

Bloomfield School

Bloomfield Road, Tipton, Staffordshire DY4 9ER

Inspection dates

4 to 6 June 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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders secure good outcomes for pupils. Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards continue to be met in full.
- Pupils make good progress in a range of subjects in key stages 3 and 4, including English and mathematics. This means they are well prepared for the next stage of their education or training.
- Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress because leaders implement pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans effectively.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress because leaders use additional funding well.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good because they are well led across a wide range of subjects. Staff are successfully trained. Their morale is high and they work effectively as a team on both school sites.
- Behaviour is good. Leaders make sure pupils' welfare is thoughtfully planned. However, a minority of pupils are not well behaved at breaktimes.
- Learning in science is less effective. This is because lessons are not interesting enough and learning does not engage pupils' curiosity.
- Leaders have put in place a broad and balanced curriculum. However, too much writing in pupils' workbooks across the curriculum is not accurate enough.
- Safeguarding is effective, and the safeguarding policy is fit for purpose.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - further developing the quality of science learning so that pupils are interested and engaged with subject content
 - enhancing the accuracy of writing in subjects across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of behaviour by making sure pupils' behaviour in corridors at breaktimes matches the good standard of courtesy and politeness in classrooms.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders ensure good outcomes for pupils. Leaders have an effective strategy for the school. Their evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is good and, consequently, the school continues to meet all of the independent school standards.
- The school's behaviour policy is well led. Leaders provide effective professional development for staff, for example in the skills needed to motivate pupils whose education has been significantly disrupted. Consequently, most pupils are courteous, polite and interested in their learning. Leaders ensure that high standards are consistently applied in classrooms throughout the school. A minority of pupils on the Bloomfield site are not well enough behaved in corridors at breaktimes.
- Leaders have put in place a strong, broad and balanced curriculum. As a result, pupils make good progress. For example, in mathematics, pupils learn skills that are carefully built up over time and meticulously assessed so that pupils learn from their mistakes. Effective practice like this is in place across the curriculum. It is less successful in a few subjects, such as science. In addition, the quality of writing in subjects other than English is not strong enough.
- Teaching and learning are well led. Leaders have invented an effective monitoring system they call 'Focus 39' and it has allowed staff to review and improve their practice. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is good across a wide range of different subjects.
- Staff apply the assessment policy consistently because they have been well trained by leaders and understand its purpose. The result is that pupils learn from their mistakes.
- Staff are very supportive of one another and the pupils. Leaders have made sure staff morale is high. Typical comments from members of staff in Ofsted's online questionnaire are: 'I love working in such a positive environment and with staff members who have the best interest of the students at all times. This is because the senior management team work hard. Our school is like a family'; 'The school is well equipped to enable all students to be able to develop efficiently and to gain positive outcomes in education and learning' and, 'The senior management team is of a high standard and I feel privileged to be a part of the school team.'
- Leaders have developed good relationships with support services in the wide range of pupils' local authorities. For example, social work colleagues express justified confidence in the capacity of the school's leadership.
- Pupils are well prepared by leaders for life in modern Britain. For instance, pupils sit a wide range of high-quality qualifications, including GCSE mathematics and English. Last year, all pupils leaving Year 11 went on to employment, education or training. Leaders ensure that there is good-quality, independent careers guidance for older students.
- There have been many changes in leadership since the previous inspection and these have been managed effectively by the proprietor. Horizon Care and Education Group's managing director for education works effectively with the school, challenging and supporting leaders well. Leaders make good use of links to other schools in the Horizon Care and Education Group. The proprietor ensures that expert support is offered to the

school. For example, the executive headteacher has commissioned training and coaching for her leaders and works with a school improvement partner, who gives useful advice and constructive feedback.

- Leaders have put in place a strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development curriculum. For example, art and drama are taught effectively, so pupils' personal development is improved. Pupils learn well how to appreciate different cultures, for example in geography by studying places of worship and religious landmarks.
- Almost all pupils with SEND have an EHC plan and their good progress is due to strong leadership by the special educational needs coordinator. She trains staff well to help pupils overcome a range of barriers to their learning. Leaders help teachers match work to pupils' ability and, as a result, pupils make effective progress towards the targets on their EHC plans.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is well used. For example, leaders make sure pupils use a range of three-dimensional equipment in mathematics to bring geometry to life. The use of information communication technology (ICT) engages pupils' motivation. Leaders have invested in a wide range of good-quality specialist training. As a result, staff give effective support to pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs, for example.

