

Henbury School

Station Road, Henbury, Bristol BS10 7QH

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders at all levels have not shown the capacity to bring about the urgent improvements needed.
- The progress made by all groups of pupils has declined over recent years and under-achievement has been endemic. In 2017, because of the poor progress made by pupils, the school was in the bottom 3% of schools in the country. Progress in 2018 was considerably lower.
- The leadership of teaching and learning over time has been ineffective. Leaders do not have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and this hinders them from fully holding teachers to account.
- Teaching does not challenge or motivate pupils well enough. Pupils of all abilities, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) fail to make the progress they should.
- Leaders have an overgenerous view of how well the school is performing. They have been in denial with regard to the severity of the underachievement seen in recent years.
- The management of teachers' performance does not hold teachers fully accountable for the work they are doing.
- The leadership of the curriculum is poor. Although suitably broad, the curriculum has failed to encourage all groups of pupils, including the most able, to make good progress.
- Additional funding to help disadvantaged pupils, those who join the school with low literacy and numeracy skills, and those pupils with SEND is not used well enough. As a result, these pupils underachieve considerably.
- Governors have not held school leaders sufficiently to account for the sharp decline in pupils' progress. They are unclear about the impact that additional funding is having.
- Rates of absence and fixed-term exclusions are above the national averages.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils who attend the school's resource base receive bespoke teaching that meets their needs well.
- The most vulnerable pupils receive strong caring and nurturing support.
- Some teaching is stronger because these teachers have high expectations and use questioning skilfully to develop pupils' thinking.

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?

- Urgently and rapidly improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, so that all groups of pupils make good or better progress, by making sure that:
 - the governing body ensures that there is sufficient capacity in leadership to bring about the necessary improvements in pupils' progress across a range of subjects
 - leaders develop a coherent and accurate picture of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the whole school
 - self-evaluation is accurate and gives greater focus and weight to the progress made by different groups of pupils across all subjects and year groups
 - middle leaders play an effective role in improving the quality of teaching and hold teachers accountable for the progress pupils make
 - the school's curriculum is sufficiently challenging and motivates more pupils, especially the most able, to make better progress in their learning
 - governors carry out their statutory duties effectively and improve their strategic role in challenging school leaders to rapidly and successfully tackle the endemic weakness in pupils' progress
 - the school's use of additional funding is more carefully analysed so that it is having the desired impact on the groups of students it is meant to support.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils
 - good use is made of assessment information so that teaching over time leads to good or better progress for all groups of pupils, including the most able, low-attaining pupils, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND
 - questioning is used effectively to check and challenge pupils' understanding of the topics they are studying.
- Improve the quality of personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that:
 - teaching motivates and interests pupils and encourages them to consistently apply their best efforts in their learning
 - the school's strategies continue to reduce the numbers of pupils who are absent or persistently absent from school so that they are at least in line with the national average

- the school's strategies continue to reduce the number of pupils who are excluded from school.

External reviews of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders at all levels have not tackled the school's endemic weaknesses in teaching, learning and pupils' progress with the urgency required. Over a sustained period, all groups of pupils have been poorly served and few are adequately prepared for the next stages of their education, for employment or for further training. Leaders do not demonstrate the capacity to drive the school forward.
- Leaders have been overly preoccupied in dealing with behaviour issues in the school. Their attention to the implementation of the school's behaviour strategy, 'ready to learn', has diverted their attention from tackling the school's sharp and severe decline in pupils' academic performance with sufficient urgency. Governors acknowledge that, 'our strategic direction has been wrong. We have taken our eye off the ball with regard to pupils' progress'.
- Leaders have allowed the progress of all groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged, the most able, those who join the school with low prior attainment and pupils with SEND, to drop significantly. Progress across a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics, has been falling rapidly over the last three years.
- The school has been below floor standards – the minimum that the government expects of a school in terms of the progress made by its pupils – for the last two years. Inspection evidence indicates some signs of an upturn in the progress being made by current pupils in some subjects, but this is insufficient to make up for the lost ground of previous years.
- The school's self-evaluation shows that leaders are out of touch with the realities of what is happening in the school. Leaders believe that the poor progress of different groups of pupils was due the nature of the cohort that year. Leaders' self-evaluation has failed to address the fact that progress has been weak for a number of years. Consequently, leaders have failed to tackle these weaknesses.
- Middle leadership is ineffective. Along with senior leaders, middle leaders have not focused closely enough on the progress pupils are making when judging the effectiveness of their work. In the face of compelling evidence over a number of years, which shows weak pupil progress, middle leaders have not been effectively challenged in their views that pupils are doing well and that teaching is good.
- Leaders' actions to improve the quality of teaching over time are not effective. Reviews of teaching have now been undertaken and a new approach to teaching, involving a greater degree of challenge, has been introduced. However, these changes are relatively new and their implementation has been variable. Overall, it is too early to judge the impact of these initiatives and teaching remains unsuccessful at eradicating pupils' widespread underachievement.
- Leaders are not using performance management arrangements to challenge and improve teachers' performance. Targets set for teachers are too low and leaders too readily accept performance that does not lead to good pupil progress.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that is suitably broad and balanced, including giving attention to fundamental British values of democracy and the rule of law,

tolerance and mutual respect. However, the planned curriculum is not taught well enough to enable all groups of pupils to make good progress in a wide range of subjects. The curriculum is not ensuring that all pupils have an equal opportunity to do well. The number of pupils entered for the English baccalaureate (EBacc) is very low when compared with national figures. The proportion of pupils who leave school at the end of Year 11 and do not go into education, training or employment is much higher than the national average.

