

The Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School

Hampton Dene Road, Tupsley, Hereford, Herefordshire HR1 1UU

Inspection dates

21–22 February 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers, including governors, have not ensured that the school has continued to provide a good quality of education since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent and it has not led to good outcomes for pupils over time.
- Teachers do not systematically use the assessment information that is available to them to plan activities. Staff do not take opportunities to learn from the best practice in the school and the school's marking policy is not followed consistently.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have made slower progress from their starting points and attend less regularly than other pupils in the school. Special educational needs funding was not used well in the past.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and those who start at the school with low prior attainment has not been used effectively.
- The quality of middle leadership is variable. Some middle leaders are not taking effective action to make improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- Relatively recently introduced systems for improving the school have not yet been fully developed to secure the rapid improvements that the school needs.
- Teaching staff and leaders have not been held to close enough account for making accelerated and sustained improvements to the school.
- The members of the governing body have not held leaders to close enough account for improving the school quickly.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and senior leaders are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they are beginning to take appropriate action to make improvements.
- There is some very high quality teaching in the school. The most able pupils usually make the progress expected of them.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and fundamental British values are promoted well in this caring school.
- Pupils behave well and they feel safe. Personal development and welfare are key strengths within this school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the governing body hold leaders to close account for rapidly improving the quality of education provided by the school
 - additional funding is used well in order to improve outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, low prior attaining pupils and disadvantaged pupils
 - provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities develops further in order to quickly improve the progress and attendance of this group of pupils
 - processes for managing the performance of staff hold them to close account for improving the progress made by all groups of pupils
 - all middle leaders take effective action to make improvements in their areas of responsibility
 - recently established systems for recording and monitoring progress and behaviour are evaluated and developed to inform planning for school improvement.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that all groups of pupils make rapid progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers use the assessment information that is available to them to plan activities that allow pupils to make good progress from their starting points
 - the school's marking policy is applied consistently
 - staff take opportunities to learn from the best practice that is in the school.

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

Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers, including governors, have not ensured that consistently good teaching has led to good outcomes since the last inspection.
- Effective systems are not in place to hold staff to account for the lack of progress made by pupils. Consequently, leaders and teachers have not been challenged to ensure that pupils of all abilities make good progress over time.
- The process for managing the performance of teachers has not been used effectively to secure rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and leadership. Staff are set targets linked to pupils' progress and their areas of responsibility but the process has not improved the quality of education quickly enough.
- Some staff value the training and support that they receive and believe that this is having a positive impact on the quality of education that the school is providing. However, others have not responded fully to the opportunities that are available to them to improve their practice.
- The quality of middle leadership is variable. Leaders of particular areas of the school have not taken swift and decisive action to make improvements within their areas of responsibility. However, mathematics and science are well led and the recently appointed special educational needs coordinator is making significant improvements in the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Additional funding to support this group of pupils is now used more effectively.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. They are beginning to take actions to make improvements but relatively new systems, such as the ones to monitor pupils' progress and behaviour, are not fully developed. They provide leaders with a wealth of information but this is not yet being used effectively to secure accelerated improvements in the school.
- School leaders have ensured that the curriculum promotes good behaviour and safety. Learning in the classroom has continued to be well supported by a wealth of extra-curricular opportunities. For example, pupils take part in a range of sporting activities and they have opportunities to visit places of interest locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. However, as it has not supported good progress since the last inspection leaders have taken well-informed steps to improve the curriculum. For example, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are now following appropriate accredited courses in a more inclusive arrangement.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Religious education and ethics are central to the curriculum. Activities in English, science, music and physical education encourage social development and help pupils learn about different cultures in Britain and around the world. Pupils are respectful of others, they understand democracy and the rule of law, and they are willing to take on individual responsibility. Pupils are encouraged to have a strong set of values and they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Prejudice is not tolerated and pupils are encouraged

to be proud of their own achievements.

