trust and representatives from the academy ambassadorial advisory group and regional education team. An inspector spoke to representatives from the two alternative providers attended by pupils from Burnham Park.
- Inspectors worked alongside school leaders to look at work from pupils in Year 8 and 10. An inspector also reviewed some examples of key stage 5 students' work. During lesson visits, inspectors looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentary evidence, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, the school website, a range of policies, pupil performance information, child protection and behaviour records, and a selection of monitoring records. The school's single central record was also checked.
- Inspectors considered 29 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and 19 free text responses. They also considered 46 responses to the staff questionnaire and reviewed information provided by the school from a pupil survey that leaders had carried out.

Inspection team

Kathryn Moles, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Mark Duke	Ofsted Inspector
Ben Ramdhony	Ofsted Inspector

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