

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



5 July 2017

Mrs Parker Randall
Headteacher
Bridlington School
Bessingby Road
Bridlington
YO16 4QU

Dear Mrs Parker Randall

Short inspection of Bridlington School

Following my visit to the school on 7 June 2017 with Stuart Cleary, Ofsted 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. In your new role as headteacher, you have communicated, to staff and to parents your ambition to build on the school's current success. You share governors' determination to ensure that the school achieves excellent outcomes for all pupils. Consequently, you have raised teachers' and pupils' expectations so that they believe all pupils can meet the aspirational targets you have set.

Since the last inspection, leaders have been successful in building on the good progress which pupils make in English and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils are also making much better progress from their starting points. You have done this by providing consistently good-quality teaching, and carefully targeted revision sessions so that pupils go into their examinations well prepared.

Pupils, staff and governors share your view that the school culture provides pupils with a safe and stimulating environment in which they can thrive. An extensive range of educational and enrichment opportunities enables pupils to develop new skills and establish positive relationships with others. Pupils value the support given to them by teachers and other adults in the school. Pupils speak highly of the way in which they are expected to show respect for others and they are willing to help each other during lessons. Your positive discipline policy works effectively and most pupils are keen to work hard in lessons and challenge themselves to reach the higher grades. Pupils behave impeccably around the school site during breaks and between lessons. Their attendance rates are improving due to actions you are

taking. You know there is more to do to ensure all pupils attend regularly, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Senior leaders have been successful in addressing most of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Leaders and governors have ensured that middle leaders are fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas. Where necessary, you have provided middle leaders with the support and training they need to carry out their roles effectively. You have also taken care to recruit highly effective leaders to strengthen leadership at all levels. As a result, pupils' progress is improving across the curriculum. Actions you are taking to address previous weaknesses in science are making their mark. You know there is still more to do to ensure that outcomes in additional science are as strong as they are in English and mathematics.

At the last inspection, you were asked to embed a coherent approach to developing literacy and numeracy skills. There is evidence in pupils' books that teachers are correcting errors in spelling and punctuation. Most pupils take pride in their work and respond well to their teachers' expectations. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to develop pupils' use of subject-specific language and pupils are given ample opportunities to practise their extended writing. Leaders and governors also make sure that the Year 7 catch-up funding is used well to help pupils with weaker reading and mathematical skills to make rapid gains in their learning.

You have made sure that the school's policy for marking and giving feedback is applied consistently well across all subjects and this is now a strong feature of the school. Pupils reflect regularly on their learning in what is known in the school as 'green for growth'. They make very effective use of the time given for them to respond to their teachers' comments or questions. Most pupils are skilled in identifying how to improve their subject knowledge or understanding because their teachers give them clear and specific guidance.

Teachers' skilled use of questioning is also a strong feature across a range of subjects. Where questioning is used most effectively, teachers check pupils' understanding closely and use lesson time well to move pupils on to new or more challenging tasks when they are ready. In mathematics, for example, teachers plan learning activities which develop pupils' problem-solving skills and encourage them to explain their reasoning. In English, skilful questioning develops pupils' language skills because teachers expect pupils to justify their views and use evidence to support their thinking.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders' arrangements for safeguarding pupils are secure because the welfare of pupils is given high priority in the school. The designated safeguarding leader is knowledgeable and makes referrals to the local authority when necessary to keep pupils safe. Staff are trained in the latest guidance and this training is updated regularly. As a result, they know what action to take when there are potential risks

to pupils' safety. The school undertakes required checks and processes when recruiting staff. Minor administrative errors in record-keeping were addressed promptly during the inspection. Pupils feel safe in the school. They said that bullying is rare and, when it happens, staff deal with it effectively. They also said they felt confident to talk to the pastoral team if they have concerns. Pupils are aware of potential risks to their safety, including online, for example when using social media.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to focus on your work to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum. The leadership of teaching and learning, by senior and middle leaders, is strong. Leaders set high expectations and subject leaders check the pupils' progress regularly through a range of activities such as learning walks, analysing assessment information and checking pupils' work in books. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make particularly strong progress in English and mathematics from their starting points because teaching is consistently effective. Pupils also benefit from additional revision sessions to tackle topics which they found most difficult.
- In the past, pupils have made average progress in science, languages and humanities. Senior leaders have strengthened the leadership in these subject areas through careful recruitment and training. The tracking of pupils' progress is now more robust. In science, teachers work together to improve the accuracy of their assessments but would benefit from external moderation as well. A legacy of weaker teaching in science means that some pupils are still catching up. Pupils in the current Year 11 are making better progress in core science but are less successful in additional science. In history and geography, leaders agree that the quality of teaching is variable and pupils are often given the same work, irrespective of their starting points, so some pupils do not make as much progress as they could. In modern languages, small numbers take a GCSE qualification in French or Spanish but, under new leadership, pupils show a high level of confidence when they are challenged to develop their speaking, reading and writing skills.
- Leaders have identified rightly the need to stretch and challenge the most able pupils because the proportion of pupils achieving the highest grades is lower than the national average in several subjects. You have reviewed the curriculum to make sure that younger year groups will be able to follow a curriculum pathway that is suitable for their starting points and career aspirations. For example, the most able pupils will have the opportunity to study three science subjects and more pupils will be encouraged to take a qualification in modern languages. The school's plans for improvement also identify teachers' planning as a priority so that the most able pupils are challenged more systematically to achieve the highest grades. It is too early for leaders to tell whether their strategies are making a positive impact but there is a shared understanding across all teachers that this is a priority.
- Pupils' attendance overall is below average and the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school remains high, especially for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders

acknowledge that the school's systems for improving attendance have not been robust enough in the past. This year, leaders have focused on improving the attendance of Year 11 pupils and have achieved some success. Leaders have identified the need to track the absence of groups as well as individuals to make sure that their actions are having enough impact. Leaders and governors have also agreed to strengthen the tracking of attendance and to establish stronger working relationships with families and other agencies by appointing additional staff to manage pupils' attendance.

- The school has a relatively small sixth form with a successful range of applied courses and a limited number of academic courses offered as part of a wider consortium with another local school. In the past, some students did not make good progress on academic courses, particularly girls and disadvantaged students in 2016. Leaders have reflected on the school's current strengths and reviewed the range of subjects on offer. They have been meticulous in ensuring that students progress to suitable and successful courses at post-16. For example, improved teaching in science means that leaders are confident to offer A-level sciences again, in September 2017, for the current Year 11. Leaders' greater focus on checking the quality of teaching is resulting in better outcomes for current students in Years 12 and 13. Students' confidence in the sixth form is growing as a result.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most effective practice in English and mathematics is shared more widely so that all pupils develop excellent knowledge, understanding and skills across all subjects, including the most able pupils
- they continue to improve pupils' progress in science, checking the accuracy of assessment in this key subject
- they continue to focus on improving pupils' attendance, especially for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

Yours sincerely

Lynn Kenworthy
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, your leadership team, middle leaders and a group of teachers. I also met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. Inspectors met with pupils from Year 7 to Year 10 and a group of sixth form students, as well as talking to several pupils informally, during lessons and breaktimes, about their views of school life. We visited lessons in a range of subjects in both key stage 3 and 4. Some of these visits were with you. Inspectors also carried out a scrutiny of the work in pupils' books with a senior leader. We looked at a range of school information, including current assessment information, leaders' school self-evaluation, information about the behaviour and attendance of current pupils and information about safeguarding. There were no responses to the pupils' questionnaire but I considered 44 responses to the staff questionnaire, 42 responses to Ofsted's online survey and 40 written comments by parents.