

Inspection of Bradfield School

Kirk Edge Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S35 0AE

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high expectations for pupils. However, they know that some pupils do not achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 11. This is because the curriculum over time has not been ambitious enough. As a result of leaders' actions, the quality of education is improving. Many pupils are getting a better deal than they did before.

Most pupils enjoy coming to school. They know that it is a safe place. Bullying is increasingly rare. Younger pupils who have recently joined the school have settled well. They know that there are trusted adults who will look after them and help them with any concerns that they might have. Leaders are improving the behaviour of pupils at school. Incidents of poor behaviour have declined in number. Pupils are more able to focus on their lessons. A small number of pupils do not meet leaders' expectations for behaviour and conduct.

Pupils benefit from an increasing range of extra-curricular activities. Some are involved in the school choir and Christmas performances. Others enjoy the sporting competitions in which they can take part. Opportunities for pupil leadership include the 'sports leaders', who enjoy the work they do with primary-age pupils.

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

In many subjects, leaders have ensured that the important knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember is clearly identified. Where this is in place, teachers know what to teach and how to teach it. As a result, teachers are able to plan lessons that are ambitious for all pupils. Where the curriculum is less developed, pupils experience a more limited diet of learning. When this happens, pupils are less engaged in their learning and make less progress through the curriculum.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and work effectively with teaching assistants. Teaching staff skilfully use questioning techniques to tease out where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge, and address these swiftly. Leaders have recently strengthened the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have also improved support for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Teaching staff are provided with information and training on how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. As with other areas, recent developments have not had the time to consistently translate into improved outcomes for some of these pupils.

Pupils at the earliest stages of learning to read now receive the support that they need. A more structured programme of support has recently been put in place to help build their confidence and fluency in reading.

Leaders have worked hard to improve the behaviour of pupils at the school. A new behaviour policy, supported by staff training, is beginning to have impact. The

number of suspensions for poor behaviour is reducing as pupils' behaviour and conduct improve. There is still work to do to ensure that everyone, including pupils, staff and parents, has clarity and confidence in what leaders are trying to achieve.

Although overall attendance of pupils is improving, some pupils do not come to school regularly. This includes pupils who are from disadvantaged backgrounds. They miss out on important learning. Some disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress through the curriculum that they should.

Leaders know the importance of ensuring that pupils gain the skills, knowledge and wider experiences they need to be ready for their next steps. Year 11 pupils value the careers interviews they have had. This has helped guide and prepare them for their next steps. Leaders recognised that the previous personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme was not providing all pupils with sufficient understanding of important concepts such as equality and diversity and fundamental British values. Many pupils do not have strong knowledge of different world religions. Leaders have taken action to strengthen this provision. There are now regular PSHE lessons in place, supplemented by assemblies and form time.

Leaders engage more effectively with parents than was previously the case. Many parents report positively on the communications that they now receive. They value the bi-weekly blog and the increased emphasis on celebrating pupils' achievements. Some parents continue to have concerns about aspects of communication. They would like more information about how their child is doing, and they would like to understand leaders' work on improving behaviour.

The support the school receives from the trust is driving positive change. Trustees, working together with the local governing body, know the school well. They are aware of the challenges it faces. Trustees and governors offer suitable levels of support and challenge to leaders. Together, they are helping school leaders bring about the changes that pupils, parents and staff need.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff know how to keep pupils safe. Regular training and safeguarding updates strengthen staff's knowledge. Staff know that safeguarding pupils is everybody's job. Staff report any concerns that they have over pupils' welfare promptly. Leaders follow these concerns up carefully. They make the necessary referrals to external agencies. As a result, pupils get the support and help that they need.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They learn about fire safety, crossing the road and other important safeguarding topics, such as the importance of using social media and technology appropriately.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the 'small steps' of knowledge that pupils must gain are not clearly highlighted. Pupils do not learn as well in these subjects as they do in others. Leaders should work with teachers to ensure that pupils build consistently strong knowledge across all subjects.
- Many pupils have not learned the important information from the PSHE curriculum. They do not have sufficiently secure knowledge of different religions, or important concepts such as fundamental British values. Leaders should ensure that new approaches to teaching PSHE swiftly address any gaps in pupils' knowledge so that pupils are even better prepared for life in modern Britain.
- A minority of pupils continue to disrupt school life for others. Although reducing in number, suspensions for poor behaviour remain high. Some staff are not clear about what leaders are trying to achieve and the importance of their role in bringing about this change. Leaders should ensure that all staff understand the aims of the behaviour policy and have the training and support to implement this well. This will support further improvements in pupils' behaviour.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. They miss out on important learning. As a result, they do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should intensify actions to ensure that the attendance of all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, improves, so that all pupils benefit from the curriculum now in place.

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

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| Unique reference number | 147788 |
| Local authority | Sheffield |
| Inspection number | 10258813 |
| Type of school | Secondary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1,063 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Sarah Draper |
| Headteacher | Adrian May |
| Website | www.bradfield.sheffield.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- This is the first inspection since the predecessor school, Bradfield School, joined Tapton School Academy Trust in February 2020. When the predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- There have been significant changes to the senior leadership team. The interim headteacher has been appointed to a substantive role. A number of new middle leaders have joined the school. Additional senior leadership capacity has been provided through the trust.
- The interim executive board (IEB) worked alongside the newly formed local governing body for a period of time. The local governing body is now fully in place and the IEB has been disbanded.
- Bradfield School hosts a resource base for a small number of pupils with cognition and learning needs. Admissions to the provision are controlled by the local authority.
- The school uses eight unregistered alternative providers of education for a small number of pupils.
- 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 met with senior leaders, including school leaders and representatives of both the local governing body and the trust. They spoke to teaching and support staff. Inspectors met with teachers who are at the early stages of their career.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, geography, science and design and technology. 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. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in PSHE and in reading. An inspector listened to pupils read. Inspectors visited lessons in wider subjects.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures. They scrutinised important safeguarding records. Inspectors spoke with staff about how they keep pupils safe.
- The views of parents were considered through the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and through telephone conversations held with some parents. The views of pupils were considered through responses to Ofsted's pupil survey, as well as through meetings held with pupils.
- The views of staff were considered through meetings held with staff and from the responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Eleanor Belfield, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Lynne Selkirk | Ofsted Inspector |
| Garry Stout | Ofsted Inspector |
| Richard Wood | Ofsted Inspector |
| Lyndsey Brown | Ofsted Inspector |

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