Governance

- Leaders, the proprietor and the managing director for education work well together. They have a strong shared vision for the school. They have ensured a good quality of education on both school sites.
- The proprietor and managing director carefully monitor the standard of education, using performance management effectively to support and challenge leaders. Staff have well-planned targets to meet, and they value the high quality of training that meets their needs.
- Leaders' accountability to the proprietor is effective. The managing director and executive headteacher have put in place a good system of lesson visits, meetings with leaders and regular, sharply written reports. They test their judgements by using effective support from commissioned school improvement partners and a well-deployed leadership consultant.
- Safeguarding is of the highest priority for the proprietor and the managing director. They make effective adjustments to practice as a result of thorough scrutiny. They make sure staff are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's safeguarding policy is fit for purpose and is easily available on the school's website.
- Recruitment, training and record-keeping are strong. Leaders give staff effective training. The culture of safeguarding is rigorously implemented by staff. As a consequence, pupils develop strong protective behaviours, they understand how to minimise the risks of online communication and they respect teachers' guidance.
- Leaders have a range of effective risk assessments that provide good support to staff in

their planning and delivery of lessons, especially in practical subjects like food technology and physical education. Pupils' individual risk assessments are well matched to pupils' needs and help keep them safe.

- Staff are well trained in restraint, and incidents where restraint has been necessary are declining over time. This is because leaders ensure that the behaviour policy is consistently applied and that they intervene early to prevent unsafe behaviour.
- Leaders and the proprietor have put in place a good complaints and whistleblowing policy. These have proved effective on the rare occasions that they have been used.
- Leaders make sure that staff know how to implement the effective first-aid and fire-safety policies. There was a fire evacuation drill during the inspection and pupils were managed by staff and safe routines were well understood.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are appropriately challenging in most subjects and in both key stages. Pupils find learning interesting. For example, in English, letter writing is used to promote personal development. In food technology, pupils learn well about vegan diets. In information and communication technology, pupils enjoy learning about how software is used in vocational settings. In German lessons, pupils are motivated by being challenged to use correct grammar and pronunciation.
- Staff use their subject knowledge well. They are effectively trained in the school's assessment policy and use it to help pupils learn from their mistakes. Teachers' feedback is particularly effective when they have a very clear understanding of pupils' abilities.
- Teachers are well supported by teaching assistants, who are particularly skilled at supporting pupils with SEND.
- The school's behaviour management policies are well used in lessons. Staff give consistent messages about what behaviour is tolerated and what is not acceptable. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are good.
- Staff have high expectations of their pupils and set targets that are realistic and based on accurate information about pupils' abilities.
- In science, pupils do not make effective progress. Pupils' curiosity is not well enough engaged, so too much learning is completed with insufficient depth.
- While pupils take care to check and improve the accuracy of their writing in English lessons, the quality of spelling and punctuation in other subjects is not strong.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy their personal, social, health and economic education. As a result, they develop self-confidence. For example, pupils in Year 11 are able to motivate themselves to take a wide range of GCSEs and equivalent qualifications. They become organised,

resilient and self-disciplined.

