

Inspection of a good school: Brymore Academy

Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 2NB

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 February 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Mark Thomas. The school is part of Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the trust leader, Peter Elliott, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andy Berry.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be a 'Brymore Boy.' They live out the values of respect and working hard through the ethos of the school. For example, boys naturally engage visitors in polite conversation with interest and courtesy. Some pupils told inspectors coming to the school has been 'the making of them'.

In lessons, pupils work hard. Teachers encourage pupils to take risks when they contribute to discussion. Pupils say bullying is unusual. They are confident they have many trusted adults they can talk to if they have a concern. Pupils know the school act promptly to reports of poor behaviour or inappropriate language.

The school has high expectations of pupils in every aspect of its work. As a result, pupils embrace school life. The 'four cornerstones' of the school inspire boys in all year groups to do their best. For example, older pupils take their turn to work on the farm. In the walled garden, many boys manage their own plot. Pupils train and play for the many sports teams. They learn engineering, welding and blacksmithing through the wider development programme. The whole school proudly involve themselves in running open day events, such as the annual country fair.

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

The school has planned an ambitious and sequenced curriculum. It evaluates and revises the curriculum carefully. Teachers ensure pupils rehearse and recap their knowledge

regularly. As a result, pupils remember their learning very well. In mathematics, teachers skilfully make sure pupils secure the knowledge they need to take the next steps. Pupils are confident in their learning.

In agriculture and horticulture, pupils learn about seasonal changes. They build on what they know. For example, over the course of key stage 3, pupils learn each stage of harvesting and pressing apples. Pupils are fully immersed in work on the farm or horticulture through the rotational lessons and additional duties. Consequently, they deepen their knowledge rapidly.

The school offers a specialist curriculum. In addition to the national curriculum subjects, pupils study land skills and engineering. The full suite of subjects for the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is, therefore, not offered. In published outcomes, pupils perform exceptionally well. Pupils make strong progress in English and mathematics. This means pupils are well prepared to move on to Level 3 qualifications when they reach the next stage of their education.

The school has a significantly large group of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure their needs and the strategies to support their learning are explicitly shared with staff. Staff expertly adapt learning and provide support throughout the curriculum. This leads to pupils with SEND performing highly. The positive environment for learning supports all pupils to work hard and do their best.

Pupils appreciate there is a strong expectation to read widely and often. The school tracks this carefully. The school has a sharp focus on knowing what the reading needs of each pupil are. As a result, pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read receive the right help at the right time.

Leaders embed careers education throughout the curriculum. In every subject, pupils consider a broad range of possible careers. Expert visits, workshops and many trips show pupils the breadth of careers in the industries they learn about. Specialists teach the personal, social, health and religious education programme (PSHRE). Pupils learn about relationships and sex education in a timely way.

Pupils relish the vast opportunities for leadership across the school. This might be as a Head of Department in horticulture, an ambassador or part of the senior student leadership team. Roles for leadership carry responsibilities and are highly valued. Through this, pupils contribute to and shape the school.

Staff, parents and pupils praise the school highly. They especially reflect on the inspirational culture of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2015.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	139655
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10298015
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	339
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Berry
Trust Leader	Peter Elliott
Headteacher	Mark Thomas
Website	brymoreacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a large school farm, horticulture facilities, including a walled garden and workshops, including blacksmithing and engineering.
- The school uses one registered and one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school also uses the Apex Centre provision, an educational provision located offsite and part of the trust.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held conversations with the headteacher, senior leaders, the SENCo, trust leaders and the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, agriculture and horticulture, and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors talked with pupils about their school, visited the dining hall and met with representatives from the student senior team.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also viewed the responses to the pupil survey and the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Rachel Hesketh, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gary Schlick

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024