

Inspection of Baxter College

Habberley Road, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY11 5PQ

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 April 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Katie Beech. This school is part of Severn Academies Educational Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Matthew Carpenter, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Monica Guise.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are safe and happy at Baxter College. This is an inclusive school where everyone feels valued. Pupils benefit from positive relationships with staff. They form close friendships with their peers. Parents and carers acknowledge that staff care for their children. Sixth-form students enjoy the support and guidance they are given.

While the school has high expectations of its pupils, they do not achieve as well as they could. This is because the curriculum is not delivered as intended. Over time, some pupils have not been supported effectively to deepen their understanding of their learning. This has resulted in gaps in their knowledge.

Pupils are polite and want to learn. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Lessons are calm, and pupils focus on their learning. If pupils make incorrect behaviour choices, staff are quick to address these and support pupils. Staff apply the school's behaviour expectations consistently.

Pupils benefit from the wide range of activities, trips and clubs on offer. The school carefully matches these opportunities to pupils' talents and interests. Pupils' voice matters. They enjoy contributing to the decisions that are made about their school community. The school ensures that pupils are fully prepared for their future.

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

The intent of the school's curriculum is ambitious for its pupils. It has been organised so that each subject's curriculum is broad and logically sequenced. For example, in geography, pupils' understanding of important concepts such as sustainability and questioning the reliability of data is built over time.

The delivery of the curriculum is variable. Some pupils do not learn as well as they should. Sometimes, teachers do not check what pupils know or the quality of the work they produce. At times, staff do not ensure that pupils understand and act upon the advice they give. This means that pupils do not always deepen or expand their knowledge as well as they should. The school is aware of these issues and has introduced strategies to improve the quality of teaching. These initiatives are beginning to have an impact on pupils' learning.

Reading is a high priority in the school. There is a strong focus on ensuring pupils have extensive opportunities to read. Pupils who struggle with phonics and reading are well supported. Those pupils who fall behind are monitored, and interventions are put in place quickly to help them catch up. Staff have had training to support reading across subjects, and pupils have a say in which texts they will read.

There is a well-structured approach to the transition of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) from primary school. The school has an effective system in place to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. This system is evident in lessons through the use of pupil passports. These have been improved to now reflect the

adaptations that teachers make to meet pupils' needs. The curriculum is adapted effectively to better support pupils with SEND.

Positive relationships are evident between staff and pupils. These relationships are fundamental to supporting improvements in behaviour and attendance. The school has a calm and orderly atmosphere, and classrooms are conducive to learning. When pupils sometimes fail to follow the school's behaviour strategy, they receive timely support to reflect and change their behaviour. Hence, there is a reduction in the rate of suspensions. Attendance is improving. The school prioritises attendance. It uses its positive relationships with pupils and the wider community to support pupils with their attendance.

The school's commitment to enhancing the curriculum beyond the classroom is evident through the 'Baxter Baccalaureate'. The school's programme for pupils' personal development is wide-ranging. For example, pupils' participation in weekly 'engagement 8' sessions offers a variety of enriching opportunities that support the development of broader skills and interests. Year 12 students enjoy cooking sessions, which help to prepare them for independent living.

The school's extra-curricular provision is noteworthy. There are many opportunities for pupils to experience, including the Combined Cadet Force, the school show and educational visits. All pupils participate in the bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Year 9. The school's 'personal growth' programme means that pupils have a clear understanding of how to be independent and respectful to people from other backgrounds. They also know how to look after their physical and mental health and how to stay safe in the wider community. Pupils in all years are well supported with their careers education, training and employment opportunities.

Staff are well supported by leaders and know that their professional development is valued. They are proud to work at the school. The governors and the trust know the school well and are clear on what needs to improve. They hold leaders to account and support the school's ongoing development through well-chosen external partnerships.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not ensured that the improvements to the curriculum are implemented consistently well across subjects. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers have the expertise to implement the curriculum so all pupils can succeed.
- Assessment is not used effectively to address pupils' misconceptions. As a result, pupils do not get sufficient opportunities to deepen their knowledge and understanding as

well as they could do. The school should ensure teachers use assessment appropriately to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

- While there are processes in place to improve attendance, too many pupils are persistently absent. This means that they miss out on learning and are not able to participate in wider opportunities. Attendance should remain a priority so that the attendance of this group of pupils improves quickly.

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	144367
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10378821
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
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	770
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	77
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Monica Guise
CEO of the trust	Matthew Carpenter
Headteacher	Katie Beech
Website	www.baxtercollege.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in September 2024.
- The school is part of the Severn Academies Educational Trust.
- The school makes use of eight settings of alternative provision. Six are registered and two are not.
- 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

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders. The lead inspector held meetings with the CEO and trust leaders, as well as the chair of the trust board and representatives of the local governing body. Inspectors also met with a range of curriculum leaders and staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, art and design, geography and history. 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 also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour and interactions during lessons and at break- and lunchtimes and spoke to many pupils during the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted's Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Andrew Washbourne, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Marie George	Ofsted Inspector
Patrick Amieli	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Steer	Ofsted Inspector

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