- Additional funding has not been used effectively in the school. Although a range of interventions are in place to help those pupils who join the school with low prior attainment, Year 7 catch-up funding has not been used in a systematic way to address the needs of this group of pupils. Consequently, the impact of this funding has not been assessed and leaders, including governors, do not know which interventions have had the most impact.
- Disadvantaged pupils have made slower progress than other pupils in the school and the difference in attainment between these pupils and all pupils nationally is not diminishing quickly enough. Leaders do not know which interventions have had the most impact as the use of pupil premium funding has not been evaluated fully. Governors have not held leaders to close enough account about the use of this funding.
- Parents are supportive of the school and receive regular updates about the school and information about their child's progress. A very large majority of parents, who made their views known during the inspection, believe that the school is well led and managed and a high proportion would recommend it to another parent.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not ensured that the school has continued to provide a good quality of education. They have not held leaders and staff to close enough account for a decline in the quality of teaching and the slow progress made by particular groups of pupils over time.
- Meetings of the governing body are well attended and governors have the skills, knowledge and experience to ask challenging questions about the information that they receive from school leaders. However, they have not sought additional information about the progress that current pupils are making, a full analysis of the impact of pupil premium or an evaluation of the use of Year 7 catch-up funding. Consequently, they do not have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are clear about their responsibilities and know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare. They receive regular training and updates and systems are in place to deal with serious issues, should they arise.
- Records are well kept and stored securely. Referrals are made in a timely manner and outside agencies are used appropriately. Careful checks are made on visitors to the school and pupils feel safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been inconsistent since the last inspection. Expectations have not been high enough so teaching has not led to good progress for pupils.
- Where teaching is less effective, there is an inappropriate level of challenge. Teachers do not use the information that is available to them to plan activities which allow pupils from different starting points to make rapid progress. This has slowed the progress made by low and middle prior attaining pupils in particular. At times, teachers focus on what they want the pupils to do rather than what they want them to learn. This means that staff are unclear about what pupils understand.
- The school's marking policy is not followed consistently and the use of assessment information varies between and within departments. This means that teachers, those with responsibilities for particular areas of the school, senior leaders and governors do not have a clear understanding of the progress that pupils in the school are making. The relatively new system for recording and monitoring progress is beginning to address this but it is not yet fully developed.
- Some teachers use questions extremely well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding and move learning on quickly. They employ techniques which keep all pupils focused, but other teachers do not use questions skilfully to give pupils opportunities to think deeply about topics or keep them fully engaged. Staff have secure subject knowledge but this is not always used effectively to help pupils make sustained progress.
- There is some teaching of a very high quality in the school. Where teaching has most impact, activities are planned carefully to help pupils make accelerated progress from their starting points, resources are used well to support learning and teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support individuals and groups of pupils.
- Pupils are keen to learn and want to do well. Teachers and pupils enjoy positive relationships but these are not routinely used to challenge pupils to make rapid progress. Disruption to learning is rare and pupils usually listen very carefully to staff and to their peers. Pupils respond quickly if they are reminded to focus fully on their studies.
- Homework is set regularly and is used to consolidate and extend learning. Most parents, who made their views known to inspectors, believe that their child receives appropriate homework for their age and pupils told inspectors that they were set meaningful homework tasks.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are developed effectively across the curriculum. For example, mathematical concepts are re-enforced in geography and science, pupils write at length in history and key words and subject-specific terms are used well in mathematics.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils' physical and emotional well-being is developed effectively through the curriculum, additional activities and individual support, as required.
- Pupils are self-confident and self-aware. They help others as a matter of course and older pupils are happy to support younger pupils. For example, peer listeners help to resolve concerns that some pupils have and prefects and junior prefects contribute to the school's orderly environment. As pupils are proud of their school, they are willing to take on extra responsibilities to maintain the school's caring and socially inclusive ethos.
- Pupils show respect for other people's ideas and views. Christian values support the promotion of fundamental British values and pupils are accepting of other faiths and those who have no faith. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through a range of activities that make pupils think deeply about issues and consider different points of view. Parents commented about the 'moral growth of pupils'.
- Bullying is very rare but, when it does happen, it is recorded carefully and followed up appropriately. Pupils are aware of different kinds of bullying and trust staff to resolve any concerns promptly. Pupils respect individual differences in this increasingly inclusive school.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe. They are taught how to stay safe when undertaking physical activities and they know how to keep themselves safe when they are using the internet. They are also aware of the dangers of extremism.
- A very large majority of parents believe that their child is happy, safe and well looked after in school. Effective systems are also in place to ensure that the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils who make use of alternative provision are well supported.
- As a result of impartial careers guidance, almost all pupils have moved onto appropriate and sustained education, employment or training when they have left the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and respectful and enjoy positive relationships with adults and other pupils.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They are considerate and sensible during lunch and breaktimes and between lessons.
- Pupils usually behave well in lessons and respond quickly if they have to be reminded to concentrate fully on their learning. Low-level disruption to learning is rare.
- There have been marked improvements in the behaviour of pupils with particular behavioural needs and the use of sanctions is declining. Pupils believe that the

