

The Mandeville School

Ellen Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP21 8ES

Inspection dates

23–24 January 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Governors do not have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have not routinely held leaders to account for the school's outcomes.
- Leadership of the sixth form has only recently been improved. Prior to this, the mandatory requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes were not routinely met for sixth-form students. Consequently, the effectiveness of the sixth form is inadequate.
- Too many pupils are still persistently absent.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable. Leaders' work to improve this has not yet embedded across the school. This is partly due to turbulence in staffing and challenges with recruitment.
- Some staff do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and some pupils do not have high aspirations.

The school has the following strengths

- The principal has transformed the culture of the school. With senior leaders, she has established a sense of purpose and high ambition for all pupils.
- Staff have formed strong working relationships with pupils. Pupils are happy and see school as 'a family'. They like the fact that there is always someone to talk to.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding running through the school. Leaders' work to keep pupils safe is effective.
- Outcomes are improving for all pupils, especially those in key stage 3 and the most able. Leaders have made good use of additional funding to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Behaviour has improved dramatically. Pupils have responded well to the new systems for supporting their behaviour choices. The work of the 'anti-bullying community' has been extremely effective.
- Current sixth-form students have received effective support to ensure that they are on the correct study programme that will prepare them well for their next steps.
- The plans to improve the sixth form are accurate and thorough.
- Leaders have created an innovative curriculum that is well matched to the needs of the pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of the sixth form by making sure that the requirements for 16 to 19 programmes of study are met consistently.
- Ensure that governors improve their effectiveness by:
 - routinely holding leaders to account, especially for the use of additional funding
 - developing a sharper understanding of pupils' outcomes and whether they reflect good progress.
- Continue to address the remaining areas of weakness by:
 - embedding the improvement strategies and making sure that they are applied consistently throughout the school
 - persisting with the work to improve teaching and learning so that inconsistencies are eradicated
 - making sure that pupils understand what different assessments tell them about their progress
 - further developing middle leaders, including those who are newer to post, and leadership of the sixth form
 - checking that the monitoring, evaluation and review process makes a difference to outcomes for pupils
 - challenging all staff to raise their expectations of pupils even further.
- Improve attendance, especially of those pupils who are persistently absent.

An external review of governance 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

- The principal has ably led the transformation of Mandeville, providing vision, stability, drive and a powerful sense of community. Under her guidance, the staff, uniting as 'Team Mandeville', are determined to provide the best for the pupils in their care. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas that still require improvement. The many new strategies and actions in place now need to be embedded and applied consistently for their full impact to be realised and the improvement secured for all year groups.
- Leaders have successfully changed the culture of the school so that pupils, parents and staff have higher expectations of behaviour and learning. There is a sense of purpose from the vast majority of staff and pupils. However, further work is required in order to raise the ambition and expectations of a minority of staff and pupils.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum that matches pupils' needs well. They have innovated, for example by mixing year groups, in order to provide a wide range of courses. This has helped to ensure that the curriculum is broad. Staff work well with pupils and their families in order to make sure that pupils' subject choices are ambitious and well balanced.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well through the curriculum and the pastoral system. There is a palpable sense of equality and fairness that runs through the school. Pupils are increasingly well prepared for life in modern Britain. They are proud of the way their voice is heard at school, for example through pupil surveys, the house system and initiatives such as the 'anti-bullying community'.
- Leaders' work to improve the quality of teaching is paying dividends, although it is hampered by continued turbulence with staffing and difficulties in recruitment. Leaders' expectations are rightly high, and they provide good support to staff that is focused on the individual skills that they need to develop. Teachers at all points in their career value the professional development and training provided for them.
- Middle leaders have also benefited from supportive training and development. Their skills of leadership have improved, with most displaying a more strategic understanding of planning and assessment. They have made valuable contributions to improving the quality of teaching across the school.
- Additional funding has been used well to address the barriers to learning often experienced by disadvantaged pupils. As with so much of leaders' work, the actions are ongoing but are already making a difference, for example in helping to raise disadvantaged pupils' attendance.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are supported well by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and her team. They provide useful resources in order to support teachers to meet pupils' needs. These help pupils to make progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have received effective support from the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust. This has helped them to evaluate, plan and implement the changes to the curriculum and

