

Saint Benedict Catholic Voluntary Academy

Duffield Road, Darley Abbey, Derby, Derbyshire, DE22 1JD

Inspection dates

23–24 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The quality of leadership and management is inadequate. Leaders do not have enough capacity to ensure that improvement happens at the pace that is required. Some senior leaders are not effective in their roles. The quality of subject leadership is weak in two key subject areas. Two newly appointed senior leaders have not had the time to have significant impact.
- Leaders' strategic planning is weak. The school development plan is not sharply focused and does not have the milestones needed to help leaders check that actions are effective.
- Leaders and governors have not guaranteed that pupil premium funding makes a difference for eligible pupils. Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve or attend as well as other pupils in the school or other pupils nationally.
- The learning environment in many classes is poor. Opportunities are missed to celebrate and to display pupils' work.
- Habitual poor behaviour disrupts the learning of some pupils.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate. Teachers' planning does not meet the needs of pupils within their class. Too often, disadvantaged pupils do not receive the precise support that they require in order to catch up rapidly with others with the same starting points. Most-able pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not have their capabilities and their flair developed fully.
- Teachers' expectations of what some pupils can achieve are too low. Frequently, pupils produce work of poor quality that is then accepted too readily by their teachers.
- The assessment policy is newly implemented and not all teachers follow it. This means that some pupils do not receive the feedback needed to help them correct their errors, or to progress.
- Too many pupils are still regularly absent from school.
- Arrangements to keep pupils safe are not implemented fully. The need for improvement was discussed with senior leaders and the local authority representative during the inspection.

The school has the following strengths

- Provision within the sixth form is good.
- The enhanced provision for pupils with visual impairment is good.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of 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?

- Improve the quality of leadership, by:
 - ensuring that the school's use of the pupil premium funding is monitored efficiently and addresses well the needs of eligible pupils
 - ensuring that planning for improvement is focused sharply on the correct actions needed to improve the school and contains clear milestones to assess if the actions are having an impact
 - ensuring that all senior leaders are effective in their roles
 - ensuring that all subject leaders play an effective role in accelerating pupils' progress
 - taking steps to ensure that provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities within the school who do not attend the enhanced provision reach their potential.
- Reduce the proportion of pupils that still regularly fail to attend school, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities who do not attend the enhanced provision.
- Improve outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
 - pupils' underperformance in science, geography and history is rectified by improving the quality of subject leadership and teaching in these areas
 - disadvantaged pupils receive better support so that they can catch up to other pupils
 - more pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, but do not attend the enhanced provision, achieve at the levels of which they are capable
 - most-able pupils are challenged sufficiently to achieve at the highest levels.
- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that teachers:
 - use the information about pupils' starting points to plan lessons that provide sufficient support and challenge for different groups of pupils
 - provide helpful feedback so that pupils understand how to correct their mistakes and improve their work
 - have high expectations of the presentation and quality of work that they accept from pupils.
- Improve pupils' personal safety, behaviour and welfare by making sure that:
 - low-level disruption in lessons is eradicated

- disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities attend school as regularly as others
- the learning environment is stimulating and celebrates the achievements of pupils.
- Ensure that arrangements to keep pupils safe are implemented in full.

An external review of governance should be undertaken, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Senior leaders have insufficient capacity to bring about the improvements needed. Certain senior leaders are not effective in their roles. Senior leaders who are new to the school are beginning to make a difference, but they have had insufficient time to have the required impact.
- There has been a lengthy period of leadership turbulence that leaders have been required to manage. Nevertheless, the pace of school improvement has been too slow. Leaders' strategic planning is inadequate. Their plans lack the clarity needed to support the necessary improvement work. Required actions are not precise and lack regular milestones to assist leaders in reviewing their work.
- Leaders' efforts to rectify the academic underachievement of disadvantaged pupils are ineffective. The leaders are not making sure that pupil premium funding is having the impact it should. Plans made to support pupils eligible for pupil premium funding are too broad and do not address the specific academic barriers that these pupils face. Disadvantaged pupils continue to underachieve and attend much less well than other pupils in school and nationally.
- The quality of subject leadership is too variable and this contributes to pupils' underachievement.
- The leadership of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities within the school who do not attend the enhanced provision is weak. This group of pupils underachieves and attends less regularly than other pupils within school do. The additional funding for these pupils is not being spent effectively to rectify this underperformance.
- Leaders have not made sure that policies are well understood and followed consistently by staff. Too much has happened too recently and could have been in place before now. Much policy linked to teaching, learning, assessment, behaviour and attendance is new.
- Leaders have failed to ensure that pupils learn within a stimulating and well-cared-for environment. Too often, teachers miss opportunities to display pupils' work and to celebrate the pupils' achievement. Too often, classrooms are unkempt.
- Leaders have not evaluated the effectiveness of the school's use of the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium. They are not clear about the impact these funds are having on the pupils that failed to achieve the expected standard in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2.
- Leaders are developing the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils more successfully. At key stage 3, they have made plans to develop a broad and creative curriculum that also develops pupils' literacy and numeracy to appropriate levels. At key stage 4, however, some pupils currently do not have sufficient opportunity to study an appropriate range of English Baccalaureate subjects.
- Recently, the leaders have commendably focused on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This includes involving subject leaders in professional

