

Inspection of Bushey Meads School

Coldharbour Lane, Bushey, Hertfordshire WD23 4PA

Inspection dates: 12–13 November 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff have created a positive environment founded on the principle that the school, 'has a mind to be kind.' Staff ensure that all pupils feel welcome within the school. Pupils value each other's differences.

Leaders have also established the understanding among staff and pupils that they 'never give up.' Pupils and staff work very well together. They reach for excellence in all that they do. This is particularly the case for students in the sixth form. They work very hard to achieve their ambitious goals.

Leaders have developed an exceptionally strong curriculum for pupils' personal development. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about themselves. They speak articulately about their interests and goals in life. Staff help pupils to explore their options in life as they grow into young adults. Pupils take seriously their responsibilities as citizens in their local community and the wider world.

Pupils behave well in most lessons. They usually live up to staff's high expectations. Pupils behave sensibly between lessons and during breaktimes. They enjoy each other's company and look after each other.

Bullying is uncommon at this school. Pupils have confidence that staff can help them if bullying occurs. Pupils feel safe at school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The quality of education in most areas of the school is impressive. Leaders have created an exciting and ambitious programme of learning. The curriculum meets the needs and interests of most pupils. Pupils can choose from a very wide range of subjects and qualifications. Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the help they need to overcome their difficulties. These pupils are very well prepared for their next steps in education or employment.

Leaders ensure that all pupils can choose to study the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). Twice as many pupils completed the EBacc in 2018 than in 2017. The proportion of pupils entered for the EBacc in 2018 was nearly half the national average.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They know their pupils well and usually meet their needs. Teachers quickly notice when pupils misunderstand something. If pupils fall behind, teachers act swiftly and effectively. Leaders use additional funds well to provide support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

Leaders are making improvements so that the curriculum in some subjects matches the needs of pupils. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they should in science.

The sixth form stands out as an area of excellence within the school. Staff work with students to carefully match courses to the needs and aspirations of each student.

Teachers of the sixth form are highly skilled. They create excellent opportunities for students to explore and master what they are learning. Students achieve exceptionally well in the sixth form. They are highly ambitious and value learning. They support each other with their learning exceptionally well. They also serve as fantastic role models for pupils in the younger year groups.

Leaders' provision for pupils' career guidance is a considerable strength at the school. Leaders build useful partnerships with external agencies so that all pupils have rich experiences of the workplace. In 2019, all pupils in Year 11 and Year 13 left the school to train with an employer or continue their education at college or university.

Leaders have placed pupils' well-being at the heart of what they do. Pupils very much value the support they receive from the pastoral team. Members of the pastoral team show great sensitivity towards pupils' emotional needs. The pastoral team enables pupils to overcome difficulties, including those relating to mental health.

Leaders, governors and trustees at the school constantly look for ways to make the school even better. They listen carefully to the views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff. Pupils told us that they appreciate the way leaders make sure that they act on pupils' ideas to improve the school. Staff told us that leaders take account of their well-being. Staff also said that they feel well supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All adults make safeguarding their highest priority. Leaders ensure that they use their training to keep pupils safe. Adults act swiftly and appropriately when they have concerns that a pupil is at risk of harm.

Leaders support vulnerable pupils very well. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support they need.

Leaders carry out the checks needed to make sure adults are suitable to work with pupils. Governors and local authority representatives check that staff keep pupils safe.

Staff teach pupils how to assess risks and keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum in all subjects is planned to meet the needs of all pupils. To do this, senior leaders should ensure that all curriculum leaders have the necessary understanding and skills. Senior leaders should provide training for curriculum leaders where necessary.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	137872
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10110350
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,255
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	266
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sam Russell
Principal	Jeremy Turner
Website	www.busheymeads.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 March 2019

Information about this school

- There has been a larger than average increase in the total number of pupils. There were 1,120 pupils in 2017 and 1,255 pupils at the time of this inspection.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors had discussions with the principal, members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), curriculum leaders and the leader for the sixth form. They also had discussions with members of the local governing body and the trust board.
- Inspectors analysed 329 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), 61 responses to the staff questionnaire, and 240 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

- Inspectors spoke with teachers, including newly qualified teachers, support staff and pupils.
- Inspectors took account of a wide range of information, including the school's website, development plans, information about pupils' needs, leaders' monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment, and leaders' records about pupils' behaviour. Inspectors reviewed documentation regarding safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited lessons across the school and carried out scrutiny of pupils' books. Inspectors started the inspection focusing on English, science, geography, history, religious education and modern foreign languages. To answer questions raised on the first day of the inspection, inspectors visited lessons in other subjects on the second day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Carole Herman	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Sutton	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Whear	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Ayling	Ofsted Inspector

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