

Inspection of Bader Special Academy

Chappell Avenue, Edenthorpe, Doncaster DN3 2EW

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2023

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 want pupils to learn to 'be kind, be safe and be ready' for life. Pupils enjoy attending this school, and they feel safe here. They have good relationships with staff. Pupils say teachers help them with any problems they may have. Bullying is rare. If it happens, adults deal with it quickly. The school is mostly calm and orderly. Sometimes, when pupils are moving around the school, behaviour is less calm.

Leaders ensure that pupils are supported well. Most pupils behave appropriately. They have good attendance and are punctual. Some pupils spend a significant proportion of their time out of lessons. They are allowed to leave lessons when they feel unsettled. This interrupts their learning. Pupils told inspectors that some pupils misbehave. However, they stated that, overall, behaviour is improving in school.

Curriculum development is underway. In some lessons, pupils disengage from learning. Leaders are developing processes to prepare pupils for adulthood. Younger pupils do not have a good understanding of their next steps or careers education. Opportunities for pupils to learn about cultures other than their own are limited. The curriculum does not develop pupils' knowledge of life in modern Britain securely.

Staff do not have sufficient subject knowledge to deliver the schools' curriculum effectively. Leaders have begun to provide staff with additional training to support them in developing their subject knowledge across all subjects. Early career teachers are well supported. They receive regular coaching to develop their practice.

Most pupils speak confidently about what they have learned. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders are developing systems to address these gaps in learning in order to help pupils to know more and remember more.

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

Leaders are developing the school's curriculum. They have identified the important knowledge that pupils will learn. There is further work to do to ensure that the curriculum is ambitious in all subjects. Subject leaders are enthusiastic about the areas they are responsible for. In some subjects, such as mathematics and history, there are carefully considered plans in place. These plans are in the early stages of being embedded. In other subjects, planning is at an earlier stage of development. Staff are not yet able to deliver the curriculum effectively in these subjects.

Leaders have prioritised reading and the development of phonics. All staff have received training in a systematic, synthetic phonics programme. The teaching of phonics is consistent across all key stages. All pupils access support to develop their reading skills. Books mostly match pupils' ability to read. There is a small number of pupils who resist the reading support that is made available to them.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Most pupils behave well. Pupils who need help to manage their behaviour are supported effectively. Staff are patient and understanding. Leaders ensure that relationships between staff and pupils are secure. Staff have developed well-thought-out support plans to support pupils. They are designed to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Most pupils attend school regularly. They arrive on time. Some pupils spend a large proportion of their time out of lessons. This is a strategy to support them to calm down. However, leaders do not track how frequently pupils leave classrooms. Leaders are unclear how much learning time is lost through this approach.

Pupils access a range of educational visits. These include visiting local landmarks. Pupils have experienced residential trips to develop team building skills and independence. The personal development curriculum does not provide clear opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) knowledge. Their understanding of different faiths and religions is limited. Some pupils told inspectors that they would like more detailed careers guidance. Pupils would like more information about college and the next steps that are available to them.

Leaders are well supported by the trust. The trust is supporting the school to develop governance. Most governors are new to the school and to education. They are receiving training to increase their understanding of education and develop their effectiveness as governors. Early career teachers are well supported by leaders. They appreciate the opportunities they can access to develop their practice. Staff feel listened to. They say leaders consider their workload. Staff work collaboratively. They coach and support each other well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive ongoing safeguarding training. Leaders deliver regular safeguarding briefings. Staff can identify when pupils may be at risk of harm. Staff report any worries they have about pupils promptly. Leaders keep detailed records of concerns. These are quickly followed up by dedicated staff. Staff act decisively on safeguarding matters. They make referrals to external safeguarding partners swiftly.

Pupils know they can report any concern they have. They are confident that staff will keep them safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A number of pupils regularly leave lessons to calm down. Leaders do not track this. This means that they cannot track patterns or identify what learning has been lost. Leaders should develop systems to check how often pupils are missing learning and why this is happening in order to improve access to learning for all pupils.
- Some staff do not have the subject-specific knowledge they need to teach lessons effectively. Consequently, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should deliver targeted staff training to support all staff in developing an appropriate subject-specific knowledge that allows them to deliver the school's curriculum effectively.
- Pupils' SMSC understanding is limited. This means that they are not prepared as well as they need to be for life in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that pupils have rich and varied opportunities that allow them to develop an understanding of other cultures and religions.

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	147864
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10255586
Type of school	Special
School category	Free School Special
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Appropriate authority	Board of Trustees
Chair of Academy Council	Warren Carratt
Headteacher	Viki Drew
Website	www.baderacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Bader Special Academy is a school for pupils with SEND. Most pupils have communication and interaction needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2022.
- This is the first inspection since the school opened in September 2020.
- This school makes use of one alternative education provider.

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 spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of the academy council (who is also the chief executive of the trust). They also met with trustees and academy council members.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, English, history, and care designed to support learning (social, emotional and mental health area of need). They met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, and they talked with pupils about their learning in these subjects. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, visited lessons and talked with teachers. Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at strategies to support pupils at the early stages of reading.
- Inspectors met with the leaders of behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders with responsibility for safeguarding. They scrutinised school safeguarding records. They spoke with staff about how they keep children safe. Inspectors looked at safeguarding training records and the single central record.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils in single-sex groups.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator to look at how information about pupils is shared with, and used by, teachers.
- The views of parents, staff and pupils were considered through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Michelle Farr, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

David Mills

His Majesty's Inspector

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