

Bradford Girls' Grammar School

Squire Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD9 6RB

Inspection dates

13–14 March 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- There are significant weaknesses in leaders' handling of allegations about staff. Leaders have not followed statutory guidance in managing these incidents. Safeguarding is not effective.
- Some pupils do not feel that they have an adult in school whom they could approach if worried about anything.
- Students' progress in the sixth form has been below average for the last three years, across a range of A-level subjects. Students' attainment in their A levels in 2018 was below the national averages, compared with students with the same starting points. Students currently in the sixth form are making more encouraging progress across a range of subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make strong progress in a wide range of subjects. This progress is evident across early years, the primary phase and the secondary phase.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) and the primary and secondary phases.
- The quality of teaching overall is good. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils conduct themselves with consideration for others. Their attendance is good, particularly the attendance of those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently amend safeguarding practice, so that all allegations about staff of a safeguarding nature are handled in accordance with statutory guidance and all necessary actions are taken.
- Take further action to improve pupils' personal development and welfare by ensuring that all children, pupils and students feel confident that they have an adult whom they can tell, should they be worried about anything.
- Improve outcomes in the sixth form, so that students achieve the grades of which they are capable, by:
 - improving the quality of teaching, so that teachers match tasks more closely to the needs of the students
 - ensuring that all students feel able to approach teachers for further help when stuck or unsure of any learning
 - implementing the proposed broader curriculum to ensure that students are guided onto the most appropriate courses for their abilities and aptitudes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- There are significant weaknesses in leaders' actions following serious allegations about staff and cases of staff misconduct. Leaders did not take all the action required of them under statutory safeguarding guidance.
- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that pupils make good progress and achieve well, especially in the EYFS and key stages 1, 2, 3 and 4. Leaders have established an ambitious culture in the school. Teachers' aspirations for what pupils can achieve are high. For the majority of the time, pupils' aspirations are also high.
- Most staff who spoke with inspectors or responded to the staff survey are well motivated by the professional development opportunities provided. Subject leaders, for example, speak highly of the effect their professional development has had on their leadership and on the quality of teaching in their departments. Most staff are proud to work at the school.
- Leaders have been effective in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. As a result, pupils have a sound understanding of principles such as tolerance, respect and the rule of law. In the primary phase, for example in key stage 1, pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of cultural diversity and different lifestyle choices. In key stage 2, pupils were able to draw comparisons between the Christian festival of Lent and the Muslim faith.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium additional funding is effectively used by leaders. In the primary phase, for example, the number of pupils who can swim has increased as a result of a planned focus on this activity. Other activities include trampolining, badminton, cricket, tennis and dance. Leaders' information indicates that the take-up of these and other activities has increased this year.
- Leaders have also made effective use of the additional pupil premium funding. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' progress is strong across a range of subjects and year groups, as is their attendance at school.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities to further develop them as young people. Pupils spoke positively about opportunities available to them in sport, music and drama. Pupils also told inspectors about enrichment activities such as poetry, debating and overseas residential visits.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not ensured that leaders consistently follow statutory guidance in response to allegations about members of staff.
- In respect of other aspects of safeguarding, including the safe recruitment of staff and checks on the work of the safeguarding leaders, governors show an appropriate understanding of their responsibilities.
- Governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They have a clear sense of duty to make the school as successful as it can be. To this end, they have sought external advice and expertise to assist them in holding leaders to account for pupils'

performance.

- Such external support has enabled governors to have a secure and accurate understanding of the school's current strengths and where it still has improvements to make. For example, governors know where pupils' progress is not as strong and what is being done to address it. They can articulate the rationale behind their key stage 4 and post-16 curriculum. They have a perceptive understanding of their wider community of parents and carers, recognising that they still have more to do to bring some parents on board.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders' decision-making and judgement in managing allegations about members of staff reflect significant weaknesses in the culture of safeguarding in the school. When allegations were made, leaders and governors investigated these concerns 'in house', and did not report the incidents to the local authority and other external agencies, in line with statutory guidance.
- Leaders carry out the necessary pre-appointment checks on staff who work in the school. These checks meet statutory requirements.
- The leaders with particular responsibility for safeguarding matters are diligent in ensuring that staff receive the necessary training and that this is regularly updated. For instance, staff have received training about the risks of radicalisation and extremism, child sexual exploitation, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- The safeguarding leaders are thorough in their reporting, recording and follow-up of children's cases to the local authority when this is required.
- Safeguarding leaders have taken steps to broaden the ways in which pupils can report any worries that they might have. For example, an email alert system called 'safe@bggs' has been introduced since the previous inspection. Pupils are aware of this channel for contacting staff if they are concerned about anything.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Across a range of subjects, and in both the primary and secondary phases, teaching is effective in enabling the large majority of pupils to make good progress. Frequently, this is because teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Across a wide range of subjects, teaching provides pupils with the right degree of challenge.
- Typically, teachers demonstrate a strong grasp of their subjects. This enables them to teach topics and concepts with confidence. Often, across all key stages, teachers use technical, subject-specific vocabulary and enable pupils to become confident in its use too. Teachers also plan effectively, making use of information about what pupils know and can do, so that pupils make strong gains in their learning.
- The teaching of phonics is strong. Pupils demonstrate that they are quickly grasping the skills they need to learn to read. As a result of effective phonics teaching, pupils are able to apply their knowledge to spell accurately in their written work.

