

Inspection of Bourne End Academy

New Road, Bourne End, Buckinghamshire SL8 5BW

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Bourne End Academy is a rapidly improving school that pupils are proud to attend. One parent, typical of many, commented, 'The school has gone from strength to strength. I have nothing but praise for the staff.'

Pupils are courteous and respectful to each other and to staff. They hold doors open and speak kindly to each other. The headteacher provides purposeful direction and has strengthened leadership recently across the academy. Pupils speak passionately of these changes.

The provision for the wider development of pupils is a strength of the school. Societies, designed to develop pupils' interests, talents and wider knowledge, are very popular. These include activities such as engineering, equine studies, debating and musical theatre. Pupils relish taking part in these during the school day.

Pupils are confident they have adults in school they can talk to if they have worries or concerns. They say that while bullying happens occasionally, staff always help sort it out. This has not always been the case. Leaders have a robust and restorative approach to dealing with bullying. As a result, the number of incidents of bullying has continued to reduce.

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

Leaders share a clear vision for all pupils to access an ambitious curriculum. They have carefully identified the knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Leaders ensure that curriculum thinking considers the work that pupils completed prior to attending the school and extends into the sixth form. At key stage 4, the curriculum is broad and ambitious. However, leaders recognise that not enough pupils gain qualifications in the English Baccalaureate. Leaders are working hard to address this by increasing the number of pupils who study a modern foreign language.

There is a strong emphasis on literacy and reading. Leaders have identified ambitious texts for all pupils to read at the school. Leaders ensure that pupils who need extra support with reading are identified and supported quickly and effectively.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are typically well supported to learn the curriculum. They benefit from learning the ambitious curriculum alongside their peers in class. In some subjects, for example mathematics, adaptations to the curriculum enable pupils with SEND to learn well. However, in some other subjects, for example English and science, work is not always sufficiently adapted. Consequently, in some lessons pupils are not challenged to achieve their best possible outcomes. A small number of pupils with SEND, taught in the school's additional resourced provision, benefit from individualised support and specialist teaching. Here, staff are experts in teaching pupils with autism spectrum disorder.

The curriculum is much improved. Leaders and staff have diligently ensured that work is carefully sequenced. The recently developed 'leadership guides' and 'learning cycles' help staff and pupils understand where they are in the sequence of their learning. Many teachers use assessment effectively. They regularly check for pupils' understanding in lessons. Staff use this information to help inform their teaching and help pupils catch up quickly where they need to.

Some staff effectively adapt their teaching to help pupils to learn well. However, this is inconsistent. Some pupils are not sufficiently challenged, while others, including those with SEND, do not have their needs met. To address this, leaders have prioritised individualised support for teachers to help them meet the needs of all pupils in their class. Leaders recognise that this is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

The school takes the personal development of pupils seriously. Trained staff and carefully selected visiting speakers deliver a carefully planned personal, social and health education programme. Students in the sixth form are proud to be trained as 'reading buddies' to support younger pupils. Some students run clubs for younger pupils. All pupils receive impartial careers advice and guidance to help them plan and prepare for further study when they leave school.

The pastoral care of pupils is a strength of the school. Staff work tirelessly to support pupils who need help to modify their behaviour. If pupils make mistakes, they can 'reset', and resume learning as soon as they can. Attendance has improved. Carefully designed strategies help pupils understand why attendance is so important.

Staff are proud to work at the school and appreciate that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. The trust works effectively with the school, providing appropriate support and challenge to leaders at all levels. Together, the headteacher, senior leaders and trust staff have made significant improvements to the school in a short amount of time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Experienced leaders oversee safeguarding. They know when to refer to other agencies to offer support to families. Leaders record incidents and concerns diligently. Recruitment processes are meticulously managed.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular and thorough safeguarding training. This promotes a strong culture of vigilance. Staff are alert to any signs that may indicate pupils might be at risk of harm. Well-managed systems ensure that any concerns are dealt with in a timely manner. Safeguarding staff act swiftly to ensure pupils get the help they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the curriculum lacks consistency. Consequently, some pupils are not sufficiently challenged, while others, including those with SEND, do not have their needs met. Leaders should continue with their coaching plans to ensure that all staff have the knowledge and expertise to help all pupils learn well across all subjects.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	146518
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10241593
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	818
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	98
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lord Jim Knight
Headteacher	Louise Cowley
Website	https://bourneendacademy.e-act.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined E-ACT multi-academy trust in September 2018. When its predecessor school, Bourne End Academy, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school runs a resourced provision for pupils with speech, language and communication needs and for those with autism spectrum disorder.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff, and pupils. The lead inspector also met with leaders and officers of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, geography, physical education and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records, including the school's record of recruitment checks. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, pupils and parents to gather their views. They considered 155 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 98 free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of 61 responses to the staff survey. Inspectors spoke to a number of pupils and took account of the responses to a pupil survey conducted recently by the school.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Ben Bond	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Rodin	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Hanlon	Ofsted Inspector

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