

Budmouth College

Chickerell Road, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9SY

Inspection dates

1–2 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	19–20 September 2013

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- School leaders and governors have failed to ensure that pupils receive an acceptable standard of education. Academic standards have declined rapidly in recent years.
- Governance of the school is weak. Governors are divided among themselves. Relations between the governing body and the senior leadership team have broken down in places. This loss of trust is a serious impediment to the effective governance of the school.
- Safeguarding is ineffective. Procedures for monitoring pupils who are on the school's roll but not currently being taught on-site are not robust. Extended study leave is illegally used as an alternative to formal exclusion.
- Academic outcomes for pupils are very poor, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- Teaching is not effective in promoting good progress, appropriate behaviour or the habits of successful learning. Teaching is not challenging enough and pupils take too little pride in their work.
- Pupils' attendance is poor. The rates of persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are far too high.
- Low-level disruption in lessons is common and gets in the way of learning too often.
- Middle leadership in the school is weak. It does not contribute enough to improving the quality of teaching or pupils' academic outcomes.
- Leaders and governors are not monitoring the use of additional funding, such as the pupil premium, closely enough. This limits its impact.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching places too little emphasis on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress over time.
- The impact of teaching on improving post-16 students' progress is better than in the rest of the school. Nonetheless, the progress students make on A-level courses is consistently below the national average.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed principal has a very clear understanding of the school's current position. Nonetheless, he has not had any time to have any significant impact on improving the quality of education provided by the school.
- In the sixth form, the centre of excellence and industrial liaison (CEIL) provides students with strong work-related learning.
- The school has a comprehensive and effective programme to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management so that pupils receive an acceptable standard of education by ensuring that:
 - the governing body rapidly resolves its internal differences and focuses solely on providing school leaders with the challenge and support that they need
 - the school's leadership works closely and cooperatively with the governing body, assisting governors to exercise their role of critical oversight
 - safeguarding is made effective by establishing robust procedures to monitor those pupils who are not currently receiving education on-site
 - the quality of middle leadership develops rapidly, including by empowering it to play a full role in the monitoring of teaching and holding it accountable for academic outcomes
 - the monitoring of additional funding, especially the pupil premium, is much sharper by focusing precisely on the impact of its use on improving pupils' outcomes.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - the monitoring of teaching places much greater emphasis on the progress pupils make when evaluating the impact that teachers have
 - teachers raise their expectations of the quality of work they accept from pupils, especially in key stage 3
 - teaching provides a greater degree of challenge to all pupils, whatever their starting points
 - teachers address pupils' misconceptions quickly and pupils understand clearly how to improve their work.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by:
 - taking rapid and effective action to improve attendance, especially that of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - eradicating the low-level disruption that interferes with pupils' learning.
- Improving pupils' personal development and welfare by ensuring that:
 - teaching develops in pupils the habits of successful learners
 - pupils take a greater pride in the quality of work they produce, including in the way it is presented.

- Improve the quality of the 16 to 19 study programmes by ensuring that:
 - the monitoring of teaching in the sixth form is more robust
 - teaching on A-level courses promotes better progress by students.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- School leaders and governors have proved unable to stem the rapid decline in academic standards at Budmouth College. As a result, pupils do not receive an acceptable standard of education. The school underwent a period of turbulence in leadership after the sudden departure of the school's previous permanent principal in December 2015. This was undoubtedly a difficult time but the governors and remaining senior leaders were not up to the task of maintaining academic standards during the ensuing years. As a result, pupils' education suffered.
- Leaders' systems to monitor and evaluate teaching are weak and bear little or no relation to the impact of teaching on pupils' outcomes. The school's own self-evaluation judges that, in 2016/17, the vast majority of teaching was good or outstanding, yet, in that same year, the school's key stage 4 outcomes were among the worst in the country. This mismatch between leaders' evaluation of the quality of teaching and its actual impact on pupils' outcomes is a considerable barrier to identifying and tackling underperformance.
- Middle leadership in the school is weak and underdeveloped. A 'top-down' approach has not empowered middle leaders to improve the quality of teaching or given them meaningful accountability for academic outcomes. For example, leaders of core subjects do not routinely monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching in their departments. Middle leaders have had few opportunities to contribute to the development of strategic planning within the school.
- The curriculum for Years 7 to 11 is based around a two-year key stage 3, followed by a three-year key stage 4. In its current form, the delivery of the curriculum is not meeting pupils' needs, as pupils are making poor progress in key stage 3. Many pupils do not get off to a good start to their education by building on their work in primary school.
- Leaders have changed the way that the key stage 4 curriculum is designed. In the past, approximately two thirds of pupils would be taking courses at key stage 4 that would enable them to attain the English Baccalaureate. The figure is now approximately one third of pupils. Leaders argue that this is in the best interests of the pupils but it will inevitably mean that fewer pupils will get qualifications across the range of academic subjects considered important by the government.
- Leaders and governors do not make sure that the pupil premium is used effectively to promote better outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. The impact of its use is not analysed precisely in order to work out which approaches are working and which are not. The school's pupil premium grant, therefore, is having minimal impact on improving the prospects for disadvantaged pupils. Their overall progress has been significantly below average for the past five years.
- The impact of the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium is monitored and evaluated better with regard to literacy than to numeracy. The school can demonstrate that it is having a positive impact on reading ages for those pupils whom the premium helps. The analysis of the impact on numeracy, however, as published on the school