- Leaders have taken action to promote a love of reading across the school. This is particularly the case in key stages 1 and 2. Pupils read fluently and with appropriate expression. Owing to the good-quality phonics teaching they have received, pupils are able to use their phonics skills to decode unfamiliar words.
- Most of the time, teachers make effective use of questions to check pupils' understanding, or to stretch their thinking further. Usually, this means that pupils are ready to move on in their learning when teachers decide to do so. Very occasionally, teachers' checking of pupils' comprehension of new knowledge or skills is less precise, so pupils are sometimes left behind.
- Where pupils' progress has been less strong relative to other subjects, such as in key stage 4 mathematics, the quality of teaching is now improving. While there is still work to do, pupils benefit from teachers' ambition to see them achieve as highly as possible in mathematics. Effective checking of pupils' prior understanding is helping to strengthen their performance.
- In each key stage, teachers make effective use of assessment information to plan lessons that move pupils on in their learning. Pupils can explain what they have done to improve their work.
- Pupils across the primary and secondary phases are confident speakers. They are able to draw on a wide vocabulary to express ideas and concepts, which are often complex. For instance, in key stage 4 English, pupils spoke of the 'omniscience' of a central character in a play and why this was significant. In Year 3, pupils could use geological terminology to explain their understanding of volcanoes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- While most pupils who spoke to inspectors and responded to the pupil survey said that bullying is unusual and is dealt with effectively, a few were less certain. A small number of staff and parents think that bullying is not always handled effectively. However, of the communications from parents received by inspectors, several express satisfaction with the support their children have received from the school.
- Leaders have taken action to further improve the means by which pupils can raise any concerns. Despite this, however, a few pupils reported that they do not feel they know whom they would go to should they be worried.
- Leaders have implemented a programme for supporting pupils' personal, social, health and economic education. As a result, most pupils spoken to by inspectors have an age-appropriate awareness of risks, especially those associated with e-safety. Although leaders have put in place a programme of education about the dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism, a few pupils are less aware of these risks than others.
- Across the primary and secondary phases, pupils demonstrate strong attitudes to learning most of the time. They take a pride in their appearance. Typically, pupils show

consideration of each other's ideas and show respect for one another.

- A few parents expressed concern to inspectors about pupils' safety when exiting the site at the end of the school day. This follows leaders' reasonable steps over the last two years to maximise pupils' on-site safety at the start and end of the day by preventing vehicular access to the school site. Particularly, parents are worried about the volume of traffic and some people's parking on the public highway outside the school at these times. Inspectors observed the exit of children, pupils and parents at the end of the day. There was an appropriate level of staff supervision, with safe dispersal once outside the school grounds. Inspectors saw numerous cars parked illegally, with council wardens challenging those drivers who had done so.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- As a result of leaders' actions, the rate of pupils' attendance is in line with the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND is above the national average.
- The rate of pupils excluded from school for a fixed period is below the national average. Compared with the same time last year, the rate of fixed-term exclusion has reduced even further.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the site, in each phase of the school, is good most of the time. Pupils typically conduct themselves with consideration for each other. Inspectors saw very few instances of 'off-task' behaviour in lessons. Relationships between pupils and staff, seen by inspectors, reflect respectful speech and a collaborative atmosphere.
- The transition between activities in the primary phase is well managed and pupils show politeness and consideration for one another.
- A small number of pupils who spoke to inspectors, a few staff in the staff survey and a few parents do not think that behaviour is consistently good.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- At the end of key stage 1 in 2018, pupils' attainment in each of reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average at both the expected standard and at greater depth. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2018 was also above the national average in each of reading, writing and mathematics.
- At the end of the 2017/18 academic year, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check was above the national average, including for boys and girls separately. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment in the phonics check was above the national average.
- Pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 was above the national average for writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress in reading was in line with the national average, although this was an improvement on outcomes in reading in the previous two years. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils at the end of key stage 2 in 2018

was above the national average for the expected standard in the combined reading, writing and mathematics measure. Disadvantaged pupils also attained above the national average for greater depth in combined reading, writing and mathematics.

