

# Belvoir High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120259
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339653
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bob Roberts

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	539
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Malcolm Goff
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Jonathan Sherwin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Barkestone Lane Bottesford Nottingham
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Thirty-one lessons were observed and thirty teachers were seen teaching. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the minutes of meetings, records of monitoring and evaluation, school policy and planning documents and 118 replies to the parent and carer questionnaire, and other questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the attainment and progress of pupils, particularly in Years 10 and 11
- whether the school has, over the last two years, ensured access to a full, flexible and up-to-date curriculum to meet the needs of pupils as they have moved into Years 10 and 11
- the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning with particular respect to Years 10 and 11
- the effectiveness of leadership and management in meeting the challenge of the various developments that have taken place over the last two years.

## Information about the school

At its last inspection, Belvoir High School was a 10-14 school. Since then, it has ceased to take pupils into Year 6 and has become an 11-16 school, with its first cohort of Year 11 pupils about to reach the end of their compulsory schooling. It became a Trust School in February 2008 and was awarded specialist science status from September 2009. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the average. The great majority of pupils are White British and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportions of pupils who find learning difficult or have a statement of special educational needs are below average. The school has received a wide range of awards in recognition of its work in recent years.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Since its last inspection, the school has been through a period of extraordinary change; besides the changes in structure and organisation, there has been an extensive building programme and a substantial growth in the numbers of staff and pupils. Leaders and managers at the school have managed to sustain an ethos which is exceptionally caring and inclusive and at the same time ensure that the high level of pupil achievement has extended into Key Stage 4.

In recent years the achievement of pupils by the end of Year 9 has been outstanding. From starting points that are broadly average, pupils in the school have reached exceptionally high levels of attainment in the core subjects, particularly science. Although national tests at the end of Year 9 no longer take place, inspectors judge that the outstanding progress pupils at the school make during this stage has been sustained. The challenge the school has had since its last inspection has been to continue that rate of progress into Key Stage 4. The school is yet to receive its first full set of GCSE examination results, but inspectors were able to consider a wide range of evidence relating to the standards of work in Years 10 and 11. Inspectors judge that the rate of progress has been sustained and that pupils are on target to achieve what are very challenging targets at GCSE.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. There is a very strong sense of pride in the school, shared by staff and pupils. In this atmosphere, pupils develop as individuals with a strong sense of community and identity as well as confidence. They enjoy school immensely, as shown by the above-average attendance. Large numbers take advantage of the wide range of opportunities open to them, through the curriculum and outside it. They are exceptionally well-prepared for the next stages of their lives.

This academic achievement and outstanding personal development stem from the provision, which is at least good in all respects. Teaching is good. Inspectors could not agree with the school's own evaluation before the inspection that teaching is outstanding. Inspectors watched a large number of lessons, over half of which were observed jointly with school managers. Good progress was seen in most lessons observed. Pupils' excellent attitudes and behaviour and their good collaboration together underpinned their good progress. In some lessons, the needs of particular groups of pupils were not being met sufficiently. The use of assessment during the course of the lessons to gauge understanding and progress requires further development. The explanation for the excellent progress pupils make overall lies partly in the curriculum, which meets pupils' current needs very well. Specialist science status has begun to lead to a broadening of the curriculum available, partly in partnerships with other schools and colleges, although it is too early to judge the full impact of these developments. At the

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heart of pupils' progress is their sense of security at school coupled with their sense of being part of something exciting and new. They know they are well cared for and that everyone around them is ambitious for them.