website, is perfunctory.

- The new principal, who took up his post at the start of the summer term 2018, has a very clear understanding of the many issues the school faces. He is under no illusion about the scale of the task the school faces in turning round its history of decline. Due to the very short time he has been in post, however, he has understandably not been able to have any significant impact on the quality of education the school provides for its pupils.
- The provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well planned and implemented, both across the school and for those pupils who attend the school's Asperger syndrome unit. Nonetheless, the impact of this good provision is blunted by the high rates of persistent absence among pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The school has a well-designed programme to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. This happens through the taught curriculum, for example in citizenship lessons, as well as in assemblies and other activities that the school organises. The wide-ranging extra-curricular programme supports this work well.
- The school promotes fundamental British values appropriately. For example, pupils have a variety of leadership roles to aspire to and this helps them to understand concepts such as democracy and the rule of law.
- As a consequence of the outcome of this inspection, the school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- Governance is currently dysfunctional. Governors are internally divided and, at the time of the inspection, the current chair of the governing body had 'suspended himself' as part of a series of ongoing disputes between members of the governing body. This situation has seriously undermined the ability of the governing body to provide strategic direction to the school in the years following the departure of the previous substantive principal in December 2015.
- In addition, relationships between the governing body and the senior leadership of the school are strained. This loss of trust on both sides has impeded the governors in carrying out their duties effectively. For example, in response to a warning notice from the local authority, prompted by falling standards, governors did not ensure that the school returned its action plan by the required deadline.
- Most seriously, while these disputes have been going on, the academic outcomes for pupils have been falling rapidly and governors have not been able to play an effective role in halting or reversing this decline.
- Governors recently ratified a deficit budget which caused the local authority such concern that they removed financial delegation from the school. The local authority is also exercising its power to place additional governors on the governing body, although, at the time of inspection, they had not taken up their new roles.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- The procedures for monitoring the safety and welfare of pupils who are not currently receiving education on the school site are not robust. Some of these pupils are vulnerable and in known circumstances of risk. This is a concern in the light of a recent serious incident involving a pupil at the school.
- In addition, leaders are using extended study leave inappropriately to manage behaviour. This is a form of unlawful exclusion. These pupils are not monitored as well as they should be or as well as they would be if a formal exclusion had taken place.
- Some pupils who are not attending either the school site or an alternate provider have incorrect codes entered into the attendance register, parts of which are pre-populated until the end of this academic year. Protocols regarding children missing education are not followed consistently. This, too, puts pupils at risk.
- The designated safeguarding lead has a good understanding of key issues in safeguarding and the principles of multi-agency working. She ensures that staff are trained and receive regular updates about child protection and safeguarding. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures and how to make referrals if they have any concerns about a pupil.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Inadequate teaching is at the heart of the school's failure to provide its pupils with an acceptable standard of education.
- Teachers do not set work that is consistently challenging for pupils, whatever their starting points. Over time, this results in slow progress and pupils do not develop a deeper conceptual understanding of what they are studying. Teaching too often focuses on task completion rather than challenging pupils to think hard and push their understanding to higher levels. This lack of challenge is a characteristic of key stage 3 teaching in particular.
- Teachers' assessment is often not accurate enough, with weak work being assessed at too high a level. This means that teachers' planning is not consistently and securely based on a sound understanding of what pupils can and cannot do.
- Inaccurate assessment also prevents teachers from using pupils' misconceptions as a springboard for further progress. Some teaching does this well, for example in German, but this is not typical. Pupils are often not clear about how to improve their work.
- Teaching does not help pupils develop the habits of successful and resilient learners. Teachers are too willing to accept poor-quality work, poorly presented. In many cases, this results in the quality of pupils' work deteriorating over time.
- Many pupils have barriers to learning that are not being effectively tackled by the teaching they receive. Teachers in mathematics, for example, are not effectively addressing the shortcomings in pupils' literacy. This is an obstacle to developing pupils' mastery of mathematics and problem-solving in particular. Similarly, teaching is not developing pupils' scientific literacy.
- Despite some recent training, there is virtually no evidence of teachers adapting their teaching to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils. Some isolated examples were