improve the quality of teaching.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school requires improvement because governors have allowed concerns about inherited financial pressures to overshadow their other responsibilities. As a consequence, they have not routinely held leaders to account for important aspects of their work, including pupils' outcomes.
- The governors work hard to support the school. They have worked well with the local authority to address the financial situation successfully. They have ensured significant savings and overseen a well-considered spending plan to reduce the inherited deficit.
- They have not routinely challenged school leaders about the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and Year 7 pupils eligible for catch-up funding, and so are not able to confirm that the money has been used effectively. They do not know what difference it has made for pupils.
- Governors have a poor understanding of the school's progress and attainment information. They have not explored what this information tells them about Mandeville. For example, they do not know how the published information about the school compares with that for other schools nationally.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a very strong culture of safeguarding where each member of staff understands their role in being vigilant at all times and communicating any worries quickly. Staff and governors are trained well, with frequent updates and reminders alongside tests to check that their knowledge and understanding are secure and up to date.
- Staff are proactive in their work with external agencies, at all times keeping the needs of the pupils at the fore of their communications. They are swift in dealing with issues and concerns, and do so at an appropriate level.
- The work to develop pupils' and parents' understanding of how to keep pupils safe is particularly effective, with issues such as sexting and radicalisation addressed well. Leaders have also built strong community links that have helped develop a stronger understanding of the risks pupils can face.
- All required school policies are in place and systems are tight because they are evaluated and updated regularly, taking into account the changing local and national picture. The single central record complies with requirements, as do the processes for assuring that staff are fully checked for their suitability for working with children and young people.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable. Where teaching is most effective, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. There is a sense of purpose and drive that raises pupils' ambitions and encourages them to work hard. However, there is still a minority of teaching that is not focused or purposeful. Expectations are not high enough and activities in these lessons are not well planned so pupils do not learn enough.
- The vast majority of teachers have formed strong working relationships with pupils. Pupils trust teachers and are willing to push themselves if teachers believe that they can achieve something. Pupils learn most when teachers match learning activities to pupils' prior learning. They give pupils the time to think, apply their learning and work solutions out for themselves.
- Some teachers explain concepts very well so that pupils understand exactly how to make progress. For example, in physical education, pupils were supported to make good progress with their vaulting by systematic analysis of how they had to adapt their bodies.
- Pupils like the use of self-assessment and mini-assessments when these help them to see what they have learned. However, different subjects use this strategy in different ways, which can be confusing for pupils. For example, assessments are sometimes used to identify what a pupil needs to learn next, but if pupils do not fully understand this, they are demotivated by what they regard as failure.
- Different teachers' expectations of pupils' work and overall attitudes to learning can vary. Some teachers apply the school behaviour and reward policies consistently. Pupils are frustrated by those who do not, and they told inspectors that low-level disruption happened in these situations.
- The SENCo oversees effective support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. However, some teachers do not use the SENCo's suggested resources or detailed information enough.
- Teachers and support staff are very positive about the training they receive. It means that the stronger practice in teaching is shared well. This is improving teaching and learning effectively across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. This is because too many pupils have not developed the habits for learning that will support them to be successful learners. Many pupils are over-reliant on their teachers to keep them on track with their learning and development. This is holding them back. Leaders have created a programme of study to support pupils to develop these skills, but it is not yet fully established or delivered consistently.
- The vast majority of pupils are very happy at school. They recognise the strong quality of care provided and appreciate the positive relationships that they have with staff. Many pupils expressed their view of the school as 'a family' where everyone supports each other. One pupil told inspectors that there is always someone to talk to and she

knows that staff are 'always looking out' for her.

- Pupils told inspectors that the school's work to address and eradicate bullying has been very effective. They said that bullying was rare, but if it did happen, staff were always available and were very effective at sorting it out. Pupils are rightly proud of the 'anti-bullying community' (ABC) that they have established with the assistance of staff. The ABC acts as a hub for support and friendship for all pupils and has helped to set the strong sense of friendship, tolerance and equality that pervades the school.
- The vast majority of pupils reported that they feel safe at school. Older pupils said that the culture and safety of the school have been transformed and they now feel very safe. They identified the high levels of respect and the strong sense of community developed by the principal and all at 'Team Mandeville' as helping to create this.