development, in order that they conduct their roles more efficiently.

- The subject leaders of mathematics and English spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about the difference this training has made. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved in these subject areas.
- Since September 2016, the leadership of pupils' attendance has improved. Systems to make sure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, attend school are beginning to work; however, too many pupils still do not attend school regularly.
- Leaders make sure that pupils experience a broad range of activities to develop their understanding of life in modern Britain. This includes opportunities to develop an understanding of pupils from different countries and who have different faiths.
- The opportunities for pupils to be involved in creative and sporting activities are extensive. One pupil was keen to tell inspectors about his lead role in the upcoming school production 'Bugsy Malone' and the importance of this in building confidence and enjoying school.
- The leadership of the sixth form is good. The leader has had an impact and more students are successful in their studies, including disadvantaged students and students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The leadership of the school's enhanced provision for pupils with visual impairment is good and pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan make good progress and attend school regularly.
- The headteacher is committed to ensuring that all pupils are welcomed to the school. Leaders make much effort to help pupils avoid permanent exclusion. Pupils who experience significant challenges in their lives are well supported and treated with care.
- It is recommended that newly qualified teachers should not be appointed to the school.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is inadequate.
- Governors have failed to make sure that the pupil premium has the maximum impact, so that disadvantaged pupils achieve and attend school as well as others.
- Governors have not made sure that improvement happens quickly enough and that pupils' outcomes have improved. They have not challenged leaders sufficiently to ensure that strategic planning is precise and that the milestones for improvement are clear and checked regularly.
- Governors have not made sure that pupils learn in a stimulating and well-cared-for environment, where pupils' achievements are celebrated.
- Governors have worked closely with the local authority adviser, in order to improve their understanding of their roles. They are involved in extensive training and development. They are committed to the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- The risk assessments carried out by senior leaders and the subsequent actions taken have not ensured that pupils are safe in all areas of the school.
- An appropriate range of checks are carried out on the adults who work alongside pupils. Leaders ensure that members of staff receive up-to-date training to keep pupils safe. Weekly meetings provide an opportunity for members of staff to raise any concerns about the safety of pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The risk of pupils failing to make progress in their lessons is too high. This is because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable.
- Teaching is weak within humanities and in science. In some subjects, including in English and in mathematics, the quality of teaching is too inconsistent. Pupils told inspectors that, at key stage 4, the quality of teaching within mixed-ability option groups tended to be poor.
- Teachers do not plan for the needs of all pupils in their class. Most-able pupils, middle-ability pupils, disadvantaged pupils and some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make the progress of which they are capable. Their precise learning needs are not met.
- Pupils told inspectors that the content of some of their lessons was too easy. Some said that they sometimes had to wait for others to catch up with them, before moving on. Some said that they found things difficult and had 'given up' asking for help. Too much learning time is lost for too many pupils.
- Assessment practice is weak. The assessment policy was developed recently. Teachers do not apply this policy consistently.
- Some pupils do not receive the feedback that they need in order to help them to correct errors, for example incorrect spellings. Some pupils do not have their misconceptions corrected or receive feedback to help them to make progress. Some pupils do not have their excellent work acknowledged by their teachers.
- Pupils' poor behaviour is a barrier to learning within some lessons. Low-level disruption is a feature in lessons where teaching is not meeting properly the learning needs of all the pupils within the class. In some lessons, pupils' poor behaviour has become routine. Inspectors saw examples of this within the teaching of science.
- Teachers' expectations of what some pupils can achieve are too low. Too often, teachers accept poor-quality work from pupils who are clearly capable of more. Opportunities are missed to display pupils' work and celebrate their achievements.
- Inspectors observed pupils making progress and enjoying their learning within English, religious education, and mathematics. This learning was characterised by precise planning for the needs of pupils, good subject knowledge, positive relationships and mutual respect between the teacher and the pupils within the class. In these classes,

pupils' achievement is celebrated.

- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment has improved recently. The leaders pay attention now to managing teachers' performance and to developing and enhancing teachers' expertise.
- Pupils supported in the enhanced provision achieve well. These pupils learn in mainstream classes. They receive good support from high-quality teaching assistants and make good progress.
- Inspectors observed a particularly skilled teacher supporting pupils to make progress in English. These pupils were flourishing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Actions taken by senior leaders following risk assessments have not adequately ensured that pupils are safe in all areas of the school.
- All staff have received relevant and up-to-date safeguarding training. Leaders keep staff regularly updated about changes to policy and procedure. They keep staff well informed about pupils.
- Leaders take swift and effective action to deal with the safeguarding and welfare needs of pupils. They work in partnership with other agencies and well-conceived actions are taken to keep pupils safe. This work is effective and pupils receive extremely good support.
- Without exception, the pupils with whom inspectors spoke said that they had someone within school to whom they could turn, if they were in trouble. They trusted that any problem was treated sensitively by their teachers and would be resolved.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe while using a computer and their mobile phones. They are keenly aware of the risks presented by social media. Pupils discussed with inspectors issues relating to radicalisation and the exploitation of vulnerable young people. They appreciated the lessons where these issues were discussed.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. Too many pupils have their learning disrupted because of the poor behaviour of others in the class. In some lessons, this poor behaviour has become routine and pupils arrive for those lessons expecting the behaviour of other pupils to be poor.
- Too many pupils, too regularly, do not attend school. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils do not take pride in their work. Too often, pupils produce poor-quality work. Teachers often fail to challenge this.

- The learning environment for pupils in some classes is inadequate. Pupils learn in some classes that are cold or unkempt. These environments do not promote positive pupil behaviour.
- The Damascus Centre, a provision for pupils at risk of exclusion from school, is effective. The pupils using the centre learn how to manage their behaviour better and make progress in their learning.
- The senior leader in charge of pupils' attendance is identifying the correct issues and is putting clear procedures in place.
- The pupils with whom inspectors spoke were articulate, friendly young people, who offered their opinions in a sensible and respectful manner.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Disadvantaged pupils make much less progress than other pupils in the school and other pupils nationally. Leaders and governors have not made sure that pupil premium funding is having sufficient impact. The pastoral support and care that these pupils receive is excellent. However, too few of these pupils have bespoke provision to accelerate progress, so that they achieve as well as others with similar starting points.
- The largest proportion of pupils within school have prior attainment at key stage 2 that falls in the middle-ability range. This group of pupils underachieves. In 2016, too few of these pupils made expected progress, particularly within English.
- Most-able pupils are capable of achieving much more. Inspectors saw evidence of this in pupils' workbooks. Pupils that had understood the intended learning quickly had spent valuable time repeating work, rather than moving to more demanding activity. Pupils are given opportunities too infrequently to extend their writing and to show that they are applying their knowledge and understanding. In 2016, too many most-able pupils failed to make the progress that they could in mathematics.
- Pupils underperform within humanities and in science. The most recent information indicates that, at key stage 4, current pupils are continuing to underperform in science and in history. Inspectors observed examples of this underperformance in lessons and in pupils' workbooks. The most recent information indicates some improvement in current pupils' progress in other subjects at key stage 4.
- Some groups of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make much less progress than others within the school and compared to other pupils nationally. These pupils do not receive the help that they need to make academic progress. Pupils within the enhanced provision are well supported and make good progress.
- At key stage 3, work in pupils' books suggests that pupils in Year 9 particularly are not achieving at the levels of which they are capable.
- The very few pupils that attend alternative provision are making appropriate progress.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The leadership of the sixth form is good. This leader has improved the provision for students. Students were extremely complimentary in their praise for the difference that this leader has made and the way that this had a positive impact on them.
- Many more students than previously enter the sixth form in Year 12, continue their studies into Year 13 and do not leave the provision in their first year of study. The entry requirements are appropriate and this means that pupils begin their studies with the skills and aptitudes that they require in order to continue to be successful.
- Students receive high-quality and impartial careers advice and guidance. Students told inspectors that they appreciated the efforts made by their teachers to ensure that they received good advice about their next steps in education, training or employment. This includes information about apprenticeships, as well as suitable universities to select, in order to take their studies further.
- All pupils are involved in work experience activity. They appreciate and benefit from this opportunity.
- Student outcomes are continuing to improve. Disadvantaged students and students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive high-quality support and subsequently achieve as well as other students in the sixth form. Many more students are now achieving the highest grades at A level.
- Students clearly value the sixth form. Attendance is good for all pupils, including disadvantaged students and students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is rare for students to be regularly absent from their studies. Students told inspectors that they did not wish to miss any of their lessons.
- Students' behaviour within the sixth form is good. Students told inspectors that they no longer experienced others 'mucking about' in lessons. They told inspectors that they had experienced this previously, particularly in key stage 4.
- Leaders have put in place a range of systems to safeguard students and promote their well-being. Appropriate checks are in place and staff are vigilant. Students know, and were seen by inspectors following procedures to keep themselves safe on the school site.
- Students said that they particularly appreciate now having their own sixth form tutor group. Previously, their tutor group was a mix of pupils from other year groups. They said that they value receiving age-appropriate advice and support within this support group. They value highly their form tutors.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Teachers' planning is informed by their good knowledge of the students. As a result of this, and teachers' subject knowledge, students make good progress.
- Students receive many opportunities to receive additional support, if they require any. Homework is regularly set and appropriately extends students' learning opportunities outside of the class. Students value their private study time and use this time well.
- The majority of students that need to resit their English or mathematics GCSE in the sixth form are successful and achieve the qualification they require.

