

Beaufort Co-operative Academy

Holmleigh Park, Tuffley, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL4 0RT

Inspection dates

11–12 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Require improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- In 2016, as the result of insufficiently rapid progress in mathematics and science, pupils did not secure the grades of which they were capable in GCSE examinations.
- Teachers give too little consideration to what pupils already know, understand and can do when planning new learning.
- In a range of subjects, pupils are not given work which challenges them to think deeply enough.
- Pupils' written work is inaccurate because insufficient attention is given to the quality of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Some pupils' attitudes towards their learning are not good in lessons. Too often they do not show an active interest in their work.
- Sixth form outcomes are highly variable between subjects.
- The actions of leaders and managers have not brought about sufficient improvements in teaching to raise pupils' achievement swiftly enough.
- Leaders have not ensured that teachers build on the training they have received to improve pupils' outcomes.
- Communication with parents is not timely so parents are not in a position to help their children make better progress.
- Pupils' attendance is too low. Despite the school's work, persistent absence levels remain very high.

The school has the following strengths

- The ambition and expectations of the principal and his senior team have resulted in significant positive change in pupils' behaviour and improving rates of progress, particularly in the lower school.
- Recently appointed middle leaders show a greater awareness of how to improve teaching in their areas. It is too early to see the impact of their work.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for because staff are very committed to their welfare. Staff know pupils well and help them to understand the risks they face out of school and online.
- The difference between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally is narrowing for current pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good in all subject areas by:
 - identifying gaps in what pupils know, understand and can do so that teachers plan learning more effectively, particularly in science
 - making sure that all teachers have the same high expectations of all pupils
 - consistently providing work that challenges and interests pupils in lessons.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing further the role of middle leaders so that their actions to improve teaching lead to improved pupil outcomes
 - ensuring that all staff implement policies consistently across the school
 - improving communication with parents so that they are fully engaged in their child's learning and in the broader life of the school.
- Raise the attainment of all pupils by:
 - continuing to improve pupils' attendance and checking that they catch up on work they have missed
 - improving the accuracy of pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling
 - continuing to focus on disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, to further increase the rate of progress they make.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders' actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning are only just beginning to bring about the improvement needed to accelerate pupils' progress and raise their attainment.
- Although leaders and directors of the academy trust can demonstrate the significant progress that has been made since the school opened, they are over-generous in their self-evaluation of the school's performance to date.
- Improvement initiatives have not yet been fully effective. Staff have not made the most of the training which leaders have arranged for them. Leaders at all levels do not follow through on the well-founded strategies they have devised to ensure consistency across the school. This has slowed the rate of improvement.
- While pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum, the school's recent changes to the curriculum in science and technology are restricting pupils' choice of course at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.
- Leaders do not evaluate the effectiveness of the pupil premium funding rigorously enough. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils have achieved less well than other pupils nationally in recent years.
- Leaders are ambitious for the school. They have set in train a wide range of positive changes since the school opened which are starting to improve pupils' achievement. Systems to improve pupils' behaviour are effective and have contributed to a culture where pupils are ready to learn. This has taken some time and only recently has the focus moved on to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Middle leaders, many of whom are new in the role, have a good understanding of what needs to happen if the quality of teaching and learning is to improve. It is too early to see the impact of their work and the effect it may have on raising standards.
- Newly qualified teachers feel that they are well supported and are successful in their first year of teaching. They value the open relationship they have with leaders which helps them to reflect on their teaching and refine their planning to better meet the needs of pupils.
- Year 7 catch-up funds are being used well to make sure that targeted pupils make more rapid progress.
- Leaders have identified the importance of pupils using the library to gain further knowledge and skills across the curriculum. The librarian has made a firm start to raising the profile of this important school resource, but it is not yet being effectively used by subjects other than English.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities is offered but not many pupils take part because the timetable is not well organised.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View were positive. Nonetheless, a number of parents feel that communication between school and home is not as effective as it could be. Parents did not feel they received information about their child's progress at the right times.
- Relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils value the time staff give them, especially in key stage 4 as they prepare for forthcoming examinations.

