

# The Bramcote School

Derby Road, Bramcote, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG9 3GD

## Inspection dates

16–17 May 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The leadership of the executive headteacher and the senior team has ensured that the school has rapidly improved. It is now good, and continues to improve across all areas of the school.
- Governors have an astute understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their precise support and challenge have directly contributed to the rapid improvements.
- Leaders are determined that only the best is good enough for pupils at the school. They have introduced an aspirational culture, which pupils and staff have embraced.
- Leaders' open transparency and clear communication have ensured that everyone is working together to raise standards.
- Leaders have placed a high priority on teaching and learning and provide high-quality training for all staff. Teachers are committed to improving their practice and providing the best quality education for all pupils. Consequently, pupils are making faster progress and their attainment is improving.
- Pupils make consistently good progress in science, humanities and modern foreign languages.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Pupils trust their teachers to help them do the best that they can.
- Leaders make sure that systems for keeping pupils safe are robust and effective. Pupils feel safe and say they have someone to talk to if they need help.
- Some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are not making the progress they should in all subjects.
- Not enough pupils achieve the highest levels at the end of key stage 4.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are absent from school more often than other pupils.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that the recently introduced strategies used to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils are used consistently throughout the school and that their impact on pupils' progress is regularly evaluated.
- Sustain the increased level of challenge provided for the most able pupils to that they reach the highest standards they can in all subjects by the end of Year 11.
- Work closely with parents and external agencies to reduce the level of persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The executive headteacher provides a strong model of leadership for all staff. The appointment of senior leaders in September 2016 has further strengthened leadership capacity across the school. This was a fundamental turning point for the school. Since then, leadership, teaching, behaviour and achievement have all rapidly improved. The bar has been raised and a total commitment to continuing improvement permeates the school, as best summarised by one member of staff, who said, 'We never give up. We have the momentum, determination and tools to ensure that all learners do their best.'
- Leaders and teachers work with colleagues across the schools in the federation. This enables them to benefit from additional support and advice, and to share best practice and training. All staff say they greatly value this and that it has helped them to improve standards throughout the school.
- Middle leaders enjoy the greater accountability and responsibility given to them. They are clear about leaders' expectations and say that senior leaders support them well. This has ensured that leadership at all levels has developed strongly since the last inspection and outcomes for pupils are improving.
- Leaders know which actions are working well and which areas need further development. They regularly review and evaluate all their actions, to ensure that they have a positive impact on standards. Leaders ensure that all staff have training to understand new school policies and use them consistently. In this way, the executive headteacher has created a model of leadership that is sustainable.
- The programmes of support and challenge that leaders have established to improve the quality of teaching are excellent. Teachers benefit from structured programmes of training, individualised support and contact with colleagues in other schools. Teachers report that these have benefited them considerably. Newly qualified teachers praised the personalised support and training which they had been given. Consequently, staff feel valued and teaching and learning have greatly improved.
- Pupils now receive a broad and balanced curriculum, which prepares them well for the next stages in their education and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Pupils, particularly in key stage 3, enjoy the extra-curricular activities provided for them. Pupils also have opportunities to develop leadership skills as 'senior students' and to work as mentors of other pupils. Leaders have ensured that pupils have a wide experience outside their local community to broaden their horizons, raise their aspirations and prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- The school's use of alternative curriculum provision is carefully chosen, monitored and evaluated and, as a result, pupils attend well and make good progress.
- The additional funding, intended to help Year 7 pupils who did not achieve age-related expectations in reading or mathematics at the end of key stage 2, has been spent on extra help for these pupils. There has been some improvement in these pupils' skills in English and mathematics as a result.
- Leaders use the special educational needs funding to provide personalised support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils

make progress at least in line with other pupils at the school in most subjects.

- The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, or the free-text service were extremely positive about the school and the recent improvements and would recommend the school to other parents.
- Leaders check on the use of the school's pupil premium funding, but they have not yet ensured that it is highly effective in making sure that disadvantaged pupils make faster progress and attend school regularly. Governors requested an external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding to tackle this. The senior leader responsible for this area is using the recommendations from this review to support further improvements to the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, and in their attainment and progress.

