

Bedale High School

Fitzalan Road, Bedale, North Yorkshire DL8 2EQ

Inspection dates

17 to 18 January 2019

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- There has been a step change in the quality of education at Bedale. The new leadership team has dealt with weaker aspects of provision 'head on'. They have secured substantial improvements at school.
- The most striking improvement has been in the standards of behaviour of pupils. Pupils now behave well when moving around the site and most focus well on their learning. Pupils, parents and teachers agree that behaviour is now much better at school.
- Senior leaders monitor the quality of education at school well. They know where strengths lie and where further improvements are needed. School development plans are sensible. Leaders now have a track record of improving the school.
- Faculty leaders play their part in developing their areas well. They, too, are pivotal in ensuring that the quality of education is good.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points in a wide range of subjects. School leaders are aware that most-able pupils are not currently making the progress of which they are capable. A little variation in the progress that pupils make between subjects still exists.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and plan well to ensure that most pupils make good progress. Teachers listen intently to what pupils say and question them well to push them forward in their learning.
- Teachers are increasingly effective at meeting the needs of different pupils. For example, support networks and transition for service children help teachers to meet these pupils' individual needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils currently at school are making strong progress. Leaders acknowledge, however, that sometimes the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not met equally effectively in all subjects.
- Pupils develop into rounded citizens and grasp any wider opportunities that they are given. There is an atmosphere of tolerance and respect at school. Student leaders have a positive impact. Extra-curricular opportunities are welcomed by pupils.
- Most pupils are committed to their learning. A few would do even better in their studies with even greater commitment and resilience.
- Rates of attendance are increasing strongly and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is decreasing. Although the use of fixed-term exclusion is decreasing, leaders accept that this remains too high.
- The school's vision is that by the time pupils leave school in Year 11, a typical pupil will be 'a successful learner, a confident individual and a responsible citizen'. They are successful in this endeavour.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that most-able pupils are pushed further in their learning and reach the standards of which they are capable
 - ensuring that teachers plan to meet the needs of pupils with SEND consistently well
 - further reducing the variation in the quality of teaching between subjects.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - reducing the use of fixed-term exclusions while maintaining a positive learning environment
 - further increasing pupils' resilience and commitment to learning in classrooms.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, there have been substantial improvements in the quality of teaching and the behaviour of pupils at school. Teachers, parents and pupils agree. The new leadership team, under the guidance of the headteacher, has presided over a step change in the quality of provision. The school now offers a good standard of education.
- Of specific note, is the improvement in pupils' behaviour and their level of focus in lessons. This has, in turn, led to a situation where teachers are able to concentrate on pupils' learning rather than 'crowd control'. Pupils have an increasingly strong sense of pride in their school and are committed to their studies.
- The headteacher knows his school well. School self-evaluation is honest and accurate. Development plans are sensible. The headteacher feels that since September there has been a further improvement in the quality of education on offer. Inspectors agree that the school is now good.
- The deputy headteacher with responsibility for the quality of teaching is both experienced and incisive. He uses a variety of information, including the rates of progress that pupils are making and the quality of lesson planning, to help individual teachers to improve their practice. His findings feed directly into training and personalised professional development programmes for members of staff. Teachers are positive about the support that they receive. These strategies have been a contributing factor to the improved quality of teaching at school.
- The deputy headteacher with responsibility for pastoral care and the behaviour of pupils has had a strikingly positive impact. Pupils talk of the 'chaos' at school before current systems were introduced. This is certainly no longer the case. The school is a calm and orderly place in which to learn. In addition, rates of attendance are increasing and the number of fixed-term exclusions is decreasing.
- The new assistant headteacher has overhauled systems to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support they need. Additional support is strong, for example through small-group intervention work. Sometimes, the effectiveness of lesson planning does not meet the needs of these pupils in all subjects.
- Faculty leaders play their part in assuring the quality of education effectively. They take responsibility for their areas well, providing both support and challenge to teachers and staff working in their team.
- The curriculum fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Teachers think carefully about any links that can be made between subject content and the wider development of pupils. Assemblies cover issues relevant to secondary-age pupils well and promote positive values such as democracy and inclusion.
- One parent captured the views of many, saying, 'I feel the school has come on in leaps and bounds under the new leadership team and I feel confident this will continue.'

