

The Banovallum School

Boston Road, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6DA

Inspection dates

5–6 December 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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The leadership of the new 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.
- Leaders are determined that only the best is good enough for the pupils at the school. They have introduced an aspirational culture, which pupils and staff have embraced.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their appropriate support and challenge have directly contributed to the rapid improvements.
- 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.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Pupils trust their teachers to help them do the best they can.
- Staff provide high-quality, individualised care for pupils, especially for those who are vulnerable. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress because of the support they are given.
- Leaders and governors 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.
- The curriculum has been thoughtfully planned and contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is supplemented by a rich array of extra-curricular activities which pupils engage with enthusiastically.
- Pupils are making consistently good progress in science, modern foreign languages, art and design technology.
- In 2017, pupils' progress by the end of Year 11 has been slow in a number of subjects including English, history and geography. Current pupils are now making much better progress in these subjects.
- 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.

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 their impact on pupils' progress is regularly evaluated.
- Sustain the increased challenge provided for the most able pupils so that they reach the highest standards they can in all subjects by the end of Year 11.
- Iron out remaining pockets where pupils make slower progress, including by making sure all teaching consistently meets leaders' high expectations.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The new headteacher, senior leaders and governors are relentless in their determination to provide the best possible education for pupils. Staff value the strong leadership and share its vision for an inclusive school where pupils are cared for and are successful academically. The bar has been raised and leadership, teaching, behaviour and achievement have all improved rapidly. Almost all staff who responded to the staff inspection questionnaire said that the school is well led and that they are proud to work at the school.
- Leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. Building on the actions of the previous headteacher, they address weaknesses quickly and effectively. For example, they have addressed historically weak leadership and teaching in a small number of subjects including English, history and geography. Consequently, although published outcomes in these few subjects still require improvement, pupils currently in the school are making better progress.
- Provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is very effective. Leaders have trained teachers well to plan lessons that meet the needs of these pupils. Teaching assistants provide skilful and well-planned support in lessons. Any pupil who needs extra help is provided with it. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are fully integrated into lessons and wider school life. These pupils make good progress and leaders are therefore making good use of additional funding.
- The school's curriculum contains an appropriate range of subjects in each key stage. Leaders regularly evaluate the curriculum and have recently broadened the range of subjects on offer to meet pupils' needs and interests. Leaders' focus on raising the profile of reading and opportunities for extended writing is improving literacy across year groups.
- An extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities, clubs, visits and activities supplements the curriculum. These include sporting, music and drama activities and also several opportunities to serve the local community. Personal, social and health education taught in tutor time, drama lessons and drop-down days cover local, national and global issues. They help pupils develop a good understanding of British values, including respect for and tolerance of others.
- Together, the school's curriculum, extra-curricular activities and clear ethos contribute exceedingly well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils demonstrate caring and welcoming attitudes to each other, to staff and to visitors. Consequently, the school is a place where all pupils are accepted for who they are.
- Leaders know where teaching, learning and assessment are the strongest. They identify where it is less effective by making regular checks using different sources of information, including observation, looking at pupils' work and analysing their attainment. Good practice is regularly shared both in school and in the trust. Leaders target training well at the individuals, subjects or issues where it's needed. Leaders set targets that are well focused on improving teaching and pupils' progress. Almost all staff who completed the inspection questionnaire agreed that leaders use professional

development to encourage, challenge and support them. Newly and recently qualified teachers told inspectors that colleagues have given them high-quality training and support.

- In the last few years, middle leadership has been transformed and now middle leaders form a committed and hard-working group. Subject leaders increasingly lead the improvement of teaching in their subject areas. Strong leadership of English and history is one of the key reasons that pupils' progress in these subjects is improving.
- Leaders make effective use of Year 7 catch-up funding. Consequently, pupils accessing this are making good progress in their reading.
- 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 in all subject areas.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has played a key role in securing the rapid pace of improvements in the school. It has established a strong leadership team and supports it making sure that all of the school's actions contribute to raising standards for pupils.
- Governors ensure that they are well-informed about the school's performance. All governors have a link to aspects of school life, such as safeguarding, special educational needs and/or disabilities and different subject areas. They visit the school to meet with staff and speak with pupils. They then report to committees or the full governing board.
- Statutory duties are carried out with diligence. For example, governors regularly check that safeguarding arrangements are effective. Similarly, they keep a close eye on how the school's budget is spent, checking that targeted funding is having sufficient impact. Governors acknowledge that the progress of disadvantaged pupils has been too slow but it is improving. They have played an important role in ensuring that disadvantaged pupils attend school more regularly.
- Governors undertake training regularly to help them improve their own performance and to fulfil their role with rigour. For example, they have recently received training in helping keep pupils safe, understanding information on pupils' attainment and progress, and on governance. Consequently, the governing body has a good level of knowledge and expertise, which it is using increasingly well to question leaders and hold them to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All statutory duties are met. Senior leaders and governors have established a culture of high vigilance. Staff are well trained to spot the signs that a pupil might need extra help. Systems are clear and well understood by all. Consequently, staff readily pass on to leaders any concerns they have, secure in the knowledge that they will be treated seriously and appropriately. Records of any concerns about pupils are meticulous because leaders know that keeping children safe is of central importance.

