

Inspection of The Burton Academy

South Parks Road, Torquay, Devon TQ2 8JE

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's curriculum does not enable pupils to fully develop their mathematical knowledge. Curriculum plans are not demanding enough and do not build on pupils' prior learning. In key stage 3, pupils' gaps extend to English and science. Pupils do not learn what they should in these subjects.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and are proud to say they belong. They respect staff and show care for their environment. One pupil, whose view reflected those of many, told inspectors, 'the adults here get you.' This reflects the warm, caring relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils feel safe. They know that adults will listen if they have any concerns. Pupils said that bullying does not happen.

Pupils state that they attend school more than they did at previous settings. Despite this, some pupils' attendance remains too low.

Staff have high expectations of conduct. Pupils engage with learning and behave well. However, where curriculum plans lack ambition, pupils lose interest.

Parents and carers are positive about the school. They can see the difference the school has made to their children. One parent told inspectors, 'The pupils are lucky to have [the staff] in their lives.'

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

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. This places pupils' personal development at the heart of the school's work. Leaders have identified key qualities that form the foundation for this work. Staff demonstrate these qualities in all they do and remind pupils of these when celebrating success or challenging behaviour. Leaders incorporate these values into their curriculum plans. As a result, pupils understand the importance of developing their lives as good and effective citizens.

In key stage 3, leaders deliver the curriculum through a themed approach. The use of themes is effective in engaging pupils in learning and supporting pupils' personal development. The teaching of English and science takes place through these themes. For example, using the theme of rollercoasters, pupils learn about motion and forces in physics. However, leaders have not made sure that curriculum plans provide pupils with the full breadth of knowledge needed in these subjects. As a result, pupils are ill prepared for the next stage of their learning. In key stage 4, curriculum plans for these subjects are more precise and build on pupils' prior learning.

In mathematics, curriculum plans are not ambitious enough and do not build on what pupils know already. Leaders have not given enough thought to how the curriculum will support pupils' progress, and staff lack the knowledge to bring these plans to life. Pupils experience disconnected activities and staff do not encourage

them to try more challenging work. This restricts how well pupils build knowledge and develop their mathematical understanding.

The wider curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the world in which they live. Leaders identify the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Pupils are clear about the need to treat everyone with respect. Staff encourage pupils to read. A book exchange programme operates in the school.

The school's careers programme prepares pupils for their next steps well. Pupils have opportunities to meet employers and training providers. Most pupils move on to college or apprenticeships. They have chosen courses or jobs that suit their interests and skills. Leavers who struggle to find a suitable placement receive ongoing support.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They support the headteacher's vision. Staff appreciate the consideration leaders give to their well-being. They describe themselves as a close-knit, supportive team.

Governance of the school is going through a period of change. Until recently, Burton shared a governing body with another local school. Now, the school has its own governing body. The new chair of governors has a wealth of experience in governance. A governor, experienced in safeguarding, has joined the new governing body. The multi-academy trust (MAT) has supported leaders in defining the skills they want new governors to have.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a well-established safeguarding culture in the school. Systems are in place to support pupils, so they are safe in school. Leaders have a clear understanding of pupils' potential vulnerabilities. They take their responsibility to keep pupils safe seriously. Training ensures that staff remain constantly alert to possible risks faced by pupils. Staff record and pass on concerns to leaders, who take swift action.

Leaders are aware of local issues of which pupils need to be aware. The curriculum includes lessons about safety, so pupils know about risks when online and about threats such as gangs and county lines.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The key stage 3 curriculum does not develop pupils' English and science knowledge well enough. Leaders have not made sure that plans provide pupils with their full curriculum entitlement. Pupils do not acquire knowledge as well as they could in these subjects. Leaders must make sure that curriculum plans

support pupils' progress across the curriculum, so they are better prepared for the next stage of their education.

- The mathematics curriculum lacks organisation and ambition. Pupils do not build on what they know already. Pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Leaders must ensure that there is a coherently planned and sequenced curriculum in place, so pupils know more and remember more.
- Pupils' attendance improves when they join the school compared with their attendance at previous schools. However, attendance remains low for many pupils. Leaders must strive to improve pupils' attendance.

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 are the school and you are 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	144031
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	10122323
Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy alternative provision sponsored
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jane Reed
Headteacher	Steven Hulme
Website	www.catch-22.org.uk/services/the-burton-academy
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened as an academy in April 2017. It is part of the Catch 22 MAT.
- The school uses two alternative providers. These are South Devon College and Chances.

Information about this inspection

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

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, teachers and support staff. I met with the chair of the governing body and one other governor and with the executive principal from Catch 22. I spoke on the phone to a representative from the local authority.
- We observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school. We spoke to pupils about bullying, behaviour and leaders' expectations of pupils.
- We scrutinised the school's policies relating to safeguarding, spoke with the designated safeguarding leader and considered records of the pre-employment suitability checks the school makes on its staff.

- There were few responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire. Therefore, an inspector spoke to parents on the telephone.
- We undertook deep dives in the following subjects: mathematics, English and science. This involved meeting with subject leaders, visits to lessons in these subjects, work scrutiny, and discussion with teachers and pupils from the lessons visited.

Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Justine Hocking

Ofsted Inspector

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