- Pupils' progress in key stage 4 at the end of 2018 was well above the national average. Outcomes were especially strong in English, science, languages, history and geography. Pupils' progress in their other 'option' subjects was also very strong compared with the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND made progress at the end of 2017/18 that was above the national average. Progress for these pupils was above the national average for English, science, languages, history and geography. Additionally, it was above the national average for their option subjects.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics at the end of 2017/18 was broadly in line with the national average. This was a decline from the above-average progress made by pupils in mathematics in 2016/17.
- Current pupils in key stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 are making good progress from their starting points. This is the case across a range of subjects. Progress is not as strong in mathematics at key stages 3 and 4, although it is improving.
- Teachers' effective use of pupil information in their planning, together with their strong subject knowledge, contribute to the good progress made by the large majority of pupils. There is some variability in the progress made by some pupils, at times, because teachers do not check that pupils have understood before moving on to the next phase of the learning.
- As a result of effective careers education, information, advice and guidance, pupils move on to appropriate next steps at the end of their key stage 4 studies. The number of pupils who are not in education, employment or training is below the national average.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The EYFS is inadequate because leaders did not take all the action required of them under statutory safeguarding guidance when handling allegations and cases about staff.
- The newly appointed leader for early years has an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses in this area of the school. She leads well and plans thoroughly. Through her leadership, staff work together as a team and support each other well. She correctly identifies and addresses the ongoing training needs of her team members, so that they can improve their skills further.
- A high proportion of the children enter Reception Year with skills that are below those that are typical for their age. The very large majority make rapid progress throughout their time in early years. As a result, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development was above the national average in 2018 and is on track to be so again this year.
- The early years leader thoroughly tracks the progress of all children to make sure that they are moving on with their learning as quickly as they should be. Swift action is

taken to ensure that the findings of these progress checks are acted on, so that any gaps in children's understanding are closed. For example, although boys commence Reception Year with lower starting points than girls, they are making rapid progress as a result of leaders' actions.

- The classroom and outdoor environments are stimulating and provide many opportunities for children to learn independently. 'Free-flow' activities are well structured by teachers and teaching assistants, and give the children opportunities to engage in sustained learning. As a consequence of effective teaching and adult guidance, children do not generally 'flit around'. The provision is vibrant and stimulating, covering all areas of learning effectively. For example, inspectors observed children eagerly checking their cress seeds with a magnifying glass, to see whether they had germinated, while others were handling a selection of real vegetables and making a list of their names. Activities that are directly led by adults also interest and engage the children effectively. Adults use questions skilfully to support and extend the children's learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that children successfully acquire phonics skills. From their starting points, children quickly learn the sounds that letters represent and apply these skills to their reading and writing. Some children observed during the inspection could read and write a range of simple and more complex words. As a result of effective phonics teaching, from starting points that are below those typical for their age, the proportion of children achieving the expected level in reading in 2018 was above the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged children who achieved the expected level in reading in 2018 was well above the national average.
- The learning environment is rich in opportunities to promote and extend children's literacy skills. However, opportunities to develop their mathematical skills through practical activities of their own choosing are less well developed.
- Parents are very happy with the quality of provision the early years provides for their children. One parent told inspectors, 'The teachers are fantastic! They're really approachable and my child is really happy.' Parents are actively involved in their child's learning. They are invited into school for 'stay and play' sessions. During the inspection, inspectors observed a group of parents participating enthusiastically in a workshop session to help them in supporting their child's learning at home.
- The Reception classrooms and outdoor area are safe places for the children. Staff ensure that all welfare requirements are met. Children are happy and feel safe. They play harmoniously together and interact confidently with each other and with adults.

16 to 19 study programmes

Inadequate

- The sixth form is inadequate because leaders did not take all the action required of them under statutory safeguarding guidance when handling allegations and cases about staff.
- Over time, students' progress has been below the national average. This has been the case for the previous three years. Students' attainment is also below average compared with that of other students nationally with the same starting points. Students' progress in the science subjects was below the national averages in 2018. In

mathematics in 2018, students made significantly less progress than the national average.