seen, for example in history, but teaching has clearly not adapted itself to promoting good progress for disadvantaged pupils, whose progress over time at key stage 4 has been exceptionally poor in recent times.

- Teachers are not consistently following the school's assessment policy.
- The deployment of teaching assistants has a varying impact on helping pupils' learning. Support for pupils who attend the Asperger syndrome unit is effective but, on other occasions, the use of teaching assistants is not well organised or implemented.
- As pupils move through the school, they experience more effective teaching but this is only relative. Teaching does not help pupils make good progress in any key stage.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is inadequate.
- The processes for monitoring the attendance of pupils receiving their education at alternative providers are not consistently robust. The procedures in some cases do not ensure that a timely response can be made by the school to any absence. This puts the safety and welfare of pupils at risk.
- The welfare of pupils who are not currently in school or at an alternative provider is not promoted effectively by the monitoring procedures currently in place. This includes pupils on extended study leave and some pupils who do not successfully make the transition back from alternative providers into mainstream education.
- Leaders' use of extended study leave as an alternative to formal exclusion is not conducive to promoting pupils' welfare.
- Many pupils have not developed the habits of successful learners. For example, a lot of pupils struggle to concentrate for extended periods. Their work is often poorly presented, scrappy or incomplete. Teachers are not reinforcing the need for pupils to take pride in their work. These low standards are a particular feature in key stage 3 classes.
- Pupils receive effective education on how to stay safe, including when online or using mobile devices. Pupils of all ages state that they feel safe while they are at the school. They have no concerns about bullying or the school's ability to deal with it should it occur.
- Careers information, advice and guidance are good. In the sixth form in particular, the CEIL makes a strong contribution to students' preparation for the world of work. Pupils who attend the Asperger syndrome unit benefit from well-planned pathways for their next stage of education.
- Pupils receive effective sex and relationships education. Pupils speak confidently about what they have learned about sexual health.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Rates of absence are far too high. In particular, the rates of persistent absence are very high. For example, so far this year, one in three disadvantaged pupils is persistently absent. This is particularly troubling as this is a group of pupils whose progress is among the poorest in the country. The poor attendance of disadvantaged pupils is a key factor in their very poor achievement. The persistent absence of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is also too high.
- Low-level disruption is too prevalent in classrooms, especially from boys in key stage 3. This interrupts learning and slows the progress that pupils make. Teachers are not consistently effective in dealing with this behaviour when it occurs.
- Pupils conduct themselves well when they move around the school. However, they leave a lot of litter and food debris behind after social times.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The progress of pupils currently in the school is poor. Across a range of subjects and year groups, their work indicates that many are falling substantially short of the achievement of which they are capable. In key stage 3 in particular, pupils' work is often poor and they are clearly not getting off to a good start to their secondary education. In too many cases, the quality of their work deteriorates over time as teaching is not expecting enough of them or helping them develop the habits of successful learners.
- Weak teaching and poor progress in key stage 3 are not compensated for by the slightly stronger teaching in key stage 4. Pupils do not catch up the lost ground from their early years in the school. Similarly, pupils who underachieve in their GCSEs go on to make less progress on A-level courses than the national average.
- In recent years, academic outcomes have declined sharply, especially for disadvantaged pupils. In 2017, overall progress for pupils taking their GCSEs was very poor, well below the government's floor target. Pupils typically achieved almost one grade lower than they should have done across the subjects they took. The progress pupils made in languages and humanities was very poor indeed.
- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils' overall rate of progress was exceptionally poor, among the very worst in the country. On average, they achieved over one and a half grades lower than they should have done. In some subjects, it was equivalent to two grades worse. School leaders have not been able to remove key barriers to better progress for disadvantaged pupils, such as very poor levels of attendance.
- The school is able to admit 12% of each year group on the basis of an entrance test. These most able pupils do not make progress that is commensurate with their high prior attainment. Teaching does not meet their needs well enough and they go on to make poor progress when they take GCSEs.
- The very poor progress that pupils make by the end of key stage 4 means that they are not academically well prepared for the next stage of their education or training. Pupils do not achieve the qualifications they should and this inevitably limits their options as they move on beyond key stage 4.
- Pupils with low reading ages are helped to improve by the intervention programmes