This ethos of care, coupled with ambition for pupils, stems from the outstanding leadership of the school. Although the role of middle leaders requires some development, so that they play a more significant part in monitoring the quality of provision, there should be no underestimating the achievement of governors, the principal and senior leaders in recent years. The school's development and growth have been led and managed extremely well. It was clear from the questionnaires to parents and carers, staff and pupils that there is a very high level of admiration and trust in the leadership of the school. The amount of work has been immense but there have been underpinning values and principles that have been clear to everybody. All of those involved share a determination that the school will continue to offer high standards of care and education and the capacity to sustain improvement is good.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of teaching further by:
  - ensuring that challenging tasks meet the needs of different groups and individuals within the class
  - developing the effectiveness of assessment in lessons, particularly through the quality of questioning techniques, in order to more effectively gauge pupils' understanding and progress.
- Develop the effectiveness of middle leaders by putting in place consistent and rigorous systems through which they monitor and seek to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**1**

The high standards and outstanding progress that were clear at the last inspection, when the school was being judged on pupils' achievement at Key Stage 3, are being sustained as these pupils have moved into Key Stage 4. Although the school has not yet had a full set of GCSE examination results, the school's records of pupils' progress and the work in their books shows that the attainment of the school's first group of Year 11 pupils is high, reflecting their continued outstanding progress. In science and mathematics, some GCSE examination results have already been received, indicating high attainment. Inspectors scrutinised work in a range of subject areas that confirmed this. In the lessons seen, the excellent attitudes and behaviour of pupils were resulting in at least good progress in the large majority of cases. At the time of the inspection, further confirmation that the school is on track to meet its ambitious targets had recently been received from external evaluations of work in art and physical education. Pupils enjoy their lessons a great deal. The level of commitment to their work is high. They show ambition and interest, responding well to their teachers and working

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productively together. Attendance is consistently above average. Pupils feel safe and secure at school at all times. They are confident that issues they raise will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Their behaviour is exemplary, both in lessons and around the school, contributing to an extremely positive school ethos. Their views about school as reflected in the pupil questionnaire are very positive. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, with many participating in sports opportunities. New catering arrangements have resulted in a dramatic rise in the numbers taking school meals. Although pupils are aware of health issues such as smoking, a significant minority say they are not influenced much by the school in their preparedness to lead healthy lifestyles. Many pupils are involved in aspects of school life, such as work for charity with the local Lions club. Although the school council is active and the school does make efforts to consult pupils, their voice in school affairs could be stronger. Pupils think deeply about their own and others' experience, as suggested by the significant numbers that have recently opted to pursue an examination course in philosophy and ethics. Cultural diversity is celebrated in many ways. Besides their high academic achievement, pupils acquire a range of skills and experience that will benefit them very well in the future. For example, the school's first foray into providing work experience for Year 11 pupils was extremely successful.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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## How effective is the provision?

Very positive relationships exist in all classrooms. Inspectors saw pupils responding to their work with excellent attitudes and saw no disruptive behaviour. They work cooperatively in pairs or in groups. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Most lessons have clear learning objectives and are well structured. Very good use is made of modern computer technology to enhance learning. Pupils are clear about their targets and teachers give pupils a very clear understanding of the level at which they are working. In some cases, teachers were not providing work that matched the particular needs of groups or individuals and were not sufficiently assessing, through their use of questioning, the range and depth of pupils' understanding and progress.

The curriculum was judged outstanding at the school's last inspection. The broad range of subjects provided at Key Stage 3 remains and the needs of particular pupils continue to be met through additional challenge and practical approaches. In the last two years, the school has implemented a broad and balanced curriculum in Key Stage 4. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well through curriculum activities. Very effective partnerships with other local schools and agencies have brought added breadth to the curriculum, successfully enabling small numbers of pupils to have access to a wider range of vocational courses. Large numbers of pupils take advantage of the excellent range of enrichment activities, including sports and the arts. A new vocational centre will shortly be providing for the more diverse needs of future groups of pupils.

