

Inspection of The Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School

Hampton Dene Road, Tupsley, Hereford, Herefordshire HR1 1UU

Inspection dates: 7 to 14 July 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This school encourages pupils to be themselves. Pupils are confident to share their ideas and opinions. There is a culture of mutual respect. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Staff look after pupils well. The pastoral support given to them is highly effective. Pupils say they enjoy school and are happy.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils remind each other of the school's expectations if pupils do not behave as they should. Bullying is rare. If it does happen, pupils trust staff to sort it out.

Pupils have the chance to pursue their interests. The school offers a wide range of clubs and activities.

All staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This includes getting the qualifications they need to be successful, as well as preparing them to be good, active citizens. This may involve being a school prefect or a member of the student council, or acting as an anti-bullying ambassador.

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

The school has a culture of continuous improvement. Senior leaders and governors are passionate about giving pupils the best education and care possible. This commitment permeates throughout the school. There is a strong focus on the quality of education. Pupils follow a wide range of subjects at key stage 3. This prepares them well for the choices they make at key stage 4. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. This year, all Year 11 pupils have a post-16 place identified for September.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use resources well to support pupils' learning. This includes the effective use of technology. Learning is well sequenced. In design technology (DT), for example, work in pupils' books shows how they build on their learning. In key stage 3, pupils learn about the sustainability of materials. In key stage 4, they apply this knowledge when they justify a designer's choice of materials.

Staff use assessment to help pupils understand what has gone well and how they can improve. When done well, this gives pupils precise steps on how to improve their work.

Reading is a priority for the school. All pupils in key stage 3 follow a structured programme. Leaders check how pupils are doing. Pupils who need it get the extra help they need. Pupils say they enjoy the reading programme. It is helping them to improve their vocabulary.

The school provides good care and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They follow the full curriculum. Pupils who access the resource base speak enthusiastically about the help they get.

Staff apply the school's behaviour policy well. There is an appropriate use of rewards and sanctions. Pupils say that sanctions are fair. As a result, behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils engage well in their learning.

The school is inclusive. The curriculum helps pupils to understand how to be responsible and respectful citizens. For example, in history, pupils learn about and develop an understanding of Black histories, racism and slavery. In science and DT, pupils talk about careers that challenge gender stereotypes.

All staff speak highly about the support they get from leaders. Leaders consider staff workload. As a result, staff morale is high.

Over the last 18 months, there has been a high turnover of members of the governing body. However, they have continued to provide leaders with an appropriate balance of support and challenge. Governors constantly check their skills and knowledge. They plan to complete more training in September. This training aims to deepen their knowledge about education and help them to scrutinise leaders' actions.

The school has effective support from the local authority. This includes support from a national leader of education. His support has contributed, for example, towards an ongoing programme of improvements in the school. The school improvement partner regularly visits the school. Leaders value these visits. They have used the outcomes of these visits to improve many aspects of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding procedures are strong. All staff take safeguarding seriously. Staff quickly report any concerns, knowing that leaders will take the appropriate action. Leaders provide all staff with regular training and updates. Adults who work at or visit the school are appropriately checked.

Effective links with external agencies mean that pupils and families get the help they need. For example, the police support pupils with understanding the consequences of posting inappropriate material online. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. As a result, pupils say they feel safe. Parents agree.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Over the last 18 months, many members of the governing body left, which had the potential to affect the governing body's checks on the school's performance. The remaining governors have successfully recruited new members to the board. They have used a skills audit effectively to show where additional development for members is needed. The governing body needs to make sure that new members fully understand their roles and responsibilities. In addition, all members of the governing body should further develop the necessary skills and knowledge they need to enable them to hold leaders closely to account for their actions.

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	116991
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10184508
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	991
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Morris (acting chair)
Headteacher	Martin Henton
Website	http://www.bhbs.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 March 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Over the last 18 months, there has been a significant change in membership of the governing body. Since October 2020, there has been an acting chair of the governing body. New members have been opted onto the board and it is now full.
- The school has a special resource base for up to eight pupils in key stages 3 and 4 who have a diagnosis of autism.
- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provider. The provider used is Horizon Training. The school also uses Herefordshire's H3 Centre (the home and hospital teaching service) for six pupils on a full-time basis.
- The school had an inspection conducted under the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools framework in July 2018.
- At the time of the inspection, Year 11 were not in school. Most pupils left on 28 May 2021. The majority of Year 11 are being set online work by their post-16 provider for September.
- At the time of the inspection, a significant number of pupils were having to self-isolate. Staff were providing remote education for them. A small number of staff were also having to work from home for the same reason.

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.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body, including the acting chair, and pupils. The lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority and the school improvement partner. An inspector visited an alternative provider used by the school.
- The inspection focused mainly on DT, mathematics, history, science and physical education. Inspectors met with subject leaders and subject teachers, visited lessons, talked to pupils and looked at pupils' work.
- The lead inspector checked the single central record and the procedures for the recruitment of staff, and met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- Inspectors reviewed the 79 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. They also considered the 82 responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including 60 free-text responses.

Inspection team

Lesley Yates, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mike Onyon	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Forrest	Her Majesty's Inspector
Martin Spoor	Ofsted Inspector

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