

# Bruntcliffe Academy

Bruntcliffe Lane, Morley, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS27 0LZ

## Inspection dates

20–21 February 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The very strong leadership of the principal, and other leaders, has contributed to improving standards of education over time. This is a school where teachers, and pupils, believe only the best is good enough.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of themselves and their pupils. This highly effective teaching ensures that pupils' progress is rapidly improving.
- Pupils' attendance has improved. Rates of attendance overall, and persistent absence, are now similar to the national average. However, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities remain more likely to be regularly absent than their peers.
- Leaders' work to review the curriculum for pupils in key stage 3 has resulted in work that is now far better matched to pupils' needs. As a result, the progress of these pupils is strong and is accelerating rapidly.
- Most pupils are mature and respectful. Their behaviour in class, and around school, is calm and purposeful. A small minority of pupils do not always uphold the same high standards as others.
- Most pupils make strong progress and achieve well. However, due to historical gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, some of the most able pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not achieving as well as they can. Leaders are taking action to address this.
- A highly successful careers education programme ensures that nearly all pupils go on to education, employment or training when they leave school.
- The curriculum is designed well to meet the needs of the pupils. It is lively and engaging. Pupils value the many opportunities to study new and exciting topics during lessons and after school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive excellent support. Teachers understand these pupils' needs and how to help them. Consequently, this group of pupils achieves well.
- Staff morale is high. They, and parents, believe that the school is well led. They have confidence in leaders to improve the school further.
- Bullying is rare. Pupils say that, if it does occur, teachers deal with it very quickly. Bullying is simply not tolerated.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve pupils' behaviour and attendance by:
  - increasing overall rates of attendance so that pupils rarely miss a day at school
  - decreasing persistent absenteeism further, particularly for pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities
  - improving the behaviour and attitudes to learning of a small minority of pupils who do not always uphold the same high standards as others.
- Strengthen pupils' progress, particularly that of the most able in English and mathematics across key stage 4, by continuing to identify and address historical gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The principal provides very strong and purposeful leadership. A highly effective senior leadership team supports him well. Together, they have led by example and secured substantial improvements in the school's overall effectiveness since it opened in September 2015. Teaching has improved significantly and is now outstanding. As a result, the outcomes achieved by pupils are good and improving rapidly.
- Leaders, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have introduced tried and tested systems to monitor and evaluate their work. Leaders are uncompromising in their determination to secure the very best education for all pupils. When something is not working as it should, leaders are bold in their decision-making and quick to adapt or change procedures. As a result, school improvement is rapid.
- Leaders have the highest expectations. They have established an ethos where only the best is good enough. Leaders have secured high-quality staff and improved the skills of current teachers through well-targeted training and support.
- The quality of teaching has improved over time and is now outstanding. Teachers' planning successfully meets the needs of most pupils so that they achieve well. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching ensure that teachers are aware of what they do well and what they need to do to improve. Occasionally, staff with particular expertise from the multi-academy trust support leaders in the delivery of bespoke subject training. This ensures that all teachers receive high-quality advice and guidance that helps them to improve.
- Staff morale is high. Despite substantial changes to school processes over time, those staff who responded to Ofsted's inspection questionnaire are confident that the school is well led and managed. The vast majority of parents share this view. One parent spoke for many when saying, 'I could not be happier. This is a great school where my children are flourishing.'
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is allocated to a wide range of effective strategies. Governors regularly meet with the principal to evaluate the effectiveness of this spending. Across the school, most disadvantaged pupils are achieving well compared with other pupils nationally. In a few instances where progress is not consistently strong, it is improving rapidly.
- Subject and pastoral leaders work well together. They meet frequently to share information and advice relating to individual pupils. This regular dialogue ensures that teachers know their pupils well and plan to meet their varying needs. Subject leaders' oversight of their departments is well developed. During discussions with inspectors they were able to share in detail the impact of their work and future plans to address any weaknesses.
- Teachers who are new to the profession value the support they receive and say that the 'open door' culture allows them to learn from more experienced colleagues. Consequently, new teachers are developing into very effective practitioners.
- The curriculum is interesting and planned well to meet the needs of the pupils. Leaders

listen to pupils and explore all avenues when there is a demand to study a new subject. For example, pupils can now study musical theatre and an increasing proportion of pupils study drama. A large number of enrichment opportunities enhance the taught curriculum. Attendance at after-school clubs and revision sessions is high.