### **Governance of the school**

- The governing body has been instrumental in securing the rapid pace of improvements in the school. It has established a strong leadership team and supports it in making sure that all of the school's actions contribute to raising standards for pupils.
- The governing body oversee the school budget carefully. It ensures that additional funds are used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who need to catch up from key stage 2. Governors acknowledge that the progress of disadvantaged pupils has been too slow but is improving. They have played a critical role in ensuring that disadvantaged pupils continue to make faster progress and attend school more regularly.
- Governors undertake training regularly to help them fulfil their role with rigour. For example, they have recently received training in helping to keep pupils safe, understanding information on pupils' attainment and progress, and on governance.
- Systems for managing the performance of staff, including the headteacher, are rigorous. The governing body checks that targets have been met and that self-evaluation, school development planning and objectives for staff are linked, to ensure that they result in further improvement.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All statutory requirements are met. Senior leaders and governors have established a culture of high vigilance. All staff receive regular training to enable them to be rigorous in their safeguarding duties. Records of any concerns about pupils are meticulous, because leaders know that keeping pupils safe is of central importance. Leaders provide effective early help to pupils and their families to prevent problems from escalating.
- Leaders work well with outside agencies by raising any child protection issues swiftly and checking that appropriate actions are taken. Leaders undertake regular training in child protection and ensure that all adults working in the school have a good awareness of the signs that any pupil may be at risk. They take the new 'Prevent' duty seriously (this is the requirement for all schools to keep pupils safe from the risks of extremism) and use the correct systems for alerting the police to any signs that pupils

are at risk of radicalisation.

- Leaders and the governing body complete annual audits to check that safeguarding arrangements continue to be robust.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teaching, learning and assessment have moved on considerably since the last inspection. They are now good, despite pupils' outcomes still requiring improvement.
- Leaders have introduced a new assessment system and ensured that all teachers have had training on how to use it. As a result, all teachers understand the system and use it consistently. Leaders have organised information evenings for parents, so that they also understand the new system.
- Staff have worked closely, within the federation and with other schools, to ensure that their assessments are accurate. The new assessment system gives teachers and leaders a clear understanding of how all pupils are achieving and making progress from their starting points. Consequently, leaders can confidently demonstrate that current pupils throughout the school, including disadvantaged pupils, are now making much more progress than was previously the case in all subjects.
- Teachers use assessment information to plan learning that enables pupils to make at least the progress expected of them. Teachers are increasingly planning tasks for the most able pupils that contain greater challenge. For example, in a science lesson, higher-attaining pupils in Year 9 were encouraged to independently explore and deepen their understanding of the concept of pressure. Leaders acknowledge that challenging the most able pupils is now a priority for the school, to ensure that teachers know how to support these pupils to reach the highest standards in all subjects by the end of key stage 4.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They have worked extremely effectively to understand the requirements of the new examinations in key stage 4 and to support pupils to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers use skilful questioning in lessons to check on pupils' understanding and to develop their knowledge.
- Most teachers have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils learn in a supportive atmosphere. Pupils told inspectors that teachers help them with their work and encourage them to do their best. Pupils appreciate the feedback that teachers give them and how it helps them to improve their work.
- Other adults are deployed effectively in lessons to support pupils' learning, particularly for lower attainers.
- Teachers make sure that pupils develop their literacy skills across the wider curriculum and use subject-specific vocabulary appropriately. Teachers encourage pupils to read widely. For example, tutors read poetry to pupils as part of the 'Drop Everything And Read' time in the morning.
- Pupils say that all teachers set homework consistently. Evidence in pupils' books demonstrates that homework is used effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils said that bullying is rare but, if it does happen, it is always dealt with swiftly. Pupils say, 'There is always someone you can talk to.' They were adamant that homophobic or racist bullying is extremely rare and would not be tolerated at the school.
- All pupils who spoke with inspectors said they felt safe. Leaders are active in ensuring that pupils are informed about current issues and know how to keep themselves safe. Teachers promote equality of opportunity in lessons. Derogatory language is not tolerated.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' well-being and welfare, including that of the most vulnerable pupils, are also well supported.
- The majority of pupils take pride in their work. Most books seen were well presented and pupils demonstrate a commitment to improve their work. There are positive relationships between teachers and pupils.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through lessons, assemblies, tutor time and extra-curricular activities. Teachers encourage pupils to debate and consider others' viewpoints. Pupils listen respectfully to each other and show tolerance of different views. Pupils were confident to talk to inspectors and proud and enthusiastic to show their work.
- Leaders provide pupils with a range of careers information, advice and guidance. Leaders ensure that they receive clear, appropriate and impartial advice in individual interviews. A number of pupils who spoke with inspectors said they had appreciated this advice and felt it prepared them well to make important decisions about their futures.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils move between lessons and around the school in a calm and orderly manner. They are punctual to lessons, wear their uniform correctly and follow instructions quickly.
- Leaders ensure that all staff apply the school's behaviour policy clearly and consistently. Pupils know the high standards of behaviour expected of them. As a result, they behave well in lessons and are prompt to start their work.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision are closely monitored. The school makes sure they are safe.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions has been high but has significantly reduced.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are absent from school more often than other pupils. Leaders have been quick to tighten up the school's procedures to encourage regular attendance and to use