- There is evidence that students currently in the sixth form are making more encouraging progress, although it remains variable. Teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve. Often, in a range of subjects, teachers use questioning effectively to draw out students' prior learning to help them acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding and to make progress. This was particularly evident in mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics and art. Sometimes, students' progress is less strong because teachers' checking of how well students have understood the learning is not as effective.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the sixth form is inconsistent. Teachers' subject knowledge is typically strong. As a result, their use of appropriate and often complex subject-specific vocabulary provides students with the knowledge they require. Most of the time, students' grasp of such challenging material is secure. Sometimes, however, they are less secure in their understanding. This is because at such times, teachers do not match their explanations of tough new concepts carefully enough to students of different abilities.
- Leaders are aware that the range of subjects on offer to students for their A-level studies in recent years has not been a broad one. Leaders attribute this to what they see as parents' and students' preference for particular A-level courses, especially the sciences and mathematics. Leaders recognise that their curriculum is not always best suited to the aptitudes or abilities of the students who join the sixth form. To address this, leaders plan to expand the curriculum to offer a broader range of subjects, with effect from September 2019.
- Students spoke positively to inspectors about the support and challenge they receive from their teachers. A very small number of students, however, told inspectors that occasionally they do not feel as well supported. A few of the students who spoke with inspectors said that, at times, they do not think that teachers adapt their explanations well enough to help those who might be finding particular points harder to understand. A very small number of students who spoke with inspectors said they would not recommend the school to others.
- Leaders have taken action to begin to address students' underachievement when it occurs, through close monitoring of how well students are progressing and the introduction of several strategies to support students when they begin to fall behind. However, it is too early to evaluate the success of these actions.
- Despite students' below-average progress, they move on to appropriately challenging next steps at the end of their time in the sixth form. The proportion of students who continue their studies from Year 12 into Year 13 and then complete their courses is in line with the national average. Both of these outcomes are due to an effective careers education, information, advice and guidance programme.
- Students told inspectors that they feel safe in school. They feel well educated about some of the risks facing them as young adults, particularly those relating to online safety. Through the personal, social, health, careers and economics programme, including visiting speakers, students receive appropriate education about preparation for life in modern Britain. Students' behaviour is good, and they serve as role models

for younger pupils.

- The requirements of the Department for Education's 16 to 19 study programmes are met. These include the provision of an appropriate work experience placement during Year 12. A volunteering programme provides further opportunities for students to broaden their experiences prior to further study or employment.

School details

Unique reference number	140204
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10059188

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Early years foundation stage and primary phase: mixed Secondary phase: girls
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,087
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	128
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Helen Roberts
Principal	Kathryn Matthews
Telephone number	01274545395
Website	www.bggs.com
Email address	mtaylor@bggs.com
Date of previous inspection	24 September 2015

Information about this school

- Bradford Girls' Grammar School became a free school on 2 September 2013.
- Responsibility for governance of the school rests with the governing body.
- The school caters for pupils in Reception, key stages 1–4 and a sixth form.
- The majority of pupils have Asian or Asian British-Pakistani heritage. Small proportions of pupils are of another ethnicity, including Asian British-Indian, or White British.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below the

national average. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to support for SEND is above the national average.

- The number of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The school has links with Bradford College for the provision of alternative education.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited over 35 lessons across all phases of the school. Sometimes, inspectors were accompanied by senior leaders. During these visits, inspectors talked to pupils and looked at their workbooks and folders.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work across several subjects, with different year groups and pupil abilities represented. Some of this scrutiny of pupils' work was conducted jointly with leaders.
- Meetings were held with the principal. An inspector talked on the telephone with the chair of the governing body and in person with another governor.
- Inspectors met senior leaders with responsibility for: early years; the primary phase; 16 to 19 study programmes; attendance; behaviour; SEND; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; careers education, information, advice and guidance; literacy; the primary PE and sport premium; the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding; the programme for pupils' personal development and welfare; the curriculum; pupils' progress and outcomes; and safeguarding.
- Meetings were held with six groups of pupils, drawn from across the primary, secondary and post-16 phases. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils around the site.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, on corridors and in social spaces around the school.
- An inspector observed the ending of the school day, both inside the school perimeter and on the public highway.
- An inspector listened to several pupils in key stages 1 and 2 read.
- An inspector spoke on the telephone to the school improvement partner.
- A wide range of documentation was examined. This included: leaders' self-evaluation and plans; attendance, behaviour and exclusion information; pupils' progress and outcomes information; bullying logs; accident logs; and risk assessments for trips and visits including residential visits.
- Leaders' processes for vetting adults' suitability to work in school were checked, along with sample safeguarding files of pupils referred to external agencies. Inspectors scrutinised leaders' records of serious safeguarding cases. A number of staff personnel files were checked.
- An inspector spoke on the telephone to three parents. Inspectors considered 40 emails received from parents and one translated message from a parent. In addition, consideration was given to the 124 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils. The 70 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire were also taken into account.

Inspection team

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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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