Pupils receive exceptional care, guidance and support. The school provides an excellent learning environment. A strong sense of ambition is underpinned by a caring ethos. Staff have excellent knowledge of their pupils, who are known as individuals. The school can point to striking examples where it has helped pupils overcome significant barriers to their education. Attendance is given a high priority. There are excellent transition arrangements for pupils as they enter and leave the school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school continues to benefit from the exceptional leadership provided by the principal and senior staff. Along with governors, leaders communicate a shared vision that is highly ambitious, focused on sustaining the high standards of care and education

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that is provided. This aspirational vision is shared across the staff. During the recent time of growth and change, the school has set challenging targets which it is on track to meet if not exceed. The school has employed a number of strategies, including expert teachers from other schools, examination board advice and guidance, and intensive moderation exercises, to ensure the accuracy of its own evaluations of progress. Middle leaders have been determined to play their part in extending the quality of provision into Years 10 and 11. Their role in monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and pupil progress needs to become more systematic and rigorous in order to sustain the school's recent development.

Governors have played a huge part, with senior leaders, in successfully negotiating and overseeing the changes in the organisation of the school, including the substantial building programme which has taken place. In focusing on these developments, some of the work in terms of policy review and monitoring has fallen behind. For example, while there is no doubting the inclusive ethos and the support given to every pupil, particularly those in challenging circumstances, the school's equality policies are in need of updating. Safeguarding arrangements are very effective with good links to a number of key agencies. The school has excellent links with parents and carers, who were instrumental in the drive to change the school's status. The change to Trust status has developed further what were already extremely strong partnerships with a wide range of local schools, colleges, businesses and the community. Through such partnerships and other initiatives, such as becoming an International school, the promotion of community cohesion is good, although there has been no formal plan or evaluation of its impact. The school provides outstanding value for money. Staff morale is exceptionally high. Although the role of middle leaders has not yet been developed to be sufficiently consistent or rigorous, the determination of all concerned to succeed and the continuing effectiveness of the school over this recent period of exceptional challenge mean that its capacity for sustained improvement is good.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>



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<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## **Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers are very positive in their support for the school. A very small minority felt that the school could do more to keep them informed about the progress that their children were making and could do more to help them support that learning. Inspectors felt that the information and guidance being given, through a range of methods including through new technologies, are good. Parents and carers are very aware that the school has been through a period of transformation in the last two years and a very large majority are positive about the leadership and management of the school during this period.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Belvoir High School and Community Centre to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 539 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	34	63	53	11	9	3	3
The school keeps my child safe	50	42	61	52	6	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	24	71	60	11	9	4	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	31	67	57	9	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	36	31	72	62	5	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	22	66	56	17	14	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	25	78	66	7	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	34	29	60	51	9	8	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	31	62	53	10	8	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	30	62	53	12	10	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	24	63	53	12	10	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	44	37	63	53	6	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	45	52	44	8	7	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



7 May 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Belvoir High School and Community Centre, Nottingham, NG13 0AX

As you know, your school was inspected recently and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. First of all, I would like to thank you for the way in which so many of you greeted and spoke to the inspectors. We enjoyed meeting you and listening to what you had to say.

Belvoir High is an outstanding school. The last few years have been a time of huge change. Throughout this period, all the staff have been determined that the quality of care and education provided should not be affected. It is of great credit to everybody involved that this has been achieved. You have all played your part as well. Although the first full set of GCSE results have not been received, I believe that the outstanding progress that pupils have been making at the school for some time, and the high standards reached, have been extended into Years 10 and 11, and that this will be evident from the GCSE results. Your personal development as individuals is also outstanding. You show pride in the school, behave extremely well, and contribute to its positive atmosphere in a wide range of ways. The school is preparing you exceptionally well for the next stages of your lives.

The school needs to do two things to sustain and improve further the quality of care and education:

The quality of teaching can be improved further by teachers planning to match the work to the needs of groups and individuals better.

Subject leaders need to have a more consistent and rigorous role in checking and improving the quality of the teaching and learning.

I wish you and the school well as it moves 'onwards and upwards'!

Yours sincerely

Bob Roberts

Lead inspector

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