- Pupils enjoy activities that involve them in discussing current issues such as politics and the rule of law, and participating in elections. These contribute well to their understanding of life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- The work of the school is overseen at a strategic level by an academy trust board. The trust board has appointed a local governing body to review the day-to-day work of the school.
- The trust board has supported the school since it took on the sponsorship. For example, they appointed a chief executive officer, brokered the support of a number of consultants, particularly in mathematics, and forged a partnership with a national leader of education. While the board has ensured appropriate support for the school, the accuracy of directors' understanding of the school's progress is over-generous. Directors have not completed some of the statutory duties with the rigour required.
- Many of the members of the local governing body have been recently appointed; they bring a detailed understanding of education and of the local community. This puts them in a good position to hold leaders to account. They have the expertise to test how well particular initiatives are working and challenge leaders about them. As they are relatively new in their roles, the full impact of their work has yet to be seen. However, a tangible result of their work can be seen in an improved transition experience of pupils from primary to secondary school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are secure. The designated leader has a strong understanding of the wide range of risks that pupils face, including sexual exploitation and honour-based violence. All staff are well briefed on the indicators of risks and referrals are made swiftly when there are concerns.
- Some record-keeping lacks precision. Despite this, the highly personalised nature of the arrangements at this school means that all pupils are well protected and no child could 'fall through the net'.
- School staff have forged strong relationships with other agencies, such as children's social care and the police, to ensure that pupils are safe in and out of school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement because teachers' planning does not routinely take into account pupils' starting points or meet the identified needs of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, pupils do not make the progress they should.
- In a wide range of subjects, the most able pupils are not stretched sufficiently so they do not achieve the high grades they are capable of; and lower-attaining pupils 'get lost' as they find the work too challenging.
- Too often, staff do not address weaknesses in pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling, which detracts from their writing and leaves them ill-prepared for the increased demand for accuracy in examinations. However, the presentation of pupils' work in Years 7, 8 and 9 is much better than in Years 10 and 11. This demonstrates that improvements have been seen since the academy opened.

- Although most teachers follow the school's marking policy, they do not always check that corrections or improvements have been made and this can slow pupils' progress. Feedback in English, geography, history and health and social care is helping pupils to understand how to improve.
- In science, self-assessment is used as a tool for learning but pupils have not been sufficiently well prepared to mark work accurately. This gives pupils and teachers a false appreciation of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Misconceptions therefore go unchecked and this impedes the progress that pupils make.
- Teachers do not insist that pupils catch up on the work they have missed, because of absence for example, and this leaves important gaps in knowledge and understanding, particularly for pupils on examination courses.
- Teachers take different approaches to the teaching of mathematics across the curriculum. This inconsistency causes confusion for pupils and slows the progress they make.
- The daily tutor period is not used effectively. In general, expectations of what should happen in tutor time are too low and little learning or personal development takes place. Leaders are aware of this and are beginning to review this programme.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to challenge and stretch pupils' understanding in subjects including English and religious education. Across the school, however, there remain weaknesses in questioning that limit pupils' learning.
- There is an over-reliance on intervention work with disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 to make up for the poor teaching they have experienced previously.
- Teachers in almost all subjects have increased the opportunities for pupils to complete extended writing tasks, and improvements in pupils' ability to write at greater length are apparent.
- Teaching assistants work well with pupils who need their support. They intervene when appropriate. Specialist higher-level teaching assistants are well briefed and have secure subject knowledge which helps pupils improve. Specialist learning assistants, who help pupils who have particular special educational needs and/or disabilities, adapt the learning well to meet the pupils' particular needs.
- Teachers set homework regularly and this is developing pupils' learning. Pupils commented that they 'see the relevance' of the homework they are asked to complete.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The pastoral care of pupils and attention to their well-being is a strength. This ensures that pupils are able to concentrate on becoming successful learners. As one parent, responding to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire, said, 'I feel the school makes every effort to care and support my children'. Inspectors agree.
- Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are strong. Older pupils and students in the sixth form said that they value highly the 'extra mile' that staff go to when supporting them in revising for examinations, for example.
- Pupils show pride when wearing the school uniform.

- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They feel generally well prepared to face risks, including when they are online. However, they would value more regular updates on how to best approach areas that worry them most.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In some lessons pupils 'switch off' because the work is either too easy or too hard for them. In science, in particular, this can quickly become disruptive to other learners. In Ofsted's pupil survey, over half of the pupils who responded confirmed that there is some poor behaviour in lessons.
- Reflecting the priority given to improving pupils' behaviour, it has improved over the last three years. As a result rates of exclusions have fallen from very high starting points but still remain too high.
- Pupils' attendance has been well below national levels for many years, but with some improvement year on year resulting from the hard work of staff to tackle the issue. Consequently, in the first five weeks of the autumn term attendance was in line with national levels. However, levels of persistent absence were well above national levels in 2014–15.
- Although most pupils are on time to school and to lessons, a few are not punctual. Leaders are aware of this and are taking action to address the problem.
- Pupils and parents note that there is some bullying in the school but that staff deal with it effectively once it is brought to their attention. School data confirms that bullying is relatively rare.
- Behaviour at break and lunchtimes is good. Pupils show courtesy to one another, adults and visitors.
- Leaders make sure that pupils who attend alternative provision are safe and behave well.

Outcomes for pupils

Require improvement

- Results in 2015 at key stage 4 were low, being well below the national average in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects. They showed little improvement in 2016. Current pupils, however, are achieving higher standards. In Years 7 and 8 the school's reliable data suggests that pupils are on track to meet the standard expected of them.
- Over time, disadvantaged pupils have made slower progress than other pupils nationally by the end of key stage 4. This trend continues, with only half of the disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 on track to make the progress that is expected of them. Although the differences between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally are diminishing, this is at too slow a pace.
- Similarly, over time the most able pupils have achieved well below their capabilities and this trend continues. Inspectors saw some examples where the most able pupils were being provided with opportunities to reach the highest grades, but not in all subjects.
- School data for current pupils shows that there are still concerns about their progress in mathematics and science. While there are some indicators of improvement in mathematics, progress in science remains too slow.

- Pupils' progress in religious education and citizenship is particularly slow. Although leaders are aware of the poor outcomes in these subjects, further analysis is needed to understand why pupils are not achieving as well as they should.
- Pupils' reading age across most years is at least one year below their chronological age. Strategies to help pupils improve their reading are being introduced, but not for all pupils. The effect of this was seen in the 2016 GCSE English examination when pupils achieved grades lower than expected. The most able disadvantaged pupils who read to inspectors did so with good comprehension and were able to infer meaning. Pupils with low prior attainment, however, do not use their phonics knowledge to work out how to pronounce unfamiliar words.
- Transition arrangements between primary and secondary school are strong in English and mathematics. In mathematics, Year 7 pupils use technical language well, building on work they have done in primary school.
- The school offers a range of opportunities for careers education and this helps those pupils who are unsure to make informed choices about their next steps. In the past, many pupils continued into the school's sixth form and did not follow courses that were appropriate for them.
- Pupils are now set targets which are better aligned to their prior attainment and what they can achieve. These are appreciated by pupils but, as yet, the teaching is not well aligned to these more challenging targets.
- Pupils who had not achieved the expected standard at the end of key stage 2 are catching up as a result of the well-crafted programme they follow.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make steady progress.
- The very small number of pupils who receive some or all of their teaching with an alternative provider make good progress on the courses they follow, taking into account their individual needs.