behaviour policy is used fairly and the relatively new system to record incidents is now being used proactively.

- The proportions of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils who were excluded in the past were much higher than other pupils in the school. This is beginning to improve but leaders acknowledge that further action is needed to reduce the exclusion rates of these groups of pupils further.
- Pupils are punctual and attendance has improved since the time of the last inspection. However, although it is improving, the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils is still below that of other groups in the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, pupils, particularly those of low and middle prior attainment, have not made fast enough progress from their starting points.
- Over time and throughout the school, pupils have not made enough progress in English. Year 11 pupils made slow progress in 2016 but progress in English is now improving. Reading is given a high profile and pupils have good opportunities to write at length across the curriculum. Although the progress made by current pupils in English does not yet match the progress that they are making in other subjects, school leaders are beginning to take effective action to improve achievement in English.
- Year 11 outcomes in 2016 indicated wide variations between subjects. Pupils did not achieve well in English, history, religious education, art and design, and engineering. However, they achieved well in mathematics, science, geography, Spanish, resistant materials, food technology and physical education.
- Pupil premium funding has not been used effectively to diminish the differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. In 2016, low and middle prior attaining disadvantaged pupils made slow progress across the curriculum, particularly in English. The progress made by current pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is improving but it is not fast enough in a range of subjects in Years 8 and 10.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have not made good progress over time. This has been compounded by the fact that they have not been entered for appropriate examinations in key stage 4. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is developing and their progress is beginning to improve. However, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are still making slower progress than other pupils from their starting points in many subjects. Additional special educational needs funding was not used well in the past.
- Inconsistencies remain in the progress made by pupils currently in the school. Girls make faster progress than boys in most subjects in all year groups and pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress in the school. Pupils in the specially resourced provision and those who attend alternative provision are making improved progress but the progress that pupils make in different subject areas still varies.

- Key stage 4 attainment has been similar to the national average since the last inspection. The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, have made the progress expected of them over time. They respond well to the challenges set for them in subjects such as mathematics, science and technology and they have achieved the higher grades in a range of subjects.

School details

Unique reference number	116991
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10025232

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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,099
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Lawton
Headteacher	Sara Catlow-Hawkins
Telephone number	01432 347500
Website	www.bhbs.hereford.sch.uk
Email address	info@bhbs.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 September 2012

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school is a voluntary aided Church of England School.
- The school has local authority funded specially resourced provision for pupils who have autism. An increasing proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are taught in mainstream classes.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan is above the national average, whereas the proportion who have special educational needs and/or disabilities without a statement or an EHC plan is broadly average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well below the national average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as

an additional language are below the national averages.

- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision at the Aconbury Centre.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 34 parts of lessons. Four of these lesson observations took place with the senior leaders. On the first day of the inspection, the lead inspector made short visits to lessons to focus on provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the team inspector made short visits to mathematics lessons.
- Members of the inspection team met with pupils and looked at examples of pupils' work in their books. Inspectors heard pupils read and spoke to pupils formally and informally.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, other leaders and members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- Inspectors considered 116 responses from parents on Parent View and took into account 50 free-text responses on Parent View. They also looked at parental surveys conducted by the school.
- A range of school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, information about managing teachers' performance, staff training records and the school's safeguarding procedures. Minutes of meetings of the governing body and information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety were also analysed.

Inspection team

Simon Mosley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Martin Spoor	Ofsted Inspector
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Eddie Wilkes	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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