- Leaders provide effective early help to pupils and families to prevent problems from escalating. They work well with outside agencies by raising any child protection issues swiftly and checking that appropriate actions are taken.
- Pupils benefit from great support for their well-being from all staff. Pupils and parents very much appreciate this and say it makes a real difference.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved considerably over the last couple of years. They are now good, despite pupils' outcomes still requiring improvement.
- Staff have worked closely with each other and with the other school in the trust, to ensure that their assessments are accurate. The assessment system using 'flight paths' gives teachers and leaders a clear understanding of how all pupils are achieving and making progress from their starting points. Consequently, leaders can demonstrate that current pupils throughout the school are now making much more progress than was previously the case in nearly all subjects.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They have worked 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 questions 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 the DIRT tasks (Directed, Improvement, Reflection, Time) help them to improve their work.
- Teaching meets the needs of pupils who have lower prior attainment or have SEN and/or disabilities well. Teachers plan activities in which these pupils succeed. Teaching assistants are well trained and provide extra, expert support in class when it is needed.
- 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 French lesson, higher-attaining pupils in Year 9 were encouraged to use three tenses to improve their writing. Leaders acknowledge that challenging the most able pupils is still 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 make sure that pupils develop their literacy across the wider curriculum. They use subject-specific vocabulary appropriately and plan opportunities for extended writing in many subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Leaders ensure that pupils' well-being and welfare are central to daily life at Banovallum, including that of the most vulnerable pupils, who are also very well supported. One parent said, 'The school really focuses on trying to develop the whole child.'
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for in the school. All pupils who spoke with inspectors confirmed this. They also told inspectors that bullying is very rare and any that does happen is dealt with well by adults and anti-bullying ambassadors. Pupils trust the staff to deal with bullying or other problems they might have. There is additional support available for any who are struggling with stress or any mental health issues.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through lessons, assemblies, tutor time and a range of extra-curricular activities, including a residential trip. Teachers encourage pupils to debate and encourage others' viewpoints. Pupils listen respectfully to each other and show tolerance of different views.
- The majority of pupils take pride in their work. Most books seen were well-presented and pupils demonstrate a commitment to improve their work. Pupils were confident to talk to inspectors and proud and enthusiastic to show their work.
- Community links are well-established and pupils are actively involved in raising money for local as well as national and international charities. During the inspection, the pupils had planned and organised the Christmas Fayre to raise funds for the school's charities.
- The very small number of pupils who attend alternative provision behave well, attend regularly and make good progress. Staff hold regular review meetings to monitor their progress.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They support and encourage their classmates. Leaders ensure that staff apply the school's behaviour policy clearly and consistently. Pupils know the high standards of behaviour expected of them and as a result, low-level disruption in lessons is rare and more serious disruption is very rare. Systems to manage poor behaviour are used well on the few occasions when they are needed.
- The school is calm and orderly throughout the school day. Pupils move purposefully and sensibly around the building between lessons. They are punctual to lessons, wear their uniform correctly and follow instructions quickly.
- At breaktime and lunchtime, pupils behave maturely and show consideration for others, with a minimum of staff supervision. They show respect for their environment and there is no litter around in the school buildings or the grounds.
- Leaders use exclusion appropriately as a sanction of last resort. Leaders work together with the other school in the trust as an alternative to exclusion. As a result, the number of fixed-term exclusions is below the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are absent from school more than other pupils. Leaders have been quick to tighten up on the school's

procedures to encourage regular attendance and to use external support to help these pupils back into school. As a result, attendance for these pupils is improving rapidly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress by the end of key stage 4 has been slow in recent years in some subjects. Unvalidated GCSE results for 2017 show a considerable improvement in pupils' overall progress from their starting points. This was specifically the case in science and English language but not so in English literature, history and geography.
- In 2016 and 2017, disadvantaged pupils made significantly slower progress than other pupils nationally, particularly in English and mathematics. Their attainment was below that of their peers.
- 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 higher levels by the end of Year 11 this year.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive effective support and make progress at least in line with other pupils in the school, and at times better.
- Historically, pupils have made good progress in art, science, modern foreign languages and design technology. Current information from the school indicates that this will continue. Pupils' progress in English, history and geography has been weaker. Leaders have taken effective action to tackle this and current pupils are making better progress in these subjects as a result. This is particularly the case in English.
- Previous weaknesses in teaching in some subjects have been eliminated. The school's assessment information, confirmed by inspection evidence, shows that pupils' progress is strong across all subjects in key stage 3 and improving rapidly in key stage 4.
- Leaders provide pupils with high-quality careers advice and guidance. The programme includes visiting speakers, an annual careers convention, visits to colleges and universities and individual interviews. A number of pupils who spoke with inspectors said they appreciated this advice and felt it prepared them well to make important decisions about their futures and in choosing destinations for when they leave the school. Almost all pupils move on to appropriate further education or training when they leave Banovallum.

School details

Unique reference number	141581
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10036054

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	589
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Wendy Ireland
Headteacher	Grant Edgar
Telephone number	01507 522232
Website	www.banovallumschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@banovallumschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

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 smaller than the average-size secondary school.
- The school converted to academy status in December 2014 and is part of the Horncastle Umbrella Trust, along with Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School.
- In September 2017 a new headteacher was appointed.
- The vast majority of pupils come from White British families. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well below the national average and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is average.

- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- A very small number of pupils attend provision away from the school site for part of the week at Build A Future.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress at the end of key stage 4.
- 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 32 lessons, and some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. During visits to lessons, inspectors sampled pupils' books to evaluate the quality of their learning. Inspectors also made short visits to tutor time.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and talked to many about their learning and their attitudes to, and opinions about, school. They observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime and as they moved around the school.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including information relating to governance, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, pupils' progress and the checks made on the quality of teaching.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and four governors, including the chair of the governing body. An inspector also held a telephone conversation with Build A Future, the provider of alternative provision the school utilises.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the national leader of education who provides support for the school.
- Inspectors took account of parents' views by considering the 80 responses to Parent View, including 61 'free-text' comments, and direct contact made by parents to the inspection team.
- Inspectors took account of the 50 responses received on Ofsted's staff inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Sue Vasey, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Tanya Wiles	Ofsted Inspector
Jackie Thornalley	Ofsted Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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