

Beaumont Hill Academy

Salters Lane South, Darlington DL1 2AN

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have worked closely together in order to bring about improvement across the school.
- Leaders now have a clear vision for the future. They are focused and determined to build on recent successes, for example in improving pupils' outcomes and the curriculum.
- The introduction of a new curriculum in key stage 3 has ignited pupils' imagination and developed their thinking skills. For example, immersing pupils in the sights and sounds of the trenches in the First World War enabled pupils to both understand and empathise with soldiers' daily lives.
- The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the previous monitoring visit. Senior leaders closely monitor staff performance and offer support and challenge to bring about improvement.
- The role that middle leaders play in supporting senior leaders is developing. For example, middle leaders now closely monitor pupils' progress. However, senior leaders recognise that middle leaders need to increase the role they play in future improvement.
- Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve socially, emotionally and academically. Learning set now much more accurately meets pupils' needs. However, pupils do not always have the opportunity to practise writing longer pieces of work and this slows their progress in English.
- Students who attend the school's post-16 unit make good progress overall. This is due to the effective and well-organised transition process which ensures that students are well prepared before they start the provision.
- Children who join the school's early years provision have a range of different needs. Staff ensure that children settle quickly into the nurturing environment and routines in all three classes.
- Parents and carers spoken to and those who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View held positive views on the quality of care and provision for their children.
- Pupils' attendance has continued to improve. However, staff and leaders know that they must focus on this aspect in order to continue this upward trend.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for pupils by increasing the amount of time pupils are given to practise writing longer pieces of work across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - increasing the role middle leaders play in supporting senior leaders to bring about further improvement within the school
 - increasing pupils' attendance by continuing to develop systems to reduce persistent absence and improve attendance overall.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, governors and the leadership of the trust have worked hard to bring about recent changes to the school. Their concerted efforts have seen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment improve, with the result that outcomes for pupils have also improved overall.
- The principal and deputy principal have a clear vision for the future of the school. They have ensured that areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report have been met and are planning effectively for the future.
- Recent changes in the curriculum have excited pupils and encouraged them to learn. For example, pupils were observed learning to paint in the style of war artists and to develop their thinking skills by reflecting carefully on the after-effects of war injuries.
- A wide range of visits away from the classroom also inspire pupils to learn and participate. For example, younger pupils regularly go horse riding. Observations made of pupils preparing for this fortnightly trip showed happy smiling pupils excitedly lining up waiting to be allowed to get on the bus.
- The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection. This is largely due to the confident and regular monitoring carried out by leaders. Staff spoken to say that they welcome the new approach. Staff believe that leaders have created an open environment in which staff can share their opinions and ask for help without fear of reprisal.
- Outcomes for pupils have also improved as staff regularly challenge pupils to try even harder. Comments such as 'I love learning now' and 'lessons are never boring' reflect pupils' views of their current opportunities to learn.
- The school receives a range of extra funding, including that for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders use this funding effectively in a variety of different ways to support the needs of pupils. These include funding for extra time from an occupational therapist, staff training from the speech and language therapist and support for individual pupils who are identified as not making expected progress in mathematics and English. As a result, the difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and others is diminishing.
- School leaders are ambitious for pupils' futures. Staff aim to ensure that pupils leave with as much accreditation as possible in order that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Celebrating a multitude of different religious festivals, such as Diwali and Eid, enables pupils, including those with a very high level of need, to explore religious differences and similarities. This contributes well to their already well-developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- The role middle leaders play in developing their subject areas has continued to increase since the previous inspection. For example, middle leaders are now responsible for identifying and putting in place extra support needed for pupils who are making less progress than expected. However, they recognise that there is more that they could do to bring about future improvement and are keen to develop further, for

example in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning within their subject area.

- Pupils' attendance has risen since the previous inspection. However, senior leaders are aware that more actions are needed to continue to improve attendance overall.

