

Bishop Barrington School A Sports with Mathematics College

Woodhouse Lane, Bishop Auckland, County Durham DL14 6LA

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The progress Year 11 pupils made from their starting points by the time they left the school in 2015, 2016 and 2017 was not good enough. It reflected underachievement by some groups of pupils overall and in key subjects such as English and mathematics, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils' current rates of progress in Years 7 to Year 11 are improving but still vary too much across subjects, year groups and for different groups of pupils. Progress is not consistently good, with pockets of underperformance and slower progress still apparent.
- School leaders, governors and the local authority were slow to act, to rectify the clear weaknesses evident in the 2015 and 2016 results. Consequently, some similar weaknesses are apparent in the 2017 results.
- Leaders have not done enough to ensure that teaching is strong enough to secure good outcomes for pupils across a range of subjects.
- Leaders have not used additional funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively over time.
- Progress in mathematics has been poor over time. The recent improvement in achievement for current pupils is slower in mathematics than in other subjects.
- The quality and impact of teaching and assessment on pupils' learning are variable. Recent improvements are not consistently embedded within departments and across subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders and governors know what needs to be done and their work is starting to have some impact.
- The school is calm and orderly. Pupils behave well and relationships between staff and pupils are positive on the whole. Staff ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure. Pupils feel that the school is a friendly and safe place to be.
- The quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning and progress in physical education are noteworthy. Pupils are making good progress as a result.
- The provision for pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The curriculum in this area and the range of extra-curricular activities the school provide are effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders respond effectively to the pupil premium review recommendations and successfully implement strategies to continue and build upon the recent improvements seen in the progress of disadvantaged pupils
 - leaders address the remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching
 - leaders and governors maintain a relentless focus on accelerating all pupils' progress, especially where they have suffered from the effects of weaker teaching over time, so that they regain the lost ground in their learning and reach their full potentials.
- Improve the quality, consistency and impact of teaching and assessment on pupils' learning so that all pupils, including the disadvantaged, make at least good progress across the curriculum by ensuring that:
 - leaders use the school's most effective teaching as a model for other teachers in the school to learn from and to eliminate the variation in the quality of teaching
 - teaching in mathematics, science, geography and modern foreign languages improves, and, as a consequence, pupils make more effective progress in those subjects when set against their starting points
 - all teachers use the new policies and procedures consistently
 - the skilful questioning, seen in the most effective lessons, is used consistently well across the curriculum to check pupils' learning and deepen their understanding.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over time, leaders and managers at all levels have maintained an overgenerous perspective, believing that the school was providing pupils with a good quality of education when it was not. Quality assurance arrangements have not been sufficiently rigorous to raise the quality of teaching, to ensure that pupils of all abilities, including the disadvantaged, make consistently good progress. More rigorous and credible procedures have been introduced recently.
- Over time, leaders, managers and governors have not ensured that the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are consistently good. Therefore, the overall effectiveness of the school requires improvement.
- Leaders have not used the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively. Leaders' strategies to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils have not been successful. This is clear in the 2015, 2016 and 2017 examination results. Leaders now realise that mathematics was the key area where the funding did not have impact and have adapted plans accordingly. It is only with current pupils that the school is starting to see more rapid progress. However, the improvements secured to date are less marked than in other areas.
- There are systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and performance management targets do focus on pupil progress. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching have found a high proportion of teaching to be good or better. However, this is not borne out in the progress pupils have made over time. Leaders have also judged the vast majority of teachers to meet their performance management targets, even though progress rates have been below those seen nationally. Therefore, leaders have been overly generous in their self-evaluation.
- Over time, leaders have found it particularly difficult to recruit teachers in key areas such as mathematics and modern foreign languages. They have resorted to deploying strong teachers from other subjects to teach in those areas where recruitment was difficult. Although some subject-specialists have now been recruited, it is still the case that leaders are not always able to fill vacancies.
- The curriculum is well thought out and supports the values of the school. It is particularly effective in supporting pupils' personal development and welfare. The curriculum is well supported by a range of opportunities for pupils to learn outside the classroom and experience a range of leisure activities. The choice offered by the physical education (PE) department is wide and many pupils take part. The weakness with the curriculum is that, over time, the delivery in some academic subjects has not been as strong as in others. It is pleasing to note that inspectors did see clearly, both in lessons and in detailed work scrutiny, which standards are improving in some of the weaker areas.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is improving but is not wholly effective. This is reflected in the variable progress pupils make in different subjects throughout the school, especially in English and mathematics. The school's latest performance information, which inspectors scrutinised

during the gathering additional evidence inspection, confirms this situation. The additional funding for these pupils is targeted but is having an inconsistent impact as pupils' progress varies between rapid, mediocre and slow. The more recent focus in training on catering for the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is beginning to develop teachers' skills in this area. In the resource base, for pupils who have autism and associated learning difficulties, outcomes also vary.

- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has a positive effect on their personal development. Discussions about British values help prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain and leaders stress the importance of this in the school values of respect, inspiration, resilience and excellence.
- Responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, showed that the vast majority of parents and carers are positive about the school. Similarly, the online questionnaire for staff was positive. Staff morale is high.

Governance of the school

- Governors were slow to ensure that school leaders took appropriate action to tackle the issues raised by the GCSE results in 2016. As a result, the provisional 2017 results reflect similar weaknesses. Governors are determined that the same mistakes will not reoccur.
- They are very clear about the areas of school life which require improvement and minutes of meetings show clearly the rigour with which they are now challenging leaders.
- Governors are extremely committed to the school. They are proud of the family atmosphere in the school and the way staff support pupils. They see staff/pupil relationships as a real strength.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a clear ethos about the school which sets the safety of pupils as a high priority. Staff are well trained and consequently vigilant. Where concerns are identified, leaders deal with them promptly. They work closely with external agencies to keep the most vulnerable pupils safe.
- Leaders ensure that all the necessary checks are made on staff before they start to work at the school. Detailed records of these checks are maintained.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep safe and the risks which might affect them. They feel safe in school. If a problem does arise, they know who to go to and they have faith in that person to help them resolve the issue.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently strong enough to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress. Despite some recent improvements, there is still too much variability between and within subjects for different groups of pupils.

- Leaders realise that, over time, teaching has not catered for the needs of the most able pupils and have put an intense focus on this issue. The impact of this work was clear to inspectors in many lessons and in the extensive work scrutiny they undertook. However, there is still a way to go in some subjects and with some individual teachers.
- Teaching in mathematics has not been strong for some years and this has led to pupils not fulfilling their potential in this subject. Lesson observations and a detailed scrutiny of pupils' books showed that teaching is beginning to improve in this subject. Teachers are providing more challenge for pupils across the ability range in recognition of the fact that expectations were previously too low. However, there is still variability within the department and improvements are slower in mathematics than in other subjects.
- Teaching has also been weaker in geography. New leadership is starting to have an impact, but there is still variability within the department. Leaders acknowledge this and it was clear in the scrutiny of work, carried out with the head of department. The quality of teaching in science has also suffered.
- Teachers who teach French have realised that in the past they have given too much support to the most able and not allowed them to develop their ability to write at length independently. There are clear signs of improvement in the work of current pupils, but this is recent.
- Inspectors, both in lessons and work scrutiny, saw strengths in the teaching of PE, history and, in pockets, in science. A detailed scrutiny of work in history, for example, showed some good progress across both key stages as a result of teachers setting appropriately challenging work to pupils of all abilities. In some science classes it was evident that consistent use of the school's feedback policy was leading to a genuine dialogue between teacher and pupil. These pupils were making good progress over time. Pupils, both boys and girls, talk enthusiastically about their positive experiences in PE lessons and the range of extra-curricular activities they enjoy. Progress and outcomes in external examinations in PE, when set against pupils' starting points, have been consistently strong over time as a result of effective teaching.
- Leaders have implemented a series of procedures to improve teaching. Where teachers consistently and creatively use the procedures, teaching is effective. The impact of setting individualised challenges, for example, was clear in the work scrutiny of several departments. However, these new systems are not firmly embedded across all teachers or subjects.
- Leaders provide tailored support for those teachers whom they see as requiring it. Teachers benefit from the contact they have with local authority advisers and with colleagues from other schools. Leaders acknowledge that this has contributed to some recent improvements in mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- Pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils learn to respect each other's differences and tolerate other people's views that are different from their own.

- Pupils are proud of their school and feel part of a close school community. The strong relationships between staff and pupils are evident across the school. Pupils were very keen to tell inspectors how good their school is.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about the different types of bullying and speak very highly of the effective way school staff deal with the few incidents of bullying.
- The strong curriculum for personal development has ensured that they do not tolerate racism or homophobia.
- Pupils appreciate the valuable advice and guidance they receive throughout the school to help them make good choices for their key stage 4 options and for what they do after GCSE. As a result of this effective guidance, virtually every pupil moves on to appropriate further education, employment or training.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good and the school is a calm and orderly place.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils respond well to the visible presence of staff. As a consequence, behaviour is good as they move about school and at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. There are very few incidents where lessons are interrupted by pupils' poor behaviour.
- This is an inclusive school and the local authority welcomes the way school leaders are prepared to give pupils who have struggled in other schools another chance.
- Attendance has improved over time and is now in line with the national average. Attendance of disadvantaged pupils has also got better and is approaching the national average for all pupils. Leaders have been successful in reducing the number of pupils, including the disadvantaged, who are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- School leaders and governors accept that the progress Year 11 pupils made from their starting points over the last three years was not good enough. It represented underachievement by certain groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, in key subjects. This has led to a real focus on teaching in an attempt to improve the amount of progress that all pupils make.
- In 2016, Year 11 pupils made significantly less progress in mathematics than their peers with the same starting points nationally. The problem was even more acute for disadvantaged pupils in mathematics. Their progress was in the bottom 10% when compared with pupils nationally. Analysis of the provisional 2017 results shows that pupils in mathematics made over half a grade less progress than their peers nationally.
- Leaders' focus on mathematics, and in particular ensuring that the teaching provides challenge across the ability range, is beginning to bear fruit. Current pupils, including the disadvantaged, are starting to make more effective progress. However, improvements in mathematics are slower than in other subjects. The school also accepts that, despite some recent acceleration of progress, for some Year 11 pupils,

their underachievement in previous years means they are unlikely to catch up to where they should be, given their starting points.

- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils made significantly less progress than their peers nationally with the same starting points. Early analysis of the 2017 results shows that disadvantaged pupils underachieved again. Indeed, disadvantaged pupils from this school made less progress than all disadvantaged pupils nationally. However, lesson observations, detailed work scrutiny and the school's internal performance information show that current disadvantaged pupils are starting to make better progress in certain subjects.
- Over time, pupils' overall attainments have been similar to national averages, though not consistently so across different groups of pupils.
- In 2016, Year 11 pupils in English made significantly better progress than their peers nationally. In 2017, Year 11 pupils' progress did not match that of pupils with the same starting points across the country.
- In 2016, progress for Year 11 pupils in science was broadly in line with that of pupils with the same starting points nationally. Lesson observations and detailed work scrutiny showed that strong leadership of this subject is leading to good progress for some pupils, including the disadvantaged. Nevertheless, it was also evident during the gathering additional evidence inspection visit that progress in science was variable. Leaders identified geography and French as areas where, historically, pupils had made less progress. Their focus on these areas has had a positive effect. Current pupils are making better progress, but there is still a way to go for these subjects to match the stronger departments.
- There is some recent evidence which indicates the school has turned a significant corner which is helping to ensure that more pupils make consistently effective progress. Reduced turbulence in staffing has been key in this improving picture. Good teaching over time has led to good progress in history and PE. Nevertheless, the school's own performance information clearly shows that, in Years 7 to 9 and Year 11, attainment of current pupils varies markedly between subjects and for different groups of pupils, with evidence of fast but also slow progress. Inspection evidence shows this is the case in Year 10 also. In Year 11, these fluctuations are particularly apparent among the most able pupils, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and low prior attaining pupils in English and mathematics.
- Outcomes for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities have not been good over time. Current pupils are making stronger progress but some inconsistencies remain. For example, leaders have identified areas for improvement in Years 7 and 9 mathematics and in Year 9 English. The progress made by pupils in the enhanced mainstream provision for pupils with autism and associated learning difficulties also varies, with examples of rapid and slow progress evident.
- The school's work to develop pupils' reading is strong. Pupils can explain clearly why they have chosen to read a particular book and they read aloud fluently across the ability range. Lower-ability pupils use a variety of effective strategies when they come across unfamiliar words.
- Leaders have taken heed of comments in the previous inspection report about their provision for pupils who attend vocational courses with other providers. Robust

procedures are now in place to monitor and review the attendance and progress of these pupils. As a result, these pupils are making more effective progress.

School details

Unique reference number	114301
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10036509

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	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	730
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Thompson
Acting headteacher	Mike Bennett
Telephone number	01388 603307
Website	www.bishopbarrington.net
Email address	mike.bennett@bishopbarrington.net
Date of previous inspection	12–13 March 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of

Year 11.

- The school uses alternative providers for a total of nine pupils. The providers are Education Plus North East and Cornerstone.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons, some jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors observed pupils in all year groups being taught across a range of subjects. In addition, inspectors carried out a detailed scrutiny of work with the relevant middle leader in mathematics, French, science, history, geography and English. The scrutiny of work included books from across every year group in the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the acting headteacher, other senior leaders, middle leaders, governors, the special educational needs coordinator, members of staff responsible for safeguarding and two representatives of the local authority. Inspectors also had discussions with groups of pupils, both formally and informally. Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's review of its performance, records of pupils' progress, attendance records, incident logs and safeguarding procedures. An inspector listened to some Year 7 and 8 pupils reading.
- Inspectors also took account of 52 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 20 free-text messages from parents. They also took account of the 59 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- On 11 December 2017, an additional visit was made to the school by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors to gather additional evidence in order to complete the inspection. The visit focused on the impact of teaching and assessment on current pupils' learning, progress and attainment when set against their starting points.
- During the additional visit, inspectors saw pupils learning in each year group in a range of subjects and sampled learning over time in their books. They met with leaders, considered school documents and carried out an extensive work scrutiny across a range of subjects and ability groups. They met formally with five groups of pupils and spoke to other pupils in lessons about their learning and progress. Inspectors also spoke to class teachers about their practice and pupils' learning and progress.

Inspection team

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Adam Ryder	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Smith	Her Majesty's 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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