

Inspection of a good school: The Bewdley School

Stourport Road, Bewdley, Worcestershire DY12 1BL

Inspection dates: 11–12 September 2019

Outcome

The Bewdley School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

In this school every pupil matters. The relationships between pupils and teachers are positive. Pupils say they have someone they can talk to if they are worried or upset. They say they enjoy going to school. Staff go the extra mile to help them with their work.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils feel safe in school. On the odd occasions when pupils misbehave pupils say that teachers sort it out straight away. Pupils say that sometimes bullying happens but teachers sort it out quickly.

A strength of the school is the number of trips and activities offered to all pupils. These include trips to Iceland and New York, visits to an outdoor education centre and after-school clubs in music, drama, sport and art.

Teachers want all pupils to do the best they can. For them, this means getting good examination results as well as preparing pupils to be good active citizens. Teachers do this by teaching pupils how to look after their physical and mental health and how to care for others. For example, pupils in the youth forum worked with a local company and the local district council. They launched gumdrop recycling bins in the local community.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the subjects that pupils follow. They make sure pupils study the subjects that will give them the qualifications they need for their future. They guide pupils with their choices. For example, pupils in Year 10 take either a modern foreign language, history, geography, computer science or additional science.

Teachers plan lessons and sequences of lessons well. They help pupils learn more and remember more by linking topics from one year to the next. For example, in geography pupils learn about the continents in Year 7. This helps them to understand where the eco-systems are when they study them in Year 8. Good links are made between subjects. For

example, pupils learn about food chains in both geography and science. However, linking work between subjects needs to be better planned in all subjects. This will help pupils remember more.

In some lessons pupils learn about more than just the subject. For example, Year 12 mathematics students analyse voting patterns using their mathematical skills. This led to a discussion about how the voting system works in England.

The school provides good support and care for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils say they feel safe and happy. Pupils with SEND can study all subjects. For example, the physical education department offers adapted sports. All trips and visits are offered to pupils with SEND. Most pupils with SEND achieve well but staff need more training on how to adapt their teaching so that pupils with SEND achieve their very best.

A small number of pupils with SEND attend alternative provision. The provision meets their needs well. They study a full range of subjects. They get additional support to help them manage their behaviour. The school checks on their well-being and progress regularly.

Staff have high expectations for what all pupils can achieve. Pupils are challenged in their work. In art, for example, the high-quality work of an ex-student is used to show pupils what can be achieved.

Most pupils achieve well at the school. However, disadvantaged pupils' attendance is too low and this is limiting their learning. Leaders know that this is something they need to work on.

Students in the sixth form value the opportunities that are given to them. They say that teachers are ambitious for what they can achieve. For example, teachers have given them advice on how to apply to Oxbridge. Many go on to study at University.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They do what the teacher asks. Pupils say their learning is rarely affected by pupils' poor behaviour. But if pupils are not doing as they are asked, teachers sort this out quickly.

Bullying happens rarely. It does not affect pupils' learning. If it does happen, pupils say that staff, especially their heads of year, sort it out quickly.

Leaders take care of their staff. All staff say they are proud to work at the school. They say they are well supported by leaders.

Governors are committed to the school and its pupils. They play an active part in the life of the school. This includes setting up working parties. For example, a marketing working party is trying to increase the number of students in the sixth form. A bigger sixth form would mean that more subjects could be offered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well and take their welfare seriously. They quickly report any concerns so that appropriate action is taken quickly when needed.

Designated safeguarding leads work well with external agencies. They ensure that pupils and their families get extra help when they need it.

Leaders are aware of the specific risks pupils face in the local area. Pupils are told about this in assemblies and they talk about it with their form tutors in tutor time. The local community police officer visits the school every week to give extra advice and support. Consequently, pupils know how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school provides a high quality of care and nurture for pupils with SEND. Their outcomes could be better. The school needs to make sure that staff are trained better in how to meet pupils' needs. This particularly applies to those pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is too low. This is limiting their progress. The gap is closing but leaders need to find better ways to improve this group of pupils' attendance.
- Curriculum leaders and the teachers in their departments have worked hard to improve what is taught in key stage 3. They have given a lot of thought to how lessons and topics are sequenced, particularly in geography and science. However, to help pupils remember more and learn more, they now need to link what is taught across other subjects.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	135035
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10088403
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	942
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Derek Haskins
Headteacher	Dave Hadley-Pryce
Website	www.bewdley.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 January 2016

Information about this school

- This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the Bewdley school to be good on 25 January 2012.
- Since the previous inspection the school has appointed a new headteacher and two deputy headteachers.
- Four pupils attend alternative provision on a full-time basis at Continu Plus Academy, Kidderminster.
- Three pupils receive their education from the medical education team organised by the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher (special educational needs coordinator) and the curriculum support manager. An inspector spoke to the school improvement adviser on the telephone.
- The inspection focused deeply on mathematics, English, art and geography. We met with curriculum leaders, teachers from the four departments and groups of pupils. We visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- An inspector checked the school's single central record and the procedures for the recruitment of staff. An inspector met with the designated safeguard lead and checked pupils' records. Inspectors spoke to staff and pupils to find out how pupils are kept safe.
- Inspectors reviewed the 69 responses on Parent View, the 57 responses from the staff survey and the 234 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lesley Yates, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gwen Onyon

Ofsted Inspector

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