Governance of the school

- Since the last inspection, the governing body has gone through review and change. New governors have been appointed, including the chair of governors. As a result, the quality of governance has improved since the previous inspection.
- Governors are skilled and knowledgeable. They visit the school often and have made a sizeable contribution to bringing about improvement to the school.
- Governors are reflective and insightful of the impact of their own actions. They recognise the importance of the journey they have been on with school leaders towards the current level of improvement. They also recognise that they need to plan their future roles carefully and strategically.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff spoken to during the inspection were very clear about the role they take in safeguarding pupils.
- Senior leaders ensure that staff receive very regular updates on local and national safeguarding concerns. As a result, staff are knowledgeable about a range of issues and are very clear about what action to take if they have a concern.
- Pupils also recognise the part they play in keeping each other safe. Since taking up post, the school council leaders and executive head pupil have surveyed the views of all pupils. The three-question survey asked pupils to say if they felt unsafe in school and, if so, where. They have already acted on the results of this survey and now pupils spoken to say they all feel safe.
- The safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead work closely with other professionals to safeguard pupils. For example, the school recently instigated a safeguarding investigation, despite some opposition from other services. The school's persistence paid off and the matter is now being dealt with by a combination of other services.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and support staff work together in closely knit teams. They are successful at achieving their common focus of ensuring that pupils' needs are met and that they make good progress over time.
- Staff spoken to during the inspection commented on the success of the newly introduced curriculum. Staff felt that the focus on the First World War had engaged pupils well. Pupils had become fascinated by the impact of war on individual lives and this had enabled them to deepen their understanding in a range of different subjects.

- Staff regularly check pupils' progress and ensure that they are making progress against targets set. They nearly always use previous information on pupils' progress to plan new work for individual pupils. This enables pupils to make good progress, often in small steps from their starting points.
- Leaders and staff have high expectations of what each pupil can achieve. Aspirational targets are set which enable pupils to achieve their potential. For example, despite the high level of need of many pupils, the most able pupils are encouraged to undertake GCSE courses which stretch and challenge them. Several proudly showed inspectors their completed work. This was clear evidence of their feelings of achievement and the boost to their self-esteem.
- Staff know and understand pupils' needs well. They are skilful at recognising the small changes which signify progress for some pupils and plan work which expands on this, enabling all pupils to make progress over time.
- Most-able pupils' reading skills are often well developed. However, work in books from this group shows that they do not get sufficient opportunity to develop their writing skills. This slows the progress they make in learning how to write longer pieces of work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Despite often having high levels of need, pupils who attend the school are happy and positive about coming to school. This was reflected in the smiles given to staff at the start of the school day.
- Pupils often show high levels of self-esteem. For example, several were bursting with pride at their achievement as they showed inspectors the work they had completed.
- Pupils told the inspection team that they were very proud to wear their school uniform because it signified they belonged to the school. They also explained that they feel safe and understand how staff help them to stay safe when away from school, for example through lessons on how to keep safe online.
- Pupils spoken to are aware that bullying can and does sometimes occur. They were keen to explain that this happens in all schools. Pupils were also determined to ensure that bullying is kept to a minimum and that all pupils should know what to do if it happened.
- The executive head pupil, head boy and head girl are very clear about the roles they wish to play in bringing about further improvement. For example, they have ambitions for a Village Pupil Parliament, where pupil representatives from each of the three schools in the Education Village meet to discuss issues which affect them all. This demonstrates clearly pupils' growing confidence that they can make a difference to the welfare of others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils greet visitors in a kind and courteous manner. The inspection team saw many occasions where pupils stopped to open doors and held them open while other less ambulant pupils passed through. This demonstrated pupils' understanding of the importance of helping others and behaving well.
- Work in lessons is rarely stopped by incidents of difficult behaviour. This is because staff know pupils well and are aware of what may cause a pupil to become distressed. Pupils are also becoming aware of what strategies to use to help themselves to cope. Examples of the effectiveness of these strategies were observed by inspectors across the school in classrooms and pupils' care plans.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a reduction in the number of incidents of difficult behaviour recorded. No exclusions have been recorded this term and the number of pupils excluded overall has declined each year. This is clear evidence of a sustained improvement in pupils' behaviour overall.
- Levels of attendance are also improving overall. Monitoring is now effectively undertaken and follow-up procedures are in place to support families to ensure that their children attend school. However, senior leaders are aware that pupils' higher levels of attendance need to be sustained and built upon to ensure that the upward trend continues.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils who attend the school have a very wide range of needs. This is reflected in their starting points. Most staff have a clear understanding of individual pupils' needs and provide a curriculum which enables them to make effective progress over time.
- Close checks are kept on the progress pupils make towards targets set. Support is put in place for those pupils who are found to be slipping behind. As a result, pupils make good progress overall.
- Pupils enjoy learning and those spoken to explained how important it is to listen and try hard in lessons.
- Older pupils understand the need to gain qualifications and accreditations in order to gain a place at college. Discussions with pupils also showed that many have ambitions for the future, including becoming a support assistant in a school and a train driver.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership and management of the early years provision are good. Leaders ensure that children's needs are effectively met. Parents spoken to feel leaders do a good job of keeping their children safe and secure.
- Children who start the school's early years unit have a wide range of needs. Staff make provision for their needs and, as a result, they settle quickly into the nurturing environment offered by the school.
- Staff are skilled at assessing the needs of individual children. Activities are carefully tailored to enable children to access the curriculum. Plans show how activities and