Governance of the school

- Governors have a strong and clear vision for the quality of education at school. They bring a variety of helpful skills and experiences to their role.
- Members of the governing body ensure that they have useful and accurate information about the quality of teaching and the rates of progress that pupils are making so that they can challenge leaders to improve the school.
- Governors are attached to different areas of school life and work in pairs to this end. They think carefully about their own effectiveness and structure. They are committed to their own training.
- Governors have also been focusing on the financial health of school. They understand that, in the past, the impact of the pupil premium money has been too variable. They can see that current plans, under the leadership of the new assistant headteacher, are sensible and already bearing fruit.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher makes sure that any pupils who are potentially at risk receive the support that they require. When working with outside agencies, his team is highly tenacious in this regard.
- School policies reflect the latest requirements. Leaders make the appropriate checks when staff are appointed. Governors, senior leaders and members of staff are all suitably trained in safeguarding. They understand what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare or safety.
- Some parents' comments reflected the recent changes that have taken place. For example, some concerns were raised around the lack of support for pupils with SEND in the past. Parents had also noted the positive impact of the new assistant headteacher in this regard.
- Pupils report that they feel safe at school. This is echoed by the vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Senior leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching has improved markedly. Overall, teaching is now good at school.
- Teaching is underpinned by strong classroom relationships and planning that focuses on the development of subject knowledge on the part of the pupils. Where learning is strongest, teachers question pupils well and listen carefully to their responses. They then probe further to help pupils to deepen their understanding. Here, planning both meets the needs of pupils in the class and sparks an interest in the subject.
- In modern foreign languages, for example, teachers focus on developing pupils' ability to understand complex texts and to produce increasingly accurate sentences and

paragraphs. They do so in a structured and engaging way. In English, teachers' subject knowledge shines through as they model tasks well and use precise subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils' accurate use of this terminology improves as a result.

- The school-wide policy of requiring pupils to focus hard in lessons in a 'silent and sustained' way is helping pupils to concentrate on the task in hand and to make gains in their understanding.
- Homework is set regularly and makes a good contribution to developing pupils' independent learning skills. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 appreciate the online system available for them.
- Leaders have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching at school. They appreciate that, although provision for pupils with SEND has improved overall, there is a need to ensure that teachers plan to meet the needs of these pupils consistently well. Inspectors also judge that some most-able pupils need to be pushed further in their learning so that they reach the standards of which they are capable.
- There is less variation in the quality of teaching between subjects now. The quality of teaching in English, history and physical education has improved, for example. However, some variation still exists within the science and design technology departments.
- Parents and pupils are positive about the standards of teaching at school. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, feel that their children make good progress at school and are taught well. Inspectors agree with these views.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe, and they appreciate the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles. During the inspection, some pupils were observed preparing for a cooking competition. The food that was prepared was both healthy and of a high quality. Pupils say that they appreciate opportunities to engage in sporting activities, and they understand the importance of physical exercise. These are examples of how school leaders place a high value on pupils' personal development.
- School leaders use assemblies effectively to remind pupils about the importance of values such as tolerance and respect. Teachers and other adults model these values in the way that they interact with pupils. Pupils at school are tolerant of each other's differences and work together well. The school is an increasingly harmonious community.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop leadership skills at school. Student leaders play an active role in helping the school to improve. Not only do they organise charity events and support the local community, they also help school leaders understand the perspectives of pupils. Recently, they listened to Year 7 pupils' concerns about homework and fed this back to members of staff. The frequency and amount of

homework was considered and adjusted as a result.

