

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



12 January 2017

Kim Rowe  
Headteacher  
Bishopshalt School  
Royal Lane  
Hillingdon  
Uxbridge  
Middlesex  
UB8 3RF

Dear Mr Rowe

### **Short inspection of Bishopshalt School**

Following my visit to the school on 6 December 2016 with Janet Hallett, Her Majesty's Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 2012.

### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have nurtured an ethos that celebrates success and proactively seeks out areas of the school's work that require further development. You are not complacent about the work required to ensure that every pupil is able to succeed and are highly ambitious for them to do so. Consequently, this is an ambitious school which places the success of each pupil at the core of its work.

Leaders have a precise view of the school's performance. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the last inspection, particularly in challenging the most able pupils to do better. Teachers now routinely plan activities that meet pupils' needs and provide helpful feedback that moves their learning on apace. You have accurately identified that science and geography have performed less well than other subjects over the past couple of years and have plans in place to address this. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils have lagged behind their peers but effective strategies are leading to an improving trend in those pupils' performance over time. The most able disadvantaged pupils are particularly well supported in mathematics, for example.

You are rightly proud of the enrichment activities that form a significant part of the school's ethos. Pupils who participate in school musical and theatrical productions are role models to other pupils. Pupils' personal development is further supported

by well-planned and embedded strategies to support lower ability pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, sessions to develop pupils' reading skills prepare them for the challenges of other subjects. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and is accessible to pupils no matter their starting points or backgrounds. Impartial careers advice and guidance helps pupils to make informed decisions regarding the next stage of their education, training or employment. Most pupils go on to study at university and those seeking work-related courses successfully move on to them. Pupils are self-motivated and highly ambitious, expecting to achieve well.

Pupils' behaviour overall is strong, with few incidents requiring significant follow-up. There is an improving trend in the reduction of the number of fixed-term exclusions. Attendance is rising to above the national average for secondary schools. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners who seek opportunities to ask questions and explore their learning. Effective monitoring systems support pupils' behaviour, and established routines are well known to pupils and staff alike. After many years with no permanent exclusions there was an unusual spike last year. Leaders' work to improve those pupils' behaviour was exhaustive and based on procedures that have improved the overall picture of behaviour in the school. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities now feature less often in behaviour records, demonstrating the impact of your good work with these groups of pupils.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Pupils' welfare is threaded throughout the school's work. Governors, leaders and staff are well trained and knowledgeable about the potential risks that pupils may face. Leaders have recently focused particularly on work around e-safety, 'Prevent' duty and child sexual exploitation. The school runs social network feeds as part of their efforts to engage with pupils in school life. This also provides opportunities to demonstrate safe use of social media. Leaders are unequivocal that pupils' welfare comes first. Pupils told inspectors that they recognised this in their day-to-day experience in school. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, agree that the school takes good care of pupils. The school has recently decided to enhance its work to support pupils' mental well-being by building upon long-established links with external agencies and introducing a new programme in the sixth form to support students through their studies. This reflects leaders' ongoing pursuit of excellence through robust reviews of what works and what could be further improved.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders have taken appropriate steps to address the area for improvement identified at the last inspection. Their evaluation of teachers' performance is accurate and feeds into effective professional development opportunities that have reduced variation across the school.
- Teachers use questioning well. Most teachers use their knowledge of pupils' needs to target their questioning specifically around those needs. Some teachers

miss opportunities to do this as effectively, which slows some pupils' progress down. This tends to be in subjects that are already receiving support to improve, such as science.

- The whole-school assessment system is straightforward and effective. Leaders provide pupils and parents with clear information regarding progress. Teachers use this information well to plan lessons based upon pupils' prior progress and needs. Governors are provided with summaries of pupils' progress which they use to challenge leaders if differences in the performance of groups are identified during the year.
- Leaders have rightly identified that outcomes at GCSE and A level in geography and science were weak last year. Leaders have drawn upon their experience of effectively raising standards in mathematics to improve the situation. However, these strategies have not yet had the impact leaders aimed for because teaching remains variable and pupils' progress is still too slow when compared with other areas of the curriculum.
- Historically, students on 16 to 19 study programmes have performed better than their peers nationally. Last year's outcomes were less strong at A level. Leaders have accurately identified the reasons for this and have strategies in place that are showing signs of improvement. These strategies are underpinned by secure teaching and assessment in A-level and work-related subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils made slower progress than their peers at GCSE level last year, particularly in science and geography. However, these pupils are generally well supported through whole-school strategies. Current assessment information indicates improvements in disadvantaged pupils' performance across the curriculum from Year 7. This is a result of teachers' focus upon disadvantaged pupils' needs and effective interventions outside lessons. In the sixth form, disadvantaged students make better progress than their peers.
- A culture of reading exists where pupils read regularly throughout the school day and any requiring additional support are able to catch up with their peers quickly. Pupils read with confidence and enjoy the thrill of exploring new places through books. The library is a lively, well-used place during break and lunchtimes, as pupils recognise it as a place to study and concentrate.
- Additional sessions to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are particularly effective in preparing them for the mainstream curriculum. For example, inspectors observed pupils applying a range of literacy skills while analysing a book they had read. Pupils could explain how this work helps them in other lessons.
- Historically, fixed-term exclusions have been below the national average and no permanent exclusions had been made up to 2015. The recent increase in permanent exclusions bucks the in-school trend for behaviour. Leaders have ensured that they followed the correct procedures in excluding pupils from the school. Pastoral leaders know the pupils very well and have detailed records outlining their work to support those in need. Their timely interventions help to reduce potential barriers to learning, including persistent absenteeism.
- Whole-school approaches to maintaining and improving good attendance are

working. Attendance, including for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is just above average. Attendance to lessons is similarly strong and pupils adhere well to expectations for punctuality.

- The curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to succeed. The school's performing arts specialism is one route and supports an increasingly diverse subject offer that includes GCSE, A-level and work-related courses. Pupils studying performing arts subjects enjoy being able to put their skills into action.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) set of qualifications is broadly average and improving. Disadvantaged pupils' achievement of the EBacc is improving more slowly but this is not holding them back from going on to their destination of choice.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- consistently good or better teaching, learning and assessment improves outcomes in science and geography.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Hillingdon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matt Tiplin  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors agreed to prioritise the following areas with the school at the start of the inspection:

- the actions being taken to improve the performance of science and geography
- how disadvantaged pupils are being better supported to make better progress at GCSE and A level
- what leaders are doing to improve the attendance and exclusion rate of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the effectiveness of the school's careers advice and guidance programme at supporting pupils to excel.

Inspectors carried out the following activities to explore these areas during the inspection:

- they visited 17 lessons accompanied by senior leaders and listened to pupils from Year 7 read. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during social times and lesson change-over
- they met with senior leaders, staff, governors and pupils and held informal conversations throughout the day
- they considered the views expressed by 75 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View
- they scrutinised documentation including: policies and procedures; assessment and behaviour information; minutes of governors' meetings; leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and plans for development; performance evaluation and plans for development for subjects; the single central record of pre-employment checks made on staff.