

Bourne End Academy

New Road, Bourne End, Buckinghamshire SL8 5BW

Inspection dates

29–30 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too variable. Some teaching does not focus sharply enough on what pupils need to learn.
- Some teaching does not provide suitable challenge for pupils of varying ability, including the most able.
- Pupils are not routinely clear about what they are supposed to be learning and how they can improve.
- Pupils' achievement is not consistently good in relation to their starting points.
- Although there are recent signs of improvement, disadvantaged pupils and boys achieve less well than their peers and others nationally.
- At times, when teaching is less effective, low-level disruption is evident.
- Although attendance levels are broadly in line with the national average, some disadvantaged pupils attend less well than others.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors are strong forces for change. This has led to recent improvements, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The welfare and personal development of pupils is fostered particularly well. There are carefully planned activities in lessons, assemblies and whole days devoted to events promoting pupils' personal development and understanding of diverse topics.
- There is a culture of safety and, as a result, pupils say they feel safe in school.
- The achievement of students in the sixth form is good and improving due to the well-planned curriculum, effective teaching and good leadership.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good or better, by:
 - ensuring that all lessons focus sharply on what pupils are expected to learn
 - making sure that teachers routinely take into account pupils' differing starting points so that tasks set are of suitable challenge for pupils of varying ability, including the most able.
- Continue to improve outcomes for pupils, particularly for the disadvantaged and boys, by:
 - ensuring that pupils know what they are supposed to be learning and how to improve their work.
- Continue to improve the behaviour of pupils in lessons, by:
 - ensuring that the school's behaviour management systems are applied consistently well by all staff.
- Continue to raise levels of attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school's most senior staff provide dynamic leadership, conveying a sense of ambition and determination to succeed. The strong and effective work of leaders at all levels is bringing about a positive change in the culture of the school.
- As a result of good leadership and management, the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' behaviour, their personal development and welfare, as well as outcomes have improved from a very low base.
- Despite the many changes to leadership, staffing and governance since the last inspection, leaders and managers have been tenacious in their efforts to secure suitable staff for the school.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's current priorities. There is a clear sense of direction as well as a determination to improve teaching and raise standards.
- Leaders and managers have introduced carefully planned strategies to improve outcomes for pupils. The success of these is becoming evident, particularly where teaching is effective.
- Leaders and managers monitor the quality of teaching and learning carefully by undertaking lesson observations and scrutinising the work in pupils' books. This enables leaders to identify training needs accurately for those staff who need to improve their practice. Consequently, teachers are making better use of questions to check on pupils' learning and progress during lessons.
- Staff value the support and guidance provided by the senior leadership team. Performance management is effective and staff are clear about what is expected of them. Morale is high and the very large majority of staff who responded to the online survey said they are proud to work in the school.
- Middle leaders have been encouraged and supported to develop their expertise. Subjects that underperform, such as modern foreign languages, are stringently held to account.
- Information about how current pupils are achieving is thorough. Leaders know that teachers' use of assessment information to plan lessons to match work to pupils' needs is too variable across the school. Leaders and managers have allocated skilful staff to support those whose practice requires improvement.
- The funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively. Leaders make good use of advice from outside consultants about how to improve the effectiveness of provision. Consequently, the school has recently employed a new member of staff to work more closely with those families with children whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used carefully. For example, leaders provide additional support to accelerate the progress that this group of pupils make in reading and mathematics, particularly in Year 7. The success of this additional support is reviewed regularly and plans amended when necessary.

- The curriculum is responsive to local needs and the constraints of the small size of the school. There are, for example, different pathways which include academic and vocational options. Senior leaders check on the progress made across the curriculum at regular intervals during the course of the year. This has led to changes in curriculum provision so that it is better suited to pupils' needs. Increased provision of physics and the introduction of further mathematics in the sixth form are good examples of this. There are plans to open some of the vocational qualifications delivered in this school to the other school in the multi-academy trust next year to develop the partnership further.
- The wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, including sporting and cultural activities, support pupils' personal development well. Pupils take part in a variety of sports tournaments with other schools. Older pupils meet with people from the local community to discuss ways of improving the local environment. They also spend time helping pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities from another school. These sorts of opportunities complement the school's enrichment programme for its pupils very well.
- The promotion of British values is supported well through assemblies; tutor time; and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE). Pupils know what it means to live in a democratic society. They have contributed to some important decisions made by the school, such as the ethos of the school, 'Believe, Engage, Aspire'.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is actively encouraged through carefully planned activities including the use of outside speakers, trips and links to the community and other schools.
- The school is committed to raising attendance for the small group who do not attend regularly enough. This includes support for families and home visits. The effectiveness of leaders and managers in raising levels of attendance is already evident in the extent to which exclusions are falling, attendance is rising and in the reduction of pupils who are persistently absent.
- The multi-academy trust has provided helpful support for leadership, governors and teaching staff. Beneficial links are established with the other school in the trust to provide support for teachers and extra subjects for the sixth form.
- Responses from the online Parent View questionnaire are very positive. Most parents say that they would recommend the school to another parent and that the school is well led and managed.
- The special educational needs coordinator has been particularly effective in helping to reduce exclusions, working closely with heads of year to monitor attendance, behaviour and intervention for vulnerable pupils. This information is used to inform support in lessons and for extra intervention for reading and spelling. Individualised support for pupils is reviewed termly with parents and carers.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong and provides valued support to the leadership of the school. Governors challenge leaders about the progress being made by different groups of pupils. They take the time to check on the work of the school and undertake regular