- Adults consider the needs of pupils who need more emotional support. For example, 'the base' is an area where pupils access one-to-one support or small group work during lesson time. At breaktime and lunchtime, this area is open to pupils who prefer a quieter environment. The needs of service children are effectively addressed so that their transition into school is smooth. 'Service kids club' is well attended and helpful in this regard.
- The majority of pupils who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire stated that teachers at school helped with their wider personal development. They were positive about the way that the school help and encourages them to be independent and to take on responsibilities. They were happy with the way the school helps them to focus on their emotional, physical and mental health.
- Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning in lessons. On occasion, some pupils do not take enough responsibility for their learning and do not fully engage in lessons. These pupils give up too easily when the task in hand is too difficult or if teaching does not spark their interests.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils, parents and members of staff say that there has been a sea-change in how the school feels. One pupil said, 'It was as if the new headteacher had waved a magic wand.' Inspectors found pupils to be polite, courteous, and well-behaved.
- School leaders introduced a clear and simple system in order to improve pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school site. Members of staff were encouraged to apply it consistently and the system was explained to pupils. Over time, the application of this policy, as represented within the 'behaviour triangle' at school, has been central in improving pupils' behaviour.
- As pupils' behaviour has improved, the need for the use of the 'isolation room' has decreased, there are fewer 'senior callouts' and the number of 'phase two warnings' has dropped. Leaders are aware that the number of fixed-term exclusions remains too high, although their use is decreasing rapidly.
- Pupils who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire said that if there was ever any bullying, this would be dealt with swiftly by adults in school. The groups of pupils who spoke with inspectors agreed with this perspective.
- Leaders have clear procedures to check pupils' attendance. Absences are followed up swiftly, and the school works with a range of agencies where and when there are concerns. As a result of these processes, pupils attend school regularly and rates of attendance are further increasing. The majority of pupils are punctual.
- Pupils who attend off-site provision are well looked after. Leaders have close relationships with these providers and check that pupils are safe and that their behaviour meets expectations.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The progress that pupils made by the time they left school in 2018 was stronger than that in previous years. These pupils benefited from the new systems that the headteacher introduced after his arrival and from the improvements that he made. The majority of pupils responded well to these changes. As a result, overall, pupils made progress in line with their peers nationally.
- However, senior leaders were not able to turn around the attitudes that a minority of pupils had towards their learning. As a result, there was some variation in the progress that different groups of pupils made. For example, boys made substantially less progress than girls, and some disadvantaged pupils made slow progress from their starting points.
- The progress that current pupils are making is even better. There are no longer substantial differences in the rates of progress that boys and girls are making. The progress that disadvantaged pupils are making is much stronger now. Leaders acknowledge that most-able pupils need to be pushed even further and that pupils with SEND are not supported equally well across the curriculum. Nonetheless, the progress that pupils are making in different year groups and across the curriculum is now good.
- The progress that pupils make in some subjects has been good for several years. The quality of teaching in French, German, art and geography, for example, has led to good outcomes in these subjects. The progress that pupils are making in English, mathematics, history and physical education has improved due to a stronger profile of teaching currently.
- School leaders provide additional support for pupils who may need it. Pupils who access 'the base' for one-to-one sessions or small group work are supported effectively and make gains in their learning, for example.
- There is a substantial number of service children at school. These pupils make good progress, partly due to the additional pastoral support offered should this be needed. A high proportion of these pupils arrive at school at times other than the beginning of Year 7, and the transition programme on offer is effective and appreciated by pupils.
- There is a focus on developing reading skills at school. 'Reading passports' are successful in encouraging pupils to read for pleasure. Tutor time is used increasingly effectively to practise spelling and punctuation, and to widen pupils' exposure to vocabulary. These additional strategies are helping to improve pupils' standards of English.
- School leaders work well with post-16 providers and employers to ensure that pupils get independent advice and guidance regarding their next steps after school. The vast majority of pupils leave school with concrete plans. Very few pupils leave without firm placements in education, employment or training.

School details

Unique reference number	121670
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10053127

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	501
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Ingram (co-chair) Jan Reed (co-chair)
Headteacher	Tony Rawdin
Telephone number	01677 422 419
Website	www.bedalehighschool.org.uk
Email address	admin@bedalehighschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 to 10 November 2016

Information about this school

- Bedale High School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- There is a substantial number of service children at school. A high proportion of these arrive at times other than at the beginning of Year 7.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is also close to the national average.
- The school works in collaboration with outside providers as part of the curriculum on offer for pupils. At the time of the inspection, these outside providers were PT Hub and Darlington College.
- Since the time of the previous inspection, there have been substantial changes to the leadership of the school. The headteacher, deputy headteachers and assistant headteachers are new. An extended leadership team is in place which includes

colleagues with responsibility for English and mathematics. A new faculty leadership structure is in place, which includes academic and pastoral leaders.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning and groups of pupils working in all year groups at school. Inspectors observed learning jointly with members of the leadership team and discussed what was seen.
- Inspectors observed pupils when moving around the school and at social times. They talked to pupils in lessons about their experience at school and looked at work in their books. They talked to two specific groups of pupils to hear their views about the school and about the behaviour of other pupils. In addition, inspectors spoke to pupils at social times to listen to their views.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle leaders. Inspectors met with colleagues with the overview of behaviour and those with responsibility for safeguarding. An inspector spoke with an officer from the local authority about the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 31 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 74 responses to Ofsted’s online parents’ questionnaire, Parent View. The 66 responses from the pupils’ questionnaire were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school’s view of its own performance, monitoring records, information about pupils’ progress, improvement planning, and records of behaviour and attendance. Inspectors also looked closely at records relating to safeguarding and child protection, and at the effectiveness of protocols and procedures.

Inspection team

Michael Wardle, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Janet Sheriff	Ofsted Inspector
John McNally	Ofsted Inspector

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