Behaviour

- By all accounts, behaviour in the school has improved dramatically since the principal joined the school. Her high expectations and the clear rewards and sanctions for behaviour she has established have been very effective. Pupils who remember the time prior to her joining are adamant that behaviour is now much better. However, the behaviour of pupils requires improvement to ensure that it is consistently good because a minority of pupils still behave poorly at lunchtimes or during some lessons.
- Leaders' work to improve pupils' attendance has been effective in securing higher overall attendance compared with previous years. However, there are still too many pupils who persistently miss school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils are improving over time due to the stronger quality of teaching, learning and assessment. However, the legacy of underachievement means that outcomes overall are still too low.
- Published results of key stage 4 GCSE examinations in 2017 show that many pupils did not match the progress seen nationally, based on their starting points, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Current pupils' progress in all subjects is improving, especially in key stage 3 where school information and inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that many pupils are making sound progress in most subjects.
- However, current key stage 4 progress is more variable. School information and pupils' work show strong progress in some subjects, for example, in English. However, in some subjects, including mathematics and science, many pupils are not consistently making the rapid progress required to catch up from their low starting points in Year 10.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils has improved over recent years and in 2017, their progress in English was close to that of other pupils nationally. Current disadvantaged pupils are now making progress in line with their peers in school across the curriculum. This improvement is due to the effective use of the additional funds for

these pupils.

- Current most-able and most-able disadvantaged pupils are now making stronger progress across the curriculum and developing skills that have the potential for them to attain the highest grades at GCSE.
- Pupils with low prior attainment make strong progress across a wide range of subjects. In 2017, this group made good progress at GCSE compared with their peers nationally.

16 to 19 study programmes

Inadequate

- Owing to turbulence in staffing and leadership of this key stage, leaders' evaluations of their work in the sixth form have not been robust. They do not know how successful the 2017 Year 13 students have been in sustaining the plans they had for training, education or work. In addition, provision of the statutory requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes has not been monitored properly. For example, it is not clear whether good-quality work experience has been part of all students' study programmes.
- School leaders, along with the new head of sixth form, have addressed these gaps well. They have developed a strong curriculum plan for current Year 12 students that means that they will now meet the study programme requirements in full, for example by including appropriate work experience for all students. Monitoring and evaluation of students' progress are also more regular.
- School information shows that, prior to this academic year, too few learners completed their chosen pathways. Leaders have recently addressed this and provided high-quality support for students as they decide on their courses. Early signs are that retention rates have dramatically improved as a consequence.
- Historically, attendance of sixth-form students has not been good enough. School information suggests that it is improving, but is still not good enough.
- Published information about examination results shows that students' attainment and progress in academic and vocational qualifications have not been high enough. School information about current students indicates a more promising picture of improvement.
- Students who need to retake their GCSE English and/or mathematics qualifications do well, particularly in English where a higher proportion than nationally improve their grade.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable so that students do not make consistently strong progress from their starting points. The most effective teaching provides a good level of challenge and supports students to make good progress.
- Leaders have a clear vision for the sixth form. They communicate their high expectations and aspirations well, supporting these with convincing plans to improve the overall quality of provision.
- Leaders have developed the curriculum thoughtfully, taking the ambitions and requirements of their students into account. They have ensured that academic and vocational qualifications are given equal status. The sports academy options make good use of specialist coaches to improve students' learning. Careers advice and

guidance are now good. Students have a wide range of qualification options that allow them to access many possibilities for employment, training or further study.

- Pastoral care for students is strong. Staff know students very well and put considerable time into supporting their personal, social and emotional development. This work is very effective and students feel valued and safe. The culture of safeguarding that runs through the school is also strong in the sixth form.

School details

Unique reference number	110497
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10040932

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	939
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cindy Bull
Principal	Andria Hanham
Telephone number	01296 745400
Website	www.mandeville.bucks.sch.uk
Email address	office@mandeville.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 November 2015

Information about this school

- The principal joined the school in November 2015, very shortly before the previous inspection.
- School leaders have been supported in their work to improve the school by advisers from the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust.
- The school is a non-selective comprehensive secondary school and has a sixth form.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school has an average proportion of disadvantaged pupils.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is lower than average. The

proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is higher than average.

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 55 part-lessons across the school. Many of these were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also scrutinised a wide sample of pupils' books.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, other staff, the chair of governors and representatives from the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust. Inspectors also took account of the views of the 52 staff who completed Ofsted's online staff survey.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke with pupils in lessons and around the school. They also met formally with groups of pupils and considered the views of 83 pupils who responded to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers. They took account of one letter from a parent, 45 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and 30 written comments they submitted.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including information available on the school's website and records relating to pupils' attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour. Information on governance, including minutes of governors' meetings, was examined. The school's improvement plans and self-evaluations were scrutinised, along with records of the school's work to keep pupils safe.

Inspection team

Lucy English, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Gerard Strong	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Cartwright	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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