

Bede Academy

Sixth Avenue, Blyth, Northumberland NE24 2SY

Inspection dates

8–9 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors are highly ambitious and strive to provide the very best education for pupils. Leaders know the school's strengths and areas for further development well and take robust action to drive improvement.
- Leaders have recently improved their approaches to marshalling their findings about the impact of teaching. However, not all leaders are fully using this online system yet.
- Teachers plan lessons well, taking account of the pupils' learning needs. As a result, pupils typically engage well in lessons and make good progress over time.
- Secondary pupils make progress significantly above that found nationally by the end of Year 11. Primary pupils' progress has been similar to that found nationally. However, there are signs that this is now improving.
- By the end of Year 6 and Year 11, disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to that of other pupils nationally.
- Good leadership has helped the sixth form to develop well. Students make progress significantly higher than that found nationally in vocational courses. However, their progress is not as strong in academic courses.
- Children, including disadvantaged children, make good progress from their starting points across the early years. The recently appointed leader for the early years has promptly identified where this provision needs to develop further and is taking appropriate action.
- Pupils' behaviour is good overall across the school. However, this year there has been an increase in exclusions in the secondary phase. Leaders' actions have recently resulted in a fall in the numbers of pupils excluded.
- The curriculum and assemblies supports pupils' personal development well. As a result, pupils develop good citizenship skills and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils know how to adopt healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe, including online. While pupils have a good understanding of bullying, some parents and pupils expressed concerns that incidents of bullying are not always fully resolved.
- Useful guidance helps pupils and students find successful routes into employment, education or training. As a result, pupils make a seamless transition to the next stage in learning or future careers.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' outcomes by:
 - improving pupils' progress across key stage 2, including the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in writing, to above that found nationally
 - improving the teaching in French so that pupils' progress at least matches the national average by the end of Year 11
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching of academic subjects in the sixth form is consistently high so that students make at least the progress found nationally in all subjects
 - developing the approaches to assessment on entry to the Nursery and Reception Years in order to secure a more accurate baseline.
- Further improve the impact of leaders by:
 - using the wide range of available information to make sharper self-evaluation judgements for all areas of the school, including in the early years and primary phases.
- Further develop the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils by:
 - monitoring pupils' and parents' views of bullying to strengthen pupils' and parental confidence in how leaders deal with this area of pupils' welfare
 - checking the impact of strategies to support pupils vulnerable to exclusion to ensure that the numbers of exclusions continue to fall.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal provides dedicated leadership and is passionate about raising aspirations for pupils and improving their outcomes. As a result, pupils in the secondary phase make progress above that found nationally and the personal development needs of pupils are well met. Pupils' progress from their starting points in key stage 2 is also showing signs of improvement from being broadly in line with national averages in 2016. The overwhelming majority of staff who responded to the staff survey agree that they have a clear understanding of the goals the school aims to achieve.
- The recently appointed head of the primary phase has brought increased rigour to checking the quality of teaching and learning and to developing other leaders' understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Consequently, there has been an increased focus on improving pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics across key stage 2. There is emerging evidence that this is accelerating pupils' progress, particularly in Year 6.
- Primary and secondary middle leaders know the strengths and areas for development in their subject areas well. They take appropriate actions to drive improvement and check regularly on the impact of their actions. For example, the recently appointed head of department for modern foreign languages is working effectively with staff to improve pupils' progress.
- Leaders' and governors' approach to evaluation provides them with a wealth of information that is used effectively to put in place detailed plans for school improvement. Leaders have recently introduced an online system to further support the gathering of evidence about the quality of teaching and learning. However, some self-evaluation judgements are too positive and need to take greater account of pupils' outcomes across the school.
- The well-designed curriculum focuses on academic subjects and provides appropriate vocational programmes, such as engineering. In the primary phase, pupils benefit from specialist teaching; for example, all Year 1 pupils learn to play the violin. Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities and residential visits, which enrich the school curriculum.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is a strength of the school. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of other world faiths. They develop respect and tolerance for people who come from different backgrounds to themselves and have a clear understanding of the principles of democracy. A wide range of activities, including visits to other local communities and countries abroad, support pupils' cultural development. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain and to be global citizens.
- Leaders' spending of pupil premium as a means to improving disadvantaged pupils' progress has been effective. The wide range of strategies supports disadvantaged pupils to overcome barriers to learning. In 2016, overall there were no differences in disadvantaged pupils' progress compared with other pupils nationally at the end of Year 6 and Year 11. However, in the secondary phase disadvantaged pupils' progress was not strong enough in languages. Leaders, including governors, track the impact of

this spending carefully. This has included commissioning an external review of this funding and considering the research into the most beneficial approaches of pupil premium spending.