- The leadership of the curriculum for pupils who attend the resource base for moderate learning difficulties is effective. Many of these pupils make strong progress against their individual targets and are well cared for in this base. However, leaders' interventions to support other pupils with SEND are not yet successful in enabling these pupils to make strong academic progress.
- Leaders have made poor use of additional funding. Year 7 pupils who need to catch up with other pupils are not making enough progress. Despite considerable additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, their progress remains inadequate. The difference between the progress made by such pupils and other pupils nationally remains wide. School leaders have not targeted the additional funding well enough to make sure that it is making a positive difference to disadvantaged pupils' academic performance, which remains poor.
- The very large majority of respondents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were positive about all aspects of the school. Parents of pupils in the resource base were effusive in their praise for the care shown to their children. Similarly, staff who replied to the online staff survey said that they were proud to be members of the school. However, a significant minority expressed concerns that new policies introduced by senior leaders are being applied inconsistently.
- It is recommended that the school does not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not rigorously held school leaders to account for improving the school's effectiveness over a number of years. They have been over-concerned with the introduction of behaviour management strategies and with discussions about joining a multi-academy trust. Governors are correct in their honest appraisal that they have done too little to challenge school leaders on the low progress made by all groups of pupils.
- Governors are not involved enough in the school's self-evaluation and are not challenging leaders' judgements, particularly with regard to how well additional funding is being spent. Governors have some awareness of how some of this additional funding is being used but have a weak grasp of the impact this is having on a wide range of pupils.
- Governing body minutes show that there are times when governors ask some well-targeted and challenging questions, particularly in relation to teaching and learning and behaviour. However, governors are not persistent enough in their questioning of leaders to make sure that clear next steps are agreed, followed through and evaluated in future meetings.

- The governing body is not meeting its statutory requirement to ensure that the pupil premium policy on the school website clearly shows the impact of how additional funding has been spent and the lessons that have been learned to inform future spending. The pupil premium plan does not show clearly what the specific barriers to learning are for current pupils, how additional funding will be used specifically to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils or precisely the intended impact of this work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated safeguarding lead provides regular training and updates to staff. Staff have found these sessions helpful and eye-opening. Child protection files sampled showed that staff ensure that case files are up to date with clear details of actions taken and when contact was made with various agencies and other professionals.
- Staff vetting checks and the single central record are up to date. However, some safeguarding records are not as well organised as they could be, which means that it is not always easy to access records sufficiently quickly.
- Staff provide strong care and nurturing support for vulnerable pupils, including those who attend the resource base for moderate learning difficulties. Staff apply their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding practice confidently, so that pupils' risk of harm is minimised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching is inadequate because too many groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, low-attaining pupils, the most able and pupils with SEND significantly underachieve. The poor quality of teaching is not meeting pupils' learning needs.
- Teaching over time has failed to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stages in their lives. Leaders have commissioned reviews of teaching and have introduced new, challenging, approaches to improving teaching and learning. These initiatives are in their early days and considerable shortcomings in teaching remain.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. As a result, teachers do not plan work that is closely matched to pupils' needs. Too often tasks do not motivate pupils to concentrate or apply themselves to their work with energy or enthusiasm.
- The quality of questioning is often ineffective and fails to help pupils think carefully about what they are studying, leading to brief and weak responses from the pupils.
- Too often teachers do not challenge pupils effectively or consistently when they are presented with scruffy and careless work. For example, diagrams are often haphazardly drawn, rulers are not regularly used to underline work and spelling errors often continue to be made once they have been highlighted by the teacher. This does little to accelerate the progress pupils make.
- However, some teaching is stronger. Here, teachers use questioning to good effect, are not satisfied with pupils' first replies, and persevere with additional questioning to tease

out pupils' understanding.