external support to help these pupils back into school. Attendance for these pupils is improving, but still below the national average.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Pupils leaving Year 11 in 2016 made slower progress from their starting points than the national average. Disadvantaged pupils made significantly slower progress than other pupils nationally. Pupils' attainment in 2016, however, was broadly in line with the national average.
- Pupils who enter the school in Year 7 with skills that are below what they should be in English and mathematics are supported effectively to catch up.
- Current learning is leading to better progress, but attainment is still behind where it should be because of a legacy of past underachievement. This applies particularly to disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.
- No differences were seen in the quantity and quality of work in the books of disadvantaged pupils, compared with the books of other pupils. Equally, the gap between attainment of boys and girls is closing. The differences in the progress of disadvantaged pupils, however, when compared with that of other pupils nationally, are not yet diminishing in the way they should.
- The most able pupils are now being given more challenge in their work. It is too early, however, to judge whether a greater proportion of pupils will attain the highest levels by the end of Year 11 this year.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision are making good progress towards achieving qualifications.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, receive effective support and make progress at least in line with other pupils at the school.
- Historically, pupils have made good progress in science, humanities subjects and modern foreign languages. Current information from the school indicates that this will continue. Pupils' progress in mathematics and English has been weaker. Leaders have taken effective action to tackle this and current pupils are making dramatically better progress in these subjects as a result.
- A detailed work scrutiny of current pupils' books, across all year groups, supports the school's information that pupils are now making faster progress, particularly in English and mathematics, where there had previously been underachievement. This good progress is a direct result of the improvements which leaders have made.

## School details

Unique reference number	138837
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10031178

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	483
Appropriate authority	The academy trust
Chair	Adam Bird
Executive Headteacher	Paul Heery
Telephone number	0115 913 0013
Website	<a href="http://www.thebramcoteschool.notts.sch.uk/">www.thebramcoteschool.notts.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:bramcote@whpfederation.org">bramcote@whpfederation.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	21–22 April 2015

## Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-size school.
- The school is part of the White Hills Park Federation Trust, along with Alderman White School and Bramcote College. Some leaders and teachers operate across the three schools in the federation.
- In September 2016, the senior leadership team was restructured, including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are below the national averages.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision at First Class Solutions,



Buxton College and Central College.

- 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.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 4 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 33 lessons, some of which were visited jointly with a senior leader. During visits to lessons, inspectors sampled pupils' books and talked with pupils to evaluate the quality of their learning. Inspectors also made short visits to tutor time.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils at breaktime, lunchtime and as pupils moved around the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised, in detail, pupils' books in a range of subjects across all year groups.
- Inspectors held a number of meetings with the executive headteacher, senior and middle leaders, newly qualified teachers, and governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. An inspector also held a telephone conversation with the three providers which provide alternative education for a small number of Bramcote's pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from all year groups in meetings, in lessons and around the school at breaktime and lunchtime.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of the school's documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, its action plan, data on pupils' attainment and progress, attendance, bullying and behaviour records, safeguarding procedures, and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of 38 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and 37 responses from parents to the Ofsted free-text service. The 39 responses to the online staff questionnaire and 10 responses to the pupil questionnaire were also considered.

## Inspection team

Sally Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Annabel Bolt	Ofsted Inspector
Ian Colling	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](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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