- Additional funding to help Year 7 pupils catch up in literacy and numeracy has a positive impact. The vast majority of pupils who are eligible for this support make accelerated progress in English and mathematics.
- Leaders plan the use of additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport for primary schools carefully and check for the impact on pupils' development of PE skills and pupils' engagement and enjoyment of sport and active lifestyles. Consequently, pupils have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of competitive sports and an increased range of activities, which support healthy lifestyles.
- The proportions of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are low. The special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) have taken action to ensure that effective support is generally in place for these pupils. The additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is spent, in the main, to good effect. As a result, most of these pupils make progress in line with pupils nationally. However, in 2016 by the end of Year 6, the progress of some of these pupils in writing was significantly below that found nationally. The school's information shows that currently these pupils often make less progress than other pupils do in writing in the primary phase.
- Well-established systems to manage the performance of staff are in place. Governors ensure that pay progression is linked to teachers achieving agreed objectives. Staff, including teachers new to the profession, benefit from a range of training to improve their teaching and leadership skills. The vast majority of staff believe that they are provided with training and development to challenge and support their improvement.

Governance of the school

- The members of the local governing body are very ambitious and take steps to ensure the best outcomes for children, pupils and students who attend the school. Governors have a thorough understanding of the community the school serves and strive to provide a high-quality education and to widen horizons and raise the aspirations of pupils.
- The governing body are reflective and audit their own strengths and areas for development. From this audit information, they carefully plan actions, including the appointment of new governors, to strengthen further their range of expertise. Consequently, governors have the skills and expertise to provide a good balance of support and challenge to leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders complete careful safeguarding checks for all staff, governors and volunteers. The safeguarding policy meets the current national requirements and staff understand the school's procedures and their own responsibilities. Staff and governors receive regular and appropriate training so they know how to keep pupils safe, including training about how to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. School leaders work in cooperation with the

local authority safeguarding officer where required.

- Leaders and staff work effectively with other agencies and parents to ensure that they meet the needs of pupils and families who may be vulnerable and to establish a culture of safeguarding. Leaders make good use of external expertise to audit health and safety arrangements and respond promptly to all guidance provided in reports. The governor responsible for safeguarding has a high level of experience and expertise and works closely with leaders to ensure that the safeguarding policy and practice is applied consistently across the school. A practical example of the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements was the calm and effective implementation of the lock-down procedure during the inspection.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan effectively to match the learning to the needs of the majority of pupils. Teaching often builds well on prior learning. As a result, most pupils make good progress across the school.
- Teachers draw on strong subject knowledge to engage and enthuse pupils in their learning. Most teachers make use of probing and questioning that explores and deepens pupils' understanding.
- Pupils' work is typically neat and with tidy handwriting, in both primary and secondary phases. However, occasionally work in some secondary subjects is not always as carefully presented.
- The teaching of phonics is well structured across the early years and key stage 1. Pupils make good progress and use their phonics skills well in reading and writing activities.
- Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress using the school's recently introduced system of 'Bede levels' provides a consistent approach across the primary school and key stage 3. This is providing teachers and leaders with a good understanding of pupils' progress and identifies where gaps in pupils' learning need to be addressed. For example, this new approach is helping primary phase leaders to identify where pupils' progress needs to improve in writing in some year groups.
- Teachers build positive relationships with pupils and they set high expectations for pupils' progress and attitudes to learning.
- Teachers provide pupils with a range of homework to develop their learning. Pupil planners and home-school records are well used to support pupils and parents to understand the homework requirements. Secondary pupils identified that they find homework purposeful and helpful for their learning.
- Teaching over time of French in the secondary phase has been variable. Consequently, some pupils have not made good progress in this subject. The recently appointed head of languages is providing support to teachers to improve pupils' outcomes in this subject.
- Some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities sometimes have work which is too challenging for them. As a result, they can struggle with this more difficult work, as they have not yet secured the required learning to build on.

