

Inspection of Beaconsfield High School

Wattleton Road, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire HP9 1RR

Inspection dates: 11–12 December 2019

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils throw themselves into their learning and into the remarkable range of extra-curricular opportunities offered at this school. In one pupil's words, 'There is something for everyone'. Pupils enjoy exceptional opportunities to develop their talents and wider interests through clubs, activities and societies. Many go on to play sport or take part in musical performances at county or national levels.

Pupils know that they are expected to work hard and think for themselves in class. They relish lively debate and solving tricky problems. Pupils feel a huge sense of satisfaction when they master a new concept or topic. They are fiercely proud of their school and of their own achievements. Pupils do exceptionally well in public examinations in key stage 4 and in the sixth form and go on to appropriate destinations.

Pupils respect the needs and rights of others. Pupils of all ages mix together well and have no concerns about bullying. They say that teachers put a stop to the very rare incidents of mean or spiteful behaviour. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities in school and are keen to get involved in their local community.

Pupils develop into confident, well-educated and thoughtful young adults who are ready to make their mark in the world.

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

The headteacher is passionate about pupils' entitlement to a well-rounded education. With her governing body and senior leadership team, she has transformed the curriculum. A strong culture of learning and achievement runs through the school.

Teachers use their expert subject knowledge to plan logical sequences of lessons that arouse pupils' curiosity and stretch their understanding. They make use of the most up-to-date research to inform their teaching. Teachers make sure that pupils have the skills they need to be resilient and resourceful learners. They use a variety of approaches to help pupils remember what they have learned and give pupils plenty of time in lessons to discuss their ideas. Pupils express themselves cogently, both verbally and in writing in all subjects. They use subject-specific vocabulary with precision and make connections between their current and previous learning. Pupils read widely and often, both for pleasure and in their various subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive strong and effective support. Staff involve them in discussions about their needs. Teachers and support staff go the extra mile to make sure that no pupil is left behind.

Pupils, including those with SEND, follow an ambitious, broad and well-balanced curriculum. Leaders make sure that no future career pathway is closed to pupils. All pupils study for GCSEs in three sciences, and at least one foreign language, and

humanities and creative arts subject as well as the core curriculum. At A level, students choose from a wide range of courses, tailored to their interests and aspirations. At both GCSE and A level, pupils and students, including those with SEND, achieve very well in public examinations.

Leaders and governors take their responsibilities for equal opportunities seriously. Pupils and sixth formers learn to respect the needs, beliefs and choices of others through the curriculum and a well-designed programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Leaders and governors rightly give a high priority to pupils' mental health. Trained counsellors provide sensitive emotional support to pupils and sixth formers who need it.

Pupils make the most of their time in school. A great many pupils, including those with SEND, take part in extra-curricular activities, many of which are run by fellow pupils or sixth formers. Over one fifth of the whole school population is involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Sport, music and drama are extremely well catered for. Pupils and sixth formers can take their debating skills further in, for example, the Model United Nations.

Through volunteering, performances and charitable work, pupils support the local community. Pupils make a difference in school through the school council or eco council, confident that teachers will listen to and act on their views. As subject prefects, sixth formers support younger pupils well, including through remote mentoring for pupils in a Lincolnshire school. The 'Blossom' project, conceived and run by sixth formers, also provides targeted help for pupils who need it.

Pupils and sixth formers are rarely absent, and they are always punctual to lessons. Leaders have effective systems for monitoring behaviour and supporting pupils who need help to manage their emotions.

Leaders ensure that pupils and sixth formers get up-to-date and relevant careers information, and that staff get any additional training that they need. Staff are highly appreciative of the efforts leaders make to help them manage their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors have created a culture of caring and safeguarding in which pupils' emotional well-being is of paramount importance. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Teachers have had up-to-date training on the main risks facing pupils and they know how to report any concerns they may have. Leaders responsible for safeguarding secure timely and effective help from outside agencies when required.

Leaders take great care to ensure that all who work or volunteer in the school have undergone the necessary safeguarding checks. They seek and act on external advice if 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	140893
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10085502
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,200
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	306
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Lorraine Couves
Headteacher	Rachel Smith
Website	www.beaconsfieldhigh.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Beaconsfield High School converted to academy status in 2014. When the predecessor school was last inspected in May 2007, it was judged outstanding.
- The school uses home tutors based at Aspire alternative provision for a very small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, geography, modern foreign languages, art and drama. For each of these subjects, we met with curriculum leaders and teachers, carried out visits to lessons, spoke to pupils and looked at

some of their work.

- Short visits were also made to lessons in other subjects, including physics, chemistry, religious studies, textiles, music, physical education and philosophy.
- We also attended an assembly and visited form time.
- We met with the headteacher and members of her senior team responsible for various areas of the school's work, including SEND, pastoral support and personal development.
- The lead inspector met four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke to the interim Director of Education at Buckinghamshire local authority.
- We met with members of staff individually and in groups and spoke to pupils formally and informally at various points in the inspection. We also took account of responses to pupil and staff surveys, as well as Ofsted Parent View.
- We reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with the designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

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