visits, for example to see the quality of the work in pupils' books. This has contributed to more pupils making better progress in English and mathematics, for example.

- The governors bring a wide range of skills that have been used to support improvements made to the school. They have a secure awareness of the use and effectiveness of the pupil premium and catch-up funding. They are knowledgeable about the effectiveness of performance management of staff. They challenge and hold school leaders to account effectively for how well pupils achieve.

Safeguarding

- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Procedures to identify and follow up any concerns are thorough. The school's safe recruitment and vetting procedures of staff and governors meet current requirements. Staff know how to keep children safe and have all received recent training about how to keep children safe in education.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement as there is too much variability across the school.
- Teachers' planning does not focus consistently sharply on improving what pupils know and can do. As a result, in some lessons, the work pupils are given does not enable them to make the necessary progress in their learning.
- Some teachers do not make effective enough use of assessment information to plan lessons that cater for the differing aptitudes, needs and interests of pupils with different starting points.
- Where teaching is less effective, there is insufficient challenge for pupils, especially the most able.
- Although most teachers provide pupils with feedback in line with the school's policy, pupils who spoke with the inspectors said that in some subjects teachers do not help them to know what they should do next in order to improve.
- Where teaching is improving, teachers are responsive to what pupils know and can do. There are examples of strong practice across the school, particularly in English and mathematics. Consequently, current pupils make increasingly good progress in these subjects.
- There is effective additional support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teaching and support staff know the additional needs of pupils very well. This enables them to identify the relevant strategies such as the use of information and communication technology to support pupils, for example, with reading, writing and spelling.
- Teachers encourage pupils to read widely and from a range of texts. This is particularly successful during tutor time and in English lessons. The school librarian helps pupils to choose a range of books that are well suited to their age and reading ability.
- The school's programme of training for teachers contributes successfully to the

improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Pupils told inspectors that they have noticed changes in the teaching and feel they are now learning at a faster rate.

- In lessons visited, a common feature was the strong and supportive relationships between staff and pupils; this made a positive contribution to learning.
- Strong subject knowledge is a significant feature of the best lessons and, during the inspection, was particularly noticeable in the sixth form.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils demonstrate good levels of confidence and want to do well.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They recognise the potential risks when using the internet and the importance of e-safety. Pupils know that smoking, drugs and alcohol can damage their health and compromise their welfare. They learn about what constitutes a healthy diet and the importance of exercise to support their health and well-being.
- Assemblies and PSHEE lessons are used effectively to raise pupils' awareness of diverse issues such as gender violence, sexual exploitation and extremism.
- School leaders have adopted a range of strategies to encourage positive pupil attitudes which are starting to work. For example, transition between primary and secondary, and secondary and post-16, is managed very well.
- The very large majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that their children feel safe and are well looked after by the school. Pupils confirm that they understand how to protect themselves and use social media safely.
- The school has an anti-bullying policy and pupils are aware of different forms of bullying. Bullying in all its forms is actively challenged and dealt with effectively. Pupils say that bullying is rare and instances of bullying are dealt with well.
- Careers information, advice and guidance are helpful and supportive in assisting pupils to choose career paths and make option choices. Last year, all pupils moved on to either further education, employment or training at the end of Year 11.
- Pupils have experienced a large number of changes in teachers and, as a result, some pupils have not yet developed consistently positive attitudes to their learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The whole-school emphasis on behaviour is having a positive impact on learning, although, in a small number of lessons, low-level disruption still prevents pupils from making sufficient progress.
- The majority of pupils conduct themselves well outside of lessons and movement

around the school is generally orderly. Pupils are courteous, helpful and polite. However, when activities in the classroom do not challenge or stretch them, their attitudes to learning deteriorate.

- Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. Punctuality has also improved through the introduction of the 'late gate'. However, some pupils, particularly the disadvantaged, still do not attend as regularly as they should.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Published results for 2015 indicate that pupils' progress from their starting points in a range of subjects was below average, including for disadvantaged pupils and boys. Progress in mathematics was below the national average and too few pupils with high prior attainment, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, achieved their potential in this subject.
- Provisional results for 2016 indicate that pupils' progress against the government's new benchmark was below that of pupils nationally, in particular for boys and disadvantaged pupils. Progress in English and mathematics was broadly average. Although this represents an improvement on the previous year, the progress of disadvantaged pupils from their starting points was well below the national average across a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics.
- Current pupils' rates of progress across the school suggest that the recent improvements in outcomes are continuing. The school's own assessment information confirms that most pupils are on track to meet their targets in English, mathematics and science.
- Disadvantaged pupils and boys are currently making better progress than they were last year. However, the achievement of these pupils is not consistently strong. Additionally, the most able are not routinely making the progress they should in some lessons.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve in line with other pupils nationally and better than their peers. They benefit particularly well from additional support with their reading and literacy.
- Pupils read fluently and with understanding. Teachers are systematic in developing pupils' reading skills. The most able pupils are being stretched with reading which challenges them, especially in English lessons.
- Pupils are suitably prepared for their next stage of education through effective advice and helpful guidance.
- The Year 7 catch-up programme is having a positive impact on the development of pupils' number, reading and writing skills. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to raise standards by providing additional reading and literacy classes for targeted pupils.
- Pupils who attend the on-site additional resource provision for autism are successfully supported to integrate into the main school. This is achieved through targeted sessions on study and social skills.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leaders in the sixth form track the progress of students closely. Any students at risk of underachieving are quickly identified and provided with swift and effective support to enable them to catch up quickly.
- Teachers and students respond well to the high expectations of leaders. This enables students to achieve well and rates of retention are high.
- Lessons visited confirm that teachers' subject knowledge is particularly strong in this part of the school. There are good relationships between students and their teachers.
- The curriculum includes a good balance of academic and vocational pathways. The links with the multi-academy trust allow students to study further mathematics and physics in conjunction with the neighbouring grammar school which belongs to the trust. Sixth-form students feel well supported in terms of careers advice and work experience. They receive helpful support in writing applications for higher education as well as for employment and apprenticeships.
- The school works hard to ensure that students are aware of opportunities available to them in the local area and beyond through visiting speakers and engagement with local and national businesses.
- Students have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and about the negative impact and unacceptability of prejudice behaviour including that which is homophobic. They are also aware of the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.
- Attendance in Year 13 has previously been a cause for concern, but this has improved considerably as a result of concerted efforts by the school working with students and their parents. Students confirm that they are happy, feel safe and valued.
- Students appreciate the many leadership opportunities available to them in the sixth form, as well as opportunities to support younger pupils in tutor time and the enrichment period. They work with the community and a local special school to gain other skills.
- In 2015 and 2016, students' progress was in line with the national average for academic and applied courses. Leaders predict that outcomes this year will continue to rise.
- GCSE English and mathematics retake courses are offered to those students who have not yet achieved a pass at grade C or above. Students who resat English GCSE in the last two years have typically achieved well, improving their grade to a C or above. The number of students who retook mathematics is too small to report on without the risk that individuals might be identified.
- Retention rates from Year 12 and Year 13 are similar to national averages and are improving. Destinations are tracked closely; the majority of students pursue university education or higher-level apprenticeships. All students go on to be in either education, employment or training.
- The school meets the minimum standards for 16 to 19 study programmes.

School details

Unique reference number	140678
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10026178

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
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	587
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	52
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Mike Curtis
Headteacher	Andrea Jacobson
Telephone number	01628 819022
Website	www.bea.bucks.sch.uk
Email address	office@bea.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Bourne End Academy became part of Wycombe High School Academies trust on 1 September 2014.
- Bourne End Academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It is situated in an area where approximately one in three of higher-attaining pupils attend grammar schools.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is close to the national average; the proportion learning to speak English as an additional language is low.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is slightly lower than in most schools.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are 13 pupils with autism in the specially resourced provision.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook observations of pupils' learning in 35 lessons, including 22 joint observations with senior members of staff. They reviewed work in pupils' books, covering subjects including English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, geography, history and design and technology and the sixth form, to check attainment, progress, feedback and presentation.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and middle leaders. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the academy trust, the local governing body and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors held meetings with pupils from all year groups and spoke informally to pupils inside and outside of lessons.
- Inspectors looked at the school's website and a range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans as well as safeguarding records and governors' minutes. They also looked at the school's attendance, behaviour and exclusions information.
- The views of 49 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered. Inspectors also considered 59 questionnaires completed by members of staff and 17 questionnaires completed by pupils in the school.

Inspection team

Sue Bzikot, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Cullum	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Kearsey	Ofsted Inspector
Paul James	Ofsted 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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