- Teaching over time in key stage 2 has secured progress which is broadly in line with national averages. The recently appointed head of primary has begun to address this and there is emerging evidence in books and from the school's assessment information that progress is beginning to improve. However, there remains some variability in pupils' progress across key stage 2.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are given regular guidance on how to stay safe, including when online. Links with an external agency ensure that pupils and their parents are provided with up-to-date knowledge of online safety.
- Pupils have good opportunities to develop personal responsibilities and to support other pupils. For example, primary and secondary pupils' involvement with the school councils enables them to be involved with the development of the school. In the primary phase, playground buddies' support and guidance helps younger pupils to feel safe, secure and cared for.
- Pupils receive high-quality impartial careers advice and guidance. This helps them to make well-considered choices at each transition stage across the school. Consequently, pupils select appropriate courses and programmes that support their future routes to education, employment or training.
- Effective use is made of assemblies and tutor time to develop pupils' reflection skills and to engender personal qualities such as tolerance and respect. For example, secondary pupils engaged well with the story of the Good Samaritan. This helped pupils to consider how to respond to people who hold different viewpoints or attitudes. Similarly, Year 6 pupils discussed with deep understanding and empathy some of the challenges faced by Jewish people during the Second World War.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take. Pupils identified that while bullying did take place, most pupils, although not all, believed that it would be dealt with well. However, the pupil survey was less positive, with a number of pupils reporting that bullying was not always fully addressed by staff. Similarly, some parents raised concerns regarding bullying. The school maintains detailed records, which show that incidents of bullying are followed up carefully by staff, and the numbers of bullying incidents are falling.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In the primary phase, pupils' behaviour is exemplary both in lessons and during social times. In the secondary phase, staff provide pupils with clear guidance on expectations and ensure that pupils are well supervised when moving between lessons and during break and lunchtimes. As a result, the vast majority of secondary pupils behave well in school.

- Most pupils have good levels of attendance, which demonstrates the value in education instilled by leaders and staff. Actions taken by leaders are reducing levels of persistent absence by disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities support.
- Pupils demonstrate pride in their school. For example, adherence to the school's uniform code is superb and the buildings are well respected and litter free.
- While overall behaviour around school is good, this academic year has seen an increase in exclusion levels. Actions taken by leaders are now beginning to reduce these. Governors monitor the levels and factors for exclusion closely. Leaders have consulted with the local authority to confirm that appropriate procedures have been followed in the case of permanent exclusions.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' outcomes are good because in all phases of the school pupils make at least good progress from their starting points.
- In 2016, Year 11 pupils' progress was significantly above that found nationally. However, pupils' progress at the end of Year 6 was broadly in line with the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress in developing their phonics skills. As a result, the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check have been above the national average for the last three years.
- Overall, disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. In general, at the end of Year 6 and Year 11, disadvantaged pupils' progress is broadly in line with other pupils nationally. In 2016, the progress in languages of Year 11 disadvantaged pupils with low prior attainment was significantly below that of other pupils. Leaders and governors check the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils carefully. Leaders' actions to improve disadvantaged pupils' progress have been successful.
- Generally, the progress of the most able pupils is broadly in line with others nationally by the end of Year 6 and Year 11. In 2016, higher-attaining secondary pupils did not demonstrate the accelerated progress shown by middle-attaining pupils. In key stage 2, the most able pupils' progress is similar to that of other ability groups.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make progress broadly in line with others nationally. However, in 2016, some of these pupils' progress at the end of Year 6 was significantly below that of other pupils in writing. Some of these pupils continue to show weaker progress than that of other pupils in writing across key stage 2.
- At the end of Year 11, most pupils are well prepared academically for the next stage of learning. However, despite their progress being in line with others nationally, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils lags behind that of others nationally. Consequently, this group are not as well prepared academically as others for the next stage in learning.
- At the end of Year 6, the proportions of pupils working at the expected standard and higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above those found nationally.

Therefore, most pupils are academically ready to move into the secondary phase.

- Year 7 pupils who need to catch up in English and mathematics make good progress. The vast majority catch up in English and high proportions catch up in mathematics. This is because of well-targeted interventions and support.
- In 2016, the proportions of pupils attaining well in GCSE French were significantly below the national average. Leaders are taking action to improve teaching and pupils' outcomes in this subject, but pupils' progress remains variable.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start in the early years with skills and abilities that are generally typical for their age. From their starting points, many children make good progress in both Nursery and Reception. The overall proportion of children achieving a good level of development has improved year-on-year and has been above the national average for the last two years. As a result, an increasing proportion of children are well prepared for Year 1.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged children has been targeted to good effect in order to provide extra staff time to help with the personal and social development of these children. The current disadvantaged children are making good progress from their starting points. However, the school's assessments indicate that the majority of these children will not achieve a good level of development by the end of the year.
- The recently appointed leader of the early years has a clear understanding of the learning needs of the children. She is providing useful guidance to the early years staff, some of whom are new to the role, to improve their practice further. She reviews children's outcomes and has taken action to address an identified gender gap in attainment between boys and girls.
- Staff provide a good balance of adult-led teaching combined with provision where children choose activities to support their learning. There is a rich provision to support children's learning in both the indoor classrooms and the outdoor learning environment.
- Staff work hard to help children to settle quickly to early years routines and to develop children's personal and social skills. As a result, the early years is a happy and productive place to learn. For example, children's behaviour moving around the classroom and engaging in an enthusiastic performance of 'row, row, row your boat' demonstrated high levels of maturity and self-discipline.
- Early years staff work well with parents. Parents are involved with children's assessments and staff provide information to help parents understand how to support their child's learning. Parents are very positive about the support provided by the early years staff.
- Children feel safe and secure. Safeguarding is effective and all welfare requirements are met. The leader for the early years has received a high level of safeguarding training.
- Staff make effective links with other agencies where children may require additional support.