16 to 19 study programmes

Require improvement

- The sixth form is improving but it is not yet good because students' rates of progress vary between subjects. Music is a particular strength in the sixth form, but there are many subjects where progress is not rapid enough. For example, students make slower progress in English literature, history and drama than in other academic subjects. This is sometimes associated with expectations that are too low, with students' work often limited to short responses which do not extend learning sufficiently.
- Many students in the sixth form have relatively low starting points, often associated with their underachievement when they were in key stage 4 at the school. In the past, a larger proportion than normal left during the year when they found they were not well suited to the courses they had chosen. Others left to move on to apprenticeship programmes which matched their career ambitions. Students currently in the sixth form follow courses that are appropriate for them.
- Students' progress on vocational courses, which was previously strong, fell last year and is now in line with the national average.
- Improvements to the quality of teaching have been made in some areas. Consequently the progress students make from their starting points on some academic courses has

increased overall and is now in line with the national average. In information and communication technology (ICT), for example, students are set challenges which demand creative thought and as a result they develop their skills quickly.

- The range of academic courses on offer has been reduced recently, particularly in science subjects. For some students this could limit their opportunities; however, the school is keeping the curriculum under review.
- A week of work experience in Year 12 and other opportunities to carry out work-related activities are offered to students in the sixth form. Too many students do not take these up and therefore they do not have a fully rounded view of the demands and opportunities in different career paths.
- The senior leader with responsibility for the sixth form is newly appointed to the role. She demonstrates clear ambition and genuine passion for the success of all students, no matter what their starting point. There are early signs of the positive impact of her work in students' attitudes to learning and the good use of resources that are available.
- In 2016, of those students who did not attain a grade C in English GCSE in Year 11, more than half achieved a grade C when they re-sat in Year 12. In both English and mathematics, the progress of students compares well with national averages. For mathematics, this is a big improvement on the previous year.
- Students are clear that they are taught well about the risks associated with online activity and social media. They are equally adamant that bullying, in all its forms, is not tolerated at the school.
- Students respect their environment and are supervised by a dedicated member of staff in a large, well-equipped area set aside for independent study. As a result they make good use of the time when they are not in lessons.
- Many students are involved in mentoring pupils in lower years in the school. They speak highly about this initiative and how it helps to build their self-confidence. They are rightly proud of the difference it makes to the younger pupils they work with. The sixth form is seen as an integral part of the school and this demonstrates the inclusive culture that is being built up.
- As a result of the focus placed on individual advice to students, all of those who left the sixth form at the end of the last academic year secured a place in education, employment or training.
- School leaders are proud of the fact that they are now beginning to raise the aspirations of students. A large proportion of the students who secure places at university are the first from their family to enter higher education.

School details

Unique reference number	140011
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10019932

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,175
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	184
Appropriate authority	The trust board
Chair	David Boston
Principal	David Bishop
Telephone number	01452 301 381
Website	http://www.beaufort.coop/
Email address	office@beaufort.coop
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Beaufort Co-operative Academy opened in October 2013. This is the school's first inspection report.
- OUR Academies Trust is the responsible body. The trust board has appointed a local governing body to oversee the operational work of the school.
- The trust board has arranged support for the school from The Cotswold School, Cotham School and independent consultants.
- The school is larger than the average-sized 11–18 school.

- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium is above average and is reducing.
- About a third of Year 7 pupils receive catch-up funding, which is for those who did not achieve Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of primary school.
- The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage with very small, but increasing, numbers from several minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- A small number of pupils receive alternative provision, with some or all of their education provided by Gloucestershire Hospital Education Service.
- In 2015, the school met the government's published floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the pupil premium and some details about special educational needs.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons, a number jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also made short visits to lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- Groups of pupils from various year groups met with inspectors. Discussions were held with school staff, including senior leaders, middle leaders and newly qualified teachers. Discussions were also held with two members of the trust board and, separately, two members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of school documents including the school's self-evaluation, information on pupils' outcomes, and records relating to the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment, behaviour and the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the 43 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and of the questionnaires completed by staff and pupils, and additional comments from parents.

Inspection team

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Paul Williams	Her Majesty's Inspector
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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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