

Inspection of a good school: Buxton Community School

College Road, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 9EA

Inspection dates:

28–29 January 2020

Outcome

Buxton Community School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school and attend well. They like the opportunities available to them beyond the subjects they study. They attend many clubs and sporting activities at lunchtime and after school. The school show has two separate casts as it is so popular. Many parents are positive about the school. One parent represented others by telling us, 'The teachers go above and beyond, and inspire.'

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The vast majority of pupils behave very well and disruption to learning is rare. Pupils told us they feel safe in school and well supported by the adults who teach and look after them. Pupils say that teachers deal with any bullying immediately.

Pupils study a wide range of subjects. They receive careers education, meet with employers and visit universities. Pupils are well prepared for the next stages. Many sixth-form students support younger pupils in their lessons and sporting activities. The school works hard to broaden pupils' understanding of the world beyond Buxton.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for providing a broad and balanced education for all pupils. They have constructed a curriculum that is ambitious for all. Pupils study a wide range of academic, creative and other subjects across all key stages.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Well-designed and well-sequenced curriculum plans exist in most subjects. The plans make it clear exactly what teachers must teach and the order in which they must teach it. For most pupils this works well to help them build on their prior knowledge. Most pupils can recall important knowledge. They use this knowledge to help them learn. Leaders are beginning to work together to make links between subjects. For example, pupils learn about Elizabethan England in both history and English. This is not fully developed. Leaders have planned further opportunities for teachers to work together to build links between different subjects.

Teachers are improving the curriculum plans so that all pupils can study the same range of subjects. However, in some subjects teachers do not adapt their plans for pupils with special educational needs (SEND) or ensure that disadvantaged pupils are supported to access the full curriculum. These pupils do not do as well as they could in all subjects.

Leaders have recently changed the way teachers check on pupils' learning. In many subjects these checks are effective. Most teachers use recap activities and quizzes to confirm what pupils have learned. They understand what pupils know and can recall before moving them on to what they need to learn next. Pupils told us that these helped them to 'get the knowledge into our heads so that we can remember it'.

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. Regular 'drop down' days enable pupils to learn about healthy living and how to keep safe. Pupils told us that they also learn how to look after their physical and mental health. Residential camps and overseas trips broaden pupils' experiences and raise their awareness of people and places beyond the local community. Pupils learn about faiths and lifestyles that may be different to their own.

The curriculum focuses on tolerance and diversity. The vast majority of pupils are accepting of difference. Teachers challenge discriminatory language when it happens. The 'Buxton Bugle', a newspaper produced by sixth-form pupils, celebrates diversity at the school. The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) group offers support to LGBT pupils and promotes the acceptance of difference.

The number of pupils undertaking the English Baccalaureate qualification remains low. This is largely because few pupils take up languages in key stage 4. Leaders are encouraging more pupils to choose a language at GCSE.

Sixth-form students make good progress in most subjects. Learning is well planned and students work with increasing levels of independence. Students feel confident in making decisions about further education, training and careers.

Governors are keen that every pupil achieves their best. They hold leaders to account well. Leaders are considerate of teachers' workload. Staff say that leaders listen to any concerns they have about their well-being and act on them quickly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of vigilance. The record-keeping for the employment checks that leaders make before staff start work at the school meets requirements. Leaders work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils have the help and support they need. Pupils can access a trained counsellor in school.

The safeguarding and pastoral teams are well trained and take effective action when staff or pupils raise concerns. Staff are familiar with current safeguarding issues and are alert to the risks that pupils might face in their everyday lives. Leaders, including governors, take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Over the last three years, leaders have reviewed the curriculum. There is a coherent, clear and detailed sequencing of learning in most subjects. This is enabling pupils to know more and to do more. In a few subjects, such as computing, technology and drama, curriculum plans focus on the activities that pupils will do, and do not identify clearly enough the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. Leaders should ensure at all curriculum plans enable all pupils to know and remember more.
- Leaders have not ensured that there are effective links between all subjects so that teachers can identify the important knowledge that pupils need to know and plan opportunities to revisit this knowledge in different subjects. Leaders should ensure that collaborative planning enables subject leaders to identify the substantive knowledge which pupils need in each different subject and how they can work together to help pupils know more and remember more.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 14–15 May 2013.

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	112970
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10121286
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary controlled
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	1,027
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	145
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Judy Vale
Headteacher	Craig Yates
Website	http://www.buxton.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 Sep 2016

Information about this school

- The school does not use any external alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- We spoke with pupils about life at school and their work. We held meetings with senior leaders, governors, teachers and non-teaching staff.
- We did deep dives in: English, mathematics, business studies and history. We met with subject leaders, spoke with pupils, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and met with teaching staff. A range of other subjects was also considered.
- We reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' curriculum plans. Bullying logs and information relating to pupils' behaviour were examined.

- We considered the views expressed by parents in the 78 responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire. We also considered the 90 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- We reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding, including the school’s record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff and the support provided for pupils.

Inspection team

Stephen Long, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Karen Hayes

Ofsted Inspector

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