- Leadership of the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has improved recently. Two members of staff jointly lead this provision. They provide teachers and support staff with highly detailed information and training relating to pupils' additional needs. This, in addition to their more regular checks on pupils' learning in class, ensures that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities now make strong progress.
- Subject leaders have developed the curriculum effectively so that opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are woven throughout each subject area. Alongside personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, pupils receive regular assemblies and talks from a variety of visiting speakers. Pupils say they welcome the opportunity to develop their character and understanding of modern Britain.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are extremely dedicated and knowledgeable. They understand the importance of holding leaders to account for their work. Minutes from governing body meetings show that they do this often. Governors regularly visit the school to check on the impact of leaders' work. The governing body receives comprehensive advice and support from the trust, and governors understand and fulfil their legal duties successfully.
- Governors are aware of the key priorities and emerging issues within school because they request that leaders attend governing body meetings. Leaders, at all levels, provide governors with reports that evaluate the impact of their work. As a result, governors ask pertinent questions during meetings and follow up actions systematically.
- Governors are conscientious in ensuring that they understand, and support, the safeguarding procedures in school. For example, during discussions with inspectors, governors displayed a good understanding of how leaders ensure that pupils are safe when using the internet.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and staff have successfully developed a culture in school where adults, and pupils, know that their safety is the top priority. Leaders make appropriate checks on all staff who join the school, and deliver safeguarding training during, and after, induction.
- Pupils overwhelmingly indicate that they feel safe. Leaders, and external agencies, collaborate well to ensure that all pupils receive the support they need. Some members of staff have received individual training so that they are able to act as counsellors or confidants. Pupils say that, as a result of these new arrangements, they are far more likely to share any problems or concerns with adults.

- Staff know what to do if they are worried that a pupil is at risk of harm. Inspection evidence demonstrated that referrals are followed up quickly and appropriate support is provided so that pupils are kept safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- The quality of teaching has improved over time and is now outstanding. Teachers share leaders' high expectations and they continually look for opportunities to improve their own practice. Teachers know their pupils very well and relationships are extremely positive. Pupils want to do well for their teachers and say they appreciate their teachers' efforts to make their lessons engaging and challenging.
- Leaders have established consistent and highly effective routines that ensure that pupils move swiftly from one activity to the next. Not a moment is wasted during lessons.
- Opportunities for pupils to write independently, and at length, are common in every lesson. Teachers' meticulous assessment of pupils' extended writing ensures that subsequent lessons are skilfully adapted to deepen pupils' understanding or revisit content when necessary.
- Teachers use their thorough understanding of their subject and examination rubric to ensure that pupils are well prepared for internal and external assessments. However, they do not 'teach to the test'. Teachers are passionate about teaching. They nurture pupils' curiosity and genuinely attempt to stimulate a lifelong love of their subject. For example, pupils in a Year 10 photography lesson told inspectors that they wanted to pursue a career in the industry due to encouragement from their teacher.
- Subject leaders have recently reviewed the curriculum. As a result, the work pupils study in key stage 3 is now more challenging. Many of the most able pupils, who have underachieved in the past, are benefiting the most from the changes. In key stage 3 particularly, in addition to the increasing demands of the curriculum, teachers skilfully question the most able or provide challenges which deepen their learning. As a result, progress is now stronger for this group of pupils. Leaders recognise that, because of historical inconsistencies in the achievement of the most able pupils, some pupils in Years 10 and 11 have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This is beginning to be addressed but remains a focus of leaders' work.
- Teachers' questioning is a strength. When a pupil offers an incorrect response, most teachers are able to deconstruct the question and provide support, without reducing the level of challenge. Teachers are skilful in using their questioning to extend pupils' thinking and are sensitive when clarifying pupils' understanding. Teachers encourage all pupils to play an active part in lessons by offering immediate rewards and praise. Most pupils respond positively and are not afraid to 'give it a go'.
- Literacy policies are consistently applied within, and beyond, English lessons. Teachers ensure that pupils know how to spell subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils benefit from well-organised reading programmes. When inspectors listened to Year 7 and 8 pupils read, pupils were able to sound out words confidently. They understood the meaning of what they read and could offer their own opinions on the text. Pupils' assessment information demonstrates that they make good progress in their reading over time.

## Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are very confident and self-assured learners. They are able to talk about their learning and experiences in detail. Analysis of pupils' work over time highlighted that most pupils have a positive attitude to learning. Pupils generally take pride in the presentation of their workbooks.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. Behaviour records confirm this to be the case. Pupils report that if any bullying does occur it is dealt with very quickly and effectively. The new pastoral 'achievement leaders' are learning more about their pupils and friendship groups. They provide extremely effective support and take action where any problems arise.
- A very small number of pupils attend the alternative provision which opened in September 2017. It is too early to see the impact of teachers' work on pupils' academic progress. However, the school's assessment information demonstrates that the behaviour of this group of pupils has improved substantially this academic year.
- Pupils in key stages 3 and 4 receive impartial careers education from a range of sources. Careers officers and external advisers visit the school on a weekly basis to speak with pupils. In addition, pupils benefit greatly from specific careers workshops and interviews with senior leaders. Consequently, pupils are particularly well informed about the opportunities afforded to them when they leave school.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders introduced a new behaviour policy in 2015. Teachers consistently recognise, praise and reward good behaviour. Since the introduction of the policy, the number of pupils who are excluded or receive a detention has decreased each year. Pupils told inspectors that, in their opinion, teachers now have the chance to teach properly, rather than manage incidents of challenging behaviour. Parents and staff agree that behaviour in school is much better than it used to be.
- During the inspection, pupils were polite, courteous and welcoming of visitors. They behaved in a mature manner and showed respect for each other. However, inspection evidence, including data relating to pupils' behaviour and the results of the school's own pupil questionnaire, highlighted that, over time, a small minority of pupils do not always display the same positive attitudes to learning and high standards of behaviour as others.
- Over the previous two academic years, pupils' attendance has been below the national average. Leaders have since appointed a new vice-principal and a number of pastoral staff with responsibility for attendance. As a consequence of the work of leaders, absence is reducing. Pupils now attend school far more regularly than they used to. Although pupils' attendance overall is now in line with the national average,

disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities remain more likely to be regularly absent than their peers.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Good

- Leaders carefully monitor the progress made by pupils in all subjects and year groups. They rightly say that they do not want to 'put all of their eggs in one basket' by only focusing their support on pupils who are approaching their final examinations. Consequently, every pupil who needs support swiftly receives it. This has led to improving rates of progress in most subjects.
- Pupils in key stage 3 have benefited from higher-quality teaching. This, in addition to the more challenging curriculum, ensures that the progress of pupils in Years 7 and 8, from their different starting points, is good and improving strongly.
- In the past, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and the most able was inconsistent in a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics. Leaders have wasted no time in tackling this. Outstanding teaching has ensured that, more recently, progress has accelerated for these pupils and more are making strong gains in their learning. Leaders know that, because of historical weaknesses in the quality of teaching, some pupils in key stage 4 have notable gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Leaders recognise that there is still more to do to ensure that the most able pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve as well as they can in English and mathematics.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is improving. Most now make progress that is similar to that of other pupils in a wide range of subjects. This is because teachers are aware of their additional needs and plan appropriate activities to support and challenge them.
- Work in pupils' books confirmed that most are now producing work that is of a high standard across the curriculum, especially in mathematics. Pupils are confident and able to solve challenging mathematical problems. At the same time, most pupils can relate a mathematical concept to real-life examples. Overall rates of progress in mathematics now compare favourably with the best-performing subjects.
- Pupils who arrive at the school needing to catch up in English and mathematics receive effective support. Teachers use a wide range of strategies to help them catch up, both in class and via one-to-one teaching. The individual support pupils receive leads to them making stronger progress than they did previously.
- The effective and well-developed careers education programme ensures that nearly all pupils go on to education, employment or training when they leave school.

## School details

Unique reference number	142056
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10044428

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	679
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mark Walton
Principal	Adam Ryder
Telephone number	0113 2523 225
Website	<a href="http://www.brunycliffe.leeds.sch.uk">www.brunycliffe.leeds.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@brunycliffe.leeds.sch.uk">info@brunycliffe.leeds.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- Brunycliffe High School joined the GORSE Academies Trust in September 2015 and became Brunycliffe Academy.
- Responsibility for the school rests with the board of governors. The structure of the trust's governance and management can be found on the school's website.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision at the Stephen Longfellow Academy.



- The school meets the government's current floor standards based on key stage 4 academic performance results.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a wide range of lessons across the school. Many of the observations in lessons were carried out with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior and subject leaders, teachers, governors and the chief executive of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors held informal and formal discussions with pupils, and observed mentor groups and pupil interactions during social times.
- Inspectors listened to a group of Years 7 and 8 pupils read.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and scrutinised a wide range of evidence including the school's self-evaluation, analysis of performance information, action plans and evaluations, attendance and behaviour records, safeguarding files, recruitment checks and pupils' work.
- Inspectors took into account the 95 responses from parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Sixty members of staff completed Ofsted's online staff survey. Six pupils responded to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Lee Elliott, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Barry Found	Her Majesty's Inspector
Steve Rogers	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Gabanski	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

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](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2018