- Where teaching is good, such as in the resource base, music and performing arts, art, religious education and health and social care, teachers have strong and very confident relationships with their class. They use their good subject knowledge to provoke pupils to think for themselves and give clear and full responses. As a result of this lively teaching, pupils become engrossed in their work, with energy and enthusiasm, and make good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are not strong enough. Where teaching is effective, pupils work well and are fully engaged in their work. However, when teaching is weaker, as is seen in a wide range of subjects, pupils are often passive and show little interest in or enthusiasm for their work.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school. They say that there is someone they can talk to if they have any concerns or worries. The support for vulnerable pupils, particularly those who attend the resource base for moderate learning difficulties, is a strength of the school. A typical comment from a parent was, 'My son has had significant difficulties. The school has responded to him in such a positive way that I cannot express my personal thanks enough. They have guided and supported him so well that he is making great progress.'
- Pupils understand about how to deal with risks they might face and understand issues relating to substance abuse and the dangers associated with using the internet. They were less confident, however, when speaking about the 'Prevent' duty and how to deal with the dangers posed by radicalisation.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The school has invested much time and energy in introducing new approaches to managing pupils' behaviour across the school, including the 'ready to learn' policy. Staff and pupils assert that behaviour in lessons has improved, and there has been some success in creating a more positive climate for encouraging learning across the school.
- As a consequence of this new policy, a number of pupils miss lessons by attending 'refocus', which involves pupils leaving the classroom with the teacher's permission for a fixed period of time to refocus on learning through 'time out'. Disadvantaged pupils are removed from lessons more often than other groups of pupils. School leaders have done too little to evaluate the impact of this behaviour policy on the learning of different groups of pupils, and they do not ensure a consistent approach. A typical comment from a staff member was, 'The behaviour system is not consistently applied in class, or in the inclusion room, and there are inconsistencies in the support given by

leaders’.

- Parents and carers who completed the online Parent View survey and those spoken to by inspectors spoke positively about the improvements in behaviour at the school. However, a minority expressed concerns that school leaders do not deal with incidents of bullying as well as they might.
- Pupils acknowledge that bullying is rare. They say that offensive behaviour, such as name-calling, cyber bullying or bullying based on gender or sexual orientation, is usually dealt with quickly by staff when it is brought to their attention.
- Attendance levels are not good enough. Although there are signs that attendance has started to improve this year, it remains below the national average. This is affecting the progress of particular groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- Fixed-term exclusions have been well above the national average in recent years, partly as a result of the school’s new behaviour management policy. School data shows that exclusions are increasing. Exclusions for vulnerable groups such as disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are significantly greater than for other groups of pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils’ underachievement has been prevalent in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, humanities and languages, for a number of years. Teaching is not enabling pupils who have previously underachieved to catch up, and the actions taken by leaders have been unsuccessful in stemming this decline quickly enough.
- Progress measures across all subjects have been low and declining for the last three years. In 2017, the school was in the bottom 3% of schools nationally for the progress made by pupils by the end of Year 11; this was a sharp decline over the previous year. Although the progress score was affected by the low attainment of pupils in the resource base, it remains unacceptably low once they are discounted.
- Pupils continued to make well below average progress in 2018, just as in 2017. Pupils achieved around a grade lower than their peers with similar key stage 2 attainment scores across eight of their subjects. Progress was similarly far below the national average in mathematics and English.
- Disadvantaged pupils, which make up over half the school’s cohort, did not make as much progress as other pupils from similar starting points nationally.
- The work of current pupils seen by inspectors across a range of subjects and year groups indicates that this legacy of underachievement is not being addressed quickly enough.
- Leaders assert that current in-school information points to strong improvement in the standards being reached by current pupils. Evidence gathered by inspectors does not support the views of senior leaders and shows that there is little sign of improvement in pupils’ progress.
- Pupils’ books are often poorly presented, with much missing work, particularly in the books of the lower-attaining pupils, pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Across

a range of subjects, there is an absence of work that is sufficiently challenging for the most able.

- In mathematics, the new subject lead has accurately identified that pupils' mathematical skills are not good enough in reasoning and problem-solving across both key stages 3 and 4. He has begun to put in place appropriate steps to tackle these weaknesses, including more challenging and demanding work for all groups of pupils. However, it is too early to see the impact of these initiatives in pupils' books.
- Pupils' literacy skills, especially of those who arrive at the school with low prior attainment, are not developed well enough. Despite being a key focus for the school, in many books there is an absence of extended writing and too many repeated errors in spelling and grammar.
- Pupils in the resource base are making good progress towards meeting their specific goals and targets. An examination of individual pupils' files and of samples of their work shows that most are making progress in their reading comprehension, in their writing and in their number skills.

School details

Unique reference number	138217
Local authority	Bristol City Council
Inspection number	10081525

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	727
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carew Reynell
Headteacher	Clare Bradford
Telephone number	0117 9030100
Website	www.henbury.bristol.sch.uk
Email address	henburys@bristol-schools.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 May 2015

Information about this school

- Henbury School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average.
- Just over half of the school's pupils are known to be eligible for support by the pupil premium. This is nearly double the national average.
- The school does not meet the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a specialist resource provision for 44 pupils with moderate learning difficulties, including Down's syndrome, hearing impairment and autism spectrum disorder. There are currently 33 pupils in the resource unit, of which six are post-16

students.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in visits to lessons across the school, most of which were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher, senior leaders, and the chair and one other member of the governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including school improvement plans and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspection team carried out a scrutiny of the quality of pupils' work in books, some of which was carried out along with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils to seek their views about the school. The views of other pupils were gathered during lessons and lunchtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils from Year 8 reading.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at lunchtimes, breaktimes and around the school.
- Inspectors considered 54 responses to the online survey, Parent View, as well as 49 free-text responses from parents, 53 responses to the online staff survey and three responses to the online pupil survey.

Inspection team

Michael Merchant, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kirsten Harrison	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Nash	Ofsted Inspector
Non Davies	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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