resources are successfully modified to meet individual pupils' needs.

- Staff are well-trained observers of children's learning. Observations made by staff clearly show how very small changes in behaviour demonstrate children's learning, likes and dislikes. Information is then used to plan future changes.
- The school's early years provision is spread over three classes which are broadly based on children's stages of development and needs. Groups include pupils from key stage 1. This approach – coupled with the good progress made by children over time – ensures that children and pupils are well prepared to move into the next phase of their education.
- Children behave well in the early years unit. Staff have high expectations of both behaviour and learning. Staff also recognise that children need to be able to communicate their needs, otherwise they can become frustrated. A wide range of different communication symbols and signs are used. For example, children leaving to go riding carry communication books in order to enable others outside to communicate with them.
- All required welfare standards are met within the unit and staff and leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of the requirements of the early years programme of study.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The leadership of the post-16 unit is good. Leaders ensure that staff are clear about students' needs and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Nearly all students who join the school's post-16 provision have high levels of need. Many have transferred from key stage 4.
- The curriculum offered in the post-16 provision is largely vocational due to the complex nature of students' needs. For example, students undertake studies in horticulture, food technology and life skills. Basic skills, mathematics and English are also taught and contribute well to the life skills provision.
- As part of the preparation for their transition to the next stage in their education, students spend one day a week in a local college. This change of environment helps to prepare students for life after school and helps them to learn how to behave in different environments.
- Students are offered bespoke careers advice which takes into account their needs and requirements. School staff support their transition to the next phase in their education.

School details

Unique reference number	138093
Local authority	Darlington
Inspection number	10052671

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	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	266
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	22
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Rohit Patel
Principal	Caroline Green
Telephone number	01325 248 156
Website	www.edv.org.uk
Email address	bhsdata@educationvillage.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 January 2017

Information about this school

- The school is part of a multi-academy trust and currently has an academy monitoring group.
- The school is located within the Education Village. The school shares the site with two other schools and an on-site nursery.
- Since the last monitoring visit, the school has recruited five new teachers.
- The school is a special school which meets the needs of up to 268 pupils who have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited learning across the school. Lesson observations were carried out by the inspection team, who were accompanied by senior leaders for approximately 70% of the time.
- The inspection team held meetings with the senior leadership team, two groups of pupils, a group of more than 50 staff members, middle leaders, four members of the academy monitoring board and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspection team took into account the views of 30 parents who completed the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, or met with inspectors at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Louise Greatrex

Ofsted Inspector

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