- The leader of the early years is reviewing the quality of assessments of children on entry to Nursery and Reception. This is helping to establish more accurate starting points for children's learning, particularly when they arrive from other settings. Previous assessments on entry were in some instances too low.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully developed the sixth form. Leaders understand the strengths and areas for development well. They are taking effective action to drive continual improvement, including monitoring the teaching of academic subjects closely to ensure that students' outcomes improve.
- Students make good progress in applied subjects. In 2016, students' progress in these subjects was significantly higher than that found nationally. While overall students' progress in academic subjects was in line with that found nationally, progress was more variable across different subjects. For example, students' progress in history and English was significantly higher than that found nationally; however, their progress in subjects such as physics, chemistry and mathematics was not strong enough. Emerging evidence indicates that current students' attainment in academic subjects is improving.
- Teaching in the majority of academic and vocational subjects has ensured that students make good or better progress. Students appreciate the balance between independent learning and directed teaching. They benefit from a designated tutor who ensures that they produce quality coursework.
- Retention of students at the school between Year 12 and Year 13 is good and improving. This demonstrates that students receive useful advice and guidance and make appropriate programme choices when entering Year 12. Links with local employers, training providers and universities all support students' understanding of future steps and broaden their horizons.
- Students who did not attain at least a C grade in GCSE mathematics and English prior to entering the sixth form are taught and supported well. As a result, these students make progress significantly higher than that found nationally and the vast majority have achieved these qualifications before leaving the sixth form.
- Students are very proud of the sixth form. Students praise highly the important residential experience at the start of the year that helps them make friends and make the transition into sixth form. A wide range of extra-curricular activities, involvement with charity work and support for younger pupils all contribute to the personal development of students.
- Good use is made of tutor time and lectures to develop students' emotional and physical welfare. As a result, students are well informed about the risks relating to online safety, alcohol and drugs.
- Leaders and staff ensure that students are provided with a wide range of impartial careers advice and guidance on the possible routes following the sixth form. A wide range of work-related learning contributes well to students' programmes of study. As a result, all students successfully move to education, employment or training. A high proportion of students secure places in higher education, including at some of the top-

ranking universities, including Oxford.

School details

Unique reference number	135619
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10023937

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	All-through
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,775
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel Robson
Principal	Gwyneth Evans
Telephone number	01670 545111
Website	www.bedeacademy.org.uk
Email address	enquiries@bedeacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	29–30 May 2012

Information about this school

- Bede Academy is an all-through school and is much larger than the average-sized school. The school is situated across two sites. The south site provides teaching for early years and primary pupils and the north site provides teaching for secondary pupils and sixth form students.
- The school is part of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is below that found

nationally.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities requiring additional school support is similar to that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current key stage 2 school floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets the government's current key stage 4 floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress by the end of Year 11.
- 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.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 34 lessons and part lessons across both school sites. Senior leaders joined inspectors for a number of the observations of lessons.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around school and reviewed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The inspectors observed pupils in the playground and during lunchtime.
- Inspectors listened to six pupils read from Year 2, Year 6 and Year 7.
- The inspectors held meetings with the executive principal for the multi-academy trust, the principal, the vice-principals, the middle leaders and the leader for sixth form, a representative group of teachers, as well as the special educational needs coordinators. The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair of the local governing body.
- Three groups of pupils and a group of sixth form students discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with the inspectors.
- Inspectors took account of 186 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View. Inspectors considered 87 responses to staff questionnaires and 65 responses to the pupils' questionnaire.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including minutes from meetings of the local governing body, information about pupils' achievement, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plans. Reviews were made of behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding. The inspectors scrutinised some pupils' work in their books.

Inspection team

Michael Reeves, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Darren Stewart	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lucie Stephenson	Ofsted Inspector
Geoffrey Lumsdon	Ofsted Inspector
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Dawn Foster	Ofsted Inspector
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Jim Hannah	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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