- Pastoral staff are knowledgeable and empathetic and this leads to improvements in pupils' social skills. Pupils benefit from thoughtful counselling. Staff are especially effective with pupils who arrive at school with poor self-discipline. A high proportion of pupils make good progress toward their personal development targets.
- Fundamental British values are well taught. Consequently, pupils make good progress in understanding, for example, fairness, rights and responsibilities. Through activities such as 'Respect Day', staff help pupils see the benefits of working cooperatively.
- Leaders have put in place an effective system of 'anti-bullying champions'. This raises the profile of zero tolerance towards any form of bullying. The result is that incidents of this kind are rare. When they occur, pupils say it is not tolerated and they know from whom they can get support.
- Healthy eating is well taught by the food technology staff. As a result, pupils enjoy learning skills of planning and cooking healthily.
- Staff work closely and effectively with the police, social services and local authorities that have parental responsibility for pupils at the school. As a result, communication about pupils' needs is efficiently shared and staff give support to pupils in a timely manner.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- When they are in class, pupils behave well, follow instructions and complete work to the best of their ability. Since the last inspection, there has been a reduction in incidents of poor behaviour because staff apply the behaviour policy consistently.
- Pupils attend school increasingly well. Most pupils have very low rates of attendance when they first come on roll. However, because of well-coordinated work by staff, pupils attend more frequently. Staff work well with local authorities, parents and social work agencies to help pupils see the value of school.
- Staff analyse high rates of absence well. They are able to give effective support to pupils who, for example, have varied medical needs. Staff are highly successful in preventing pupils missing education and, where there is a risk of this, they immediately work with local authorities to get pupils back in school.
- Independent careers advice is good and older pupils, especially, find it helps them plan well for the next stage of their education and training. As a result, all pupils go on to education, employment or training when they leave the school.
- Pupils value the 'behaviour points' system that staff use to reward them. Because these points are given every lesson and pupils see them as fair, there are regular opportunities for staff to give credible feedback. As a result, this is an effective policy for reinforcing positive behaviour.
- A minority of pupils are too boisterous in corridors on their way to and from breaktime. They take too long to learn how to meet the school's high expectations for behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils are good because leaders have put in place a curriculum that is relevant and challenging for pupils. Leaders make sure pupils enter a wide range of qualifications, including GCSEs in English and mathematics. Although the grades pupils achieved in 2018 were not high, they represented good progress, since most pupils had extremely disrupted education histories.
- Pupils make good progress in both key stages 3 and 4. Pupils' progress in mathematics is especially strong because pupils have a chance to learn skills in a well-sequenced manner. They learn from their mistakes, make improvements and, therefore, develop competence.
- English lessons are well planned, varied and challenging. As a result, pupils' progress is good. Pupils are encouraged to read widely in English. They enjoy reading aloud to their class and do so with expression and skill.
- Art is well taught, so pupils make good progress in a wide range of media, including watercolour, pastel and three-dimensional work. Pupils' progress is strong in ICT and business studies. This is because teaching ensures that pupils know what to do to improve and it links skills to the world of work.
- Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Pupils' EHC plans are well reviewed and used effectively in lessons. Staff give pupils activities that are well matched to their abilities. Staff use information about pupils' progress successfully and most lessons are engaging to pupils. Where outcomes are less strong, such as in science, it is because pupils' interest has not been secured and pupils complete work that does not help them learn new skills and knowledge.
- Teachers' assessments are accurate because leaders make sure staff standardise and moderate judgements about what pupils need to do next. Therefore, pupils' outcomes are improving because they are set realistic targets for their learning.

School details

Unique reference number	135518
DfE registration number	333/6004
Inspection number	10056218

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	59
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Paul Callander
Chair	Louise De-Hayes
Headteacher	Julia Saint
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,025
Telephone number	0121 520 9408
Website	www.horizoncare.co.uk
Email address	bloomfieldhead@horizoncare.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 to 4 February 2016

Information about this school

- Bloomfield School is a dual-site secondary day school in Tipton. Pupils come from a wide range of local authorities. Almost all pupils have EHC plans. The school is one of a group of schools in the Horizon Care and Education Group.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been appointments to the post of executive headteacher. New deputy headteachers have been appointed at both the Bloomfield and Dudley Port sites.
- The school admits boys and girls from 11 to 16 years of age. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school's most recent inspection was a standard inspection in February 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher, senior leaders and members of staff.
- Inspectors talked with pupils and scrutinised their learning in their workbooks, folders and displays. They listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons on both school sites. Inspectors discussed with leaders the way they use information about pupils' progress.
- There were discussions with the proprietor and with the Horizon Care managing director for education.
- The inspectors considered a wide range of documents, such as the school development plan and the school's self-evaluation reviews.
- Safeguarding arrangements were scrutinised on both the school's sites.
- There were too few responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, so inspectors considered parental views recorded in the school's files. There were 15 responses to the questionnaire for staff and no responses to the pupils' questionnaire.

Inspection team

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