they attend.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Leadership of the sixth form requires improvement as leaders lack a clear strategic overview. This is reinforced by the fact that lines of accountability are blurred in the post-16 leadership. For example, tracking systems are in place but who is ultimately responsible for individual students' outcomes is unclear. Leaders have no clear rationale for the curriculum they offer.
- The progress students make on A-level courses, which account for a large majority of the school's post-16 examination entries, has been consistently below the national average for a number of years. This is worrying because many join the sixth form having already underachieved in their GCSEs. On applied courses and tech levels, however, students have recently made progress in line with national averages.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching in the sixth form shares the shortcomings noted in the main school. Nonetheless, teaching is typically more effective for students on 16 to 19 study programmes than for pupils lower down the school, although it has yet to secure consistently good outcomes on A-level courses.
- Leaders have no clear plan in place to improve the teaching in the sixth form specifically. In addition, the quality of teaching is very variable and students' experiences vary too much from subject to subject. Where teaching is most effective, it is characterised by secure subject knowledge and understanding of the requirements of public examinations. This results in teaching that is well planned. Less effective teaching is characterised by poor planning and this means that time is not used effectively in lessons. When this is the case, students make poor progress.
- The 16 to 19 study programmes meet requirements. However, the non-qualification activity, such as work experience, is not closely monitored to ensure that it is of good quality.
- Relatively few students enter the sixth form without at least a grade C or a 4 in English. A larger proportion enter the sixth form without these grades in mathematics. A higher proportion of them go on to improve their grades during their study programmes than is seen nationally.
- Students are well prepared to make informed decisions about the next stage of their education, employment or training. Work-related learning in the sixth form is strong. The CEIL provides good links with local employers, and bursaries are available to help offset any costs associated with work experience.
- The vast majority of students complete their main programme of study. Retention rates are particularly high on applied general courses and tech levels. Similarly, destination information indicates that a higher proportion go on to sustained education, training or employment than the national average.

School details

Unique reference number	113902
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10049043

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 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,657
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	386
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Yelland
Principal	Richard Jacobs
Telephone number	01305 830 500
Website	www.budmouth.dorset.sch.uk
Email address	budmouth@budmouth.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 September 2013

Information about this school

- Budmouth College is a large secondary school with a big sixth form.
- The current principal had been in post for less than three weeks at the time of the inspection. The previous substantive principal was not in the school after December 2015. In the interim, the school was led by two successive acting principals from among the school's senior leadership team.
- The school has specially resourced provision for up to 12 pupils in its Asperger syndrome unit.
- The school uses two alternative providers, Weymouth College and the Compass, a

nearby pupil referral unit.

- The school does not meet the government's floor standards at key stage 4.
- During this inspection, inspectors were aware of a serious incident involving a child who used to attend this school that had occurred since the previous inspection. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the incident were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons to observe learning across all year groups, including in the sixth form and the specially resourced provision. Some of these observations took place jointly with school leaders. During their visits to lessons, inspectors took the opportunity to speak to pupils about their learning and to look at their work.
- Inspectors had meetings with the principal, other senior leaders, middle leaders and other staff. The lead inspector met with a group of governors. He also had a conversation with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors met with three groups of pupils, one from each key stage.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation provided by the school, including attendance records, achievement information, key policies, governors' minutes, safeguarding records and the school's development plans and self-evaluation.

Inspection team

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Andrew Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Dorian Lewis	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Lees	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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