- Students act as role models to other pupils. They are bright, articulate young people, who are passionate about their school.
- The curriculum within the sixth form is currently under review. Some classes have low pupil numbers. Leaders are keen to provide students with a range of further study options, but are right to ensure that these options are viable.

School details

Unique reference number	138622
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10021348

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy
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	1,347
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	265
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Ray
Headteacher	Kevin Gritton
Telephone number	01332 557032
Website	www.saintben.derby.sch.uk
Email address	mail@saintben.derby.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 November 2012

Information about this school

- 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.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is much higher than the average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities at the 'support' level is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is higher than nationally.
- The school works with one alternative provider, Kingsmead School, which provides pupils at the school with education at placements off the school site.
- The school met the government's current floor standards for pupils' achievement at key stage 4 in 2014 and in 2015.
- The school has an enhanced provision for pupils with visual impairment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 54 lessons, some of which were observed jointly with senior school leaders.
- An inspector listened to a group of pupils reading, including less-able readers.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books from across all year groups within lessons. A sample of the work of disadvantaged pupils, pupils in key stage 3, work in English, and the work of students in the sixth form was also scrutinised.
- The lead inspector held a range of meetings, including with the headteacher, with senior leaders, the chair of the governing body and other governors.
- Inspectors held meetings with the behaviour and achievement leads, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, and the senior leader with oversight of the sixth form. Inspectors also spoke to the designated safeguarding lead, pastoral leaders, and members of staff with responsibility for careers advice and guidance.
- An inspector spoke with the alternative provider which pupils from the school attend to be educated elsewhere.
- Inspectors observed pupils arriving at the school. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, between lessons, and during breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to the school, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation; minutes of the governing body meetings; performance information for all year groups; and records on behaviour, attendance, exclusions, and pupils' safety and welfare. Documentation relating to pupil premium spending and the provision for these pupils was scrutinised.
- Inspectors considered 82 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered 101 responses from members of the school staff to the Ofsted online inspection questionnaire.
- Two inspectors undertook activities to test the effectiveness of the school's risk assessments.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tracey Ydlibi	Ofsted Inspector
John Edwards	Ofsted Inspector
Tanya Wiles	Ofsted Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector
Sally Wicken	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Bailey	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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