

Inspection of North Bromsgrove High School

School Drive, Stratford Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 1BA

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders, staff, pupils and students have worked together to make North Bromsgrove High School a better place to work and learn in. They have been successful. The school's 'CARE' values of 'community, aspiration, respect and endeavour' have been at the heart of their work. One parent summed this up, commenting, 'We have been delighted to witness both our son and his school develop together over the last five years.'

Most pupils attend happily, work with their teachers productively and are keen to learn. This is reflected in a calm and orderly culture, which helps pupils to feel safe. Leaders have maintained their high expectations of pupils' behaviour following the pandemic restrictions. Staff enforce these expectations fairly and consistently. Staff give help to pupils who struggle with their behaviour, and they are not simply sanctioned. Staff do not tolerate bullying. It does occasionally happen in school; however, staff resolve issues quickly. Pupils and staff do not accept racist, homophobic or misogynistic language.

Pupils and students benefit from a breadth of extra-curricular programmes, and many take part. The school musical is an integral part of this. In addition, staff run many clubs, trips and house competitions and activities. These range from designing a prom dress to the French tongue-twister challenge.

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

Leaders and staff work tirelessly to realise their vision of an inclusive community school. All are reaping the rewards of their collective endeavour. Staff feel supported by leaders and know they value their efforts. Leaders' mantra of the 'North family' is evident in many facets of school life across all year groups. Year 9 pupils are warmly welcomed when they join the school, and quickly become part of the school community. However, some disadvantaged pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Leaders' work to support these pupils to improve their attendance is yet to bear sufficient fruit.

Leaders have remodelled and restructured the Year 9 curriculum. Instead of starting key stage 4 qualifications early, leaders have constructed a broad Year 9 curriculum. They have thought carefully about what pupils will learn in each subject. Their deliberate selection of curriculum content means that pupils build a firm foundation for future learning.

Pupils and students in key stages 4 and 5 can choose from a wide range of subjects. These extend across a breadth of academic and vocational qualifications. Staff encourage pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to be ambitious in their choice of subjects. Pupils who attend the resource base in school are effectively supported so that they can achieve well. There is no 'glass ceiling' for pupils with SEND, and many go on to study in the sixth form. Leaders identify pupils'

specific needs and share this information with staff. Staff use this information well to help support pupils in lessons.

Within subjects, leaders have ordered the content of the curriculum carefully in all key stages. This means that pupils' knowledge builds over time and is linked to what they have learned before. For instance, in psychology, Year 10 pupils draw on their learning about models of memory as they develop an understanding of research methods. Teachers use their expert knowledge of their subject to explain new ideas and concepts clearly to pupils. Most pupils listen well in lessons, and develop good learning habits that help build their knowledge and understanding.

Staff make regular checks on pupils' learning through formal assessments. However, some teachers do not check what pupils know and understand effectively in lessons. This means that they do not respond to pupils' gaps in knowledge as they emerge. In addition, in some subjects, teachers focus too much on the end-points rather than the important building blocks of knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. This means that some pupils do not build new learning on secure foundations.

Leaders identify and support pupils who need additional help with reading when they join the school. However, the culture of reading is not well developed. Too many pupils do not read for pleasure. They are missing out on the many benefits of a 'good book'. Leaders have well-thought-through plans to address this.

Pupils' personal, social and health education is delivered mainly through fortnightly CARE lessons. Leaders supplement this with a range of assemblies and 'drop down' days. Sixth-form students also participate in a range of community activities and experiences. These range from volunteering at local schools to shadowing ambulance crews. Leaders have planned and resourced this curriculum assiduously. This includes a robust careers education programme. They have trained staff to help them implement this curriculum. However, there is variability in the quality of teachers' delivery of the CARE curriculum. This means that some pupils do not benefit fully from this curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are alert to the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They know that it is vital that they report all concerns quickly, no matter how small. Leaders use this information to ensure that pupils and families get the help and support they need. They work well with other agencies and follow up any issues if they feel that support is not forthcoming quickly enough.

Pupils learn about the risks they face through the CARE curriculum and a range of assemblies. This includes visiting speakers, who talk to pupils about the risks they face in the wider world. This helps to give pupils the information they need to keep safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that all disadvantaged pupils attend school well enough. This means that they miss too much of their learning, and this is a barrier to their future success. Leaders should ensure that they develop and refine their approaches, doing more of what is having the greatest impact, to provide effective support to disadvantaged pupils so that they attend school regularly.
- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers use assessment strategies well in lessons to check pupils' prior knowledge, identify misconceptions and ensure pupils fully grasp new ideas and concepts. Often, teachers are too focused on the end-points. This means that some pupils progress through the curriculum without having fully understood what they have just learned. Leaders should ensure that all teachers know how to check pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively in lessons, so that they can adapt their delivery of the curriculum to ensure that all pupils learn well.
- Leaders have not developed a culture in which pupils value and appreciate the joy of reading. This means that too few pupils read widely or often and do not experience a wide range of texts and genres. Leaders should ensure that they enact their plans to ensure that pupils develop a love of reading.
- Leaders have not ensured that all staff deliver the CARE curriculum to a consistently high standard. As a result, there is variability in the quality of information that pupils receive to help them make sensible and informed choices about their lives. Leaders should ensure that all teachers have the knowledge and skills so that the CARE curriculum is delivered consistently well to all pupils.

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	116928
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10256940
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	13 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,009
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Milsom
Headteacher	Nick Gibson
Website	www.northbromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 to 17 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a resource base for 10 pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school currently uses two registered alternative education providers.

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 discussions with the headteacher and other senior and middle leaders, including the head of sixth form and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors spoke with members of the local governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, science, modern foreign languages, geography 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. Inspectors also met with subject leaders for psychology and business studies to review curriculum information and to look at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities and personal development curriculum with leaders.
- Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils formally and informally at various points in the inspection, including pupils in the resource base. They took account of responses to the pupil survey, the staff survey and Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at records and spoke to staff in relation to attendance, behaviour, bullying and safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with safeguarding leads.

Inspection team

Ian Tustian, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Dan Robinson	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Philip Hamilton	Ofsted Inspector

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