

# Bishopsgarth School

Harrowgate Lane, Bishopsgarth, Stockton-on-Tees TS19 8TF

## Inspection dates

26–27 January 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable within and between subjects. As a result, pupils do not make good progress in all subjects.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning has not been sharp enough in identifying key areas for improvement nor swift enough in addressing them.
- The methods used to monitor teaching place an emphasis on compliance with systems rather than focusing on those aspects of teachers' practice that will promote faster learning.
- The expectations of some teachers of what pupils can do and understand are too low. Consequently, pupils of all abilities, including the most able, are not sufficiently challenged and the pace of learning can be too slow.
- Leaders have not developed the capacity of subject leaders to drive improvements in their subjects quickly enough. As a result, improvements in the quality of teaching have not been rapid enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and governors have acted robustly to tackle inadequate teaching and in applying more rigorous performance management processes.
- The school has a strong caring ethos and teachers are wholly committed to meeting the needs of the most vulnerable pupils.
- Teachers have built a genuinely inclusive environment where positive relationships exist between pupils with a range of differing needs.
- The consistently strong quality of teaching in mathematics is improving outcomes for pupils.

## Full report

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

- Improve the leadership of teaching, learning and assessment at all levels by:
  - setting clear and manageable priorities for improving teaching that staff can act upon
  - increasing the rigour of the monitoring of standards of teaching so that key areas for improvement are clearly identified and swiftly addressed
  - developing the role and capacity of subject and other middle leaders in the process of monitoring and evaluation
  - introducing coherent strategies to improve the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the school
  - closely matching teacher training and development to school priorities.
- Raise achievement so that it is consistently good in all subjects by:
  - improving the quality of teaching so that it matches the best practice that exists in the school
  - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations for the quality of pupils' work
  - developing the learning behaviours of pupils so that they acquire the skills that will enable them to make better progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The actions to eradicate inadequate teaching have not been matched by actions to build better-quality teaching. While the recruitment of middle leaders has proved challenging, existing middle leaders have not been given effective guidance in identifying key areas for improvement. Their monitoring of pupils' work has lacked rigour, resulting in uneven standards across the school.
- The quality of work in pupils' books and folders varies considerably within and between subjects, reflecting uneven implementation of policies and inconsistent expectations.
- The leadership of teaching and learning has not been effective. Despite new monitoring systems, the vision of teaching lacks focus on those key aspects of practice that can improve learning. On occasions, leaders are more concerned with compliance with systems than those simple improvements to pace in lessons and the quality of work in books that can lead to better learning.
- The headteacher and governors have a clear vision for the future of the school and of the actions that will support its continued improvement. They have acted decisively to tackle inadequate teaching, resulting in substantial staff turnover and a heightened use of performance management processes to challenge the weakest teaching. They have been resolute in driving through these necessary changes. However, the impact of these changes is not yet consistently evident within teaching and learning.
- Leaders acted determinedly to ensure that considerable support was put in place for pupils in 2015 in a climate of turbulent staffing change. These actions helped to secure the improved outcomes for Year 11 pupils with 40% achieving five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics. However, the time and energy spent addressing these urgent priorities have impacted on the pace of long-term strategic improvement.
- The curriculum is generally appropriate for pupils in the school. A new mastery curriculum has been introduced at Key Stage 3 that places a focus on securely acquiring key skills and understanding before progressing to new topics. It is too early to see any clear impact of this approach although lessons observed in Key Stage 3 did not reflect this increased challenge.
- The actions of leaders to improve attendance and support those vulnerable to exclusion are a strength. Leaders have a close awareness of the individual circumstances of vulnerable pupils and work determinedly with pupils, parents and a range of support services within and beyond the school to address their needs.
- The school provides for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils through a planned programme of activities that link assemblies, tutor time and the new flexible learning days. The overwhelming majority of pupils show tolerance and respect for those who are different, particularly those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. There are some opportunities for extra-curricular activities in subjects such as art, music and physical education. However, overall provision is limited and participation is relatively low.
- Pupil premium funding (additional funding for disadvantaged pupils who are entitled to free school meals or are looked after) has been used in part to improve outcomes through the provision of one-to-one tuition in English and mathematics. The employment of key staff including a parental support adviser, an inclusion manager and a behaviour support therapist have tackled some of the more entrenched barriers that limit achievement for some pupils. In 2015, gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally narrowed against all key indicators and there is evidence that they are continuing to narrow.
- Leaders monitor and review the wider aspects of the learning and development of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at regular review and planning meetings. This ensures that these pupils are well supported and effectively integrated. However, the wider tracking of the progress of this key group of pupils in subjects is not sharp enough.
- Local authority support has strengthened some aspects of self-evaluation and contributed to the accurate view that the headteacher has of the school. Additional specialist support has plugged gaps in key subjects such as English and helped with the moderation of standards. However, the actions leading to improvements in 2015 have not been sustained at the same pace since September and the headteacher and governing body, with the support of the local authority, are exploring additional capacity for support.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Following a review of governance, the governing body was reconstituted in January 2015 and

considerably strengthened. New governors with expertise in education, finance and governance itself have added considerable capacity. They have supported the headteacher in tackling inadequate teaching, resulting in a considerable turnover of staff.

- The reconstituted governing body has a skill set that enables them to hold leaders more firmly to account, as reflected in the meetings held with middle leaders following the disastrous outcomes for Year 11 pupils in 2014. This intolerance of failure and their increased challenge to middle leaders contributed to the improved outcomes for pupils in 2015.
- Governors monitor progress closely and ask increasingly challenging questions on pupil progress and the accuracy of assessment.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school meets all statutory requirements for safeguarding. Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture that places the welfare of children at the heart of the school. Staff are appropriately trained in child protection and pupils are taught about dangers such as radicalisation within the curriculum. Considerable action is taken to minimise risks to the most vulnerable pupils. Appropriate referrals are made to social care and these are thoroughly followed through. In both parental and pupil questionnaires, statements referring to pupil safety received highly positive scores. A number of governors are trained in safer recruitment and a suitably trained governor is present when appointments are made.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching has shown some improvement as much has been done to eradicate inadequate teaching. Despite this, much variability in the quality of teaching and assessment still exists, both within and between subjects, and as a result pupils are not making consistently good progress.
- On too many occasions, lessons lack challenge and pace, with too much time spent on unnecessary consolidation rather than embracing new learning. Planning does not always take sufficient account of what children already know and activities did not sustain their interest, limiting progress.
- In too many lessons, pupils remain passive and do not demonstrate learning attributes that enable them to get the most from their learning. Questions in class are often directed at a narrow range of pupils, or answered by teachers themselves, allowing pupils to rely on the responses of others. Teachers do not always use questions to probe understanding and as a result do not modify their teaching deftly enough to ensure good progress. Actions to encourage oral communication skills have not had sufficient impact.
- Where teaching is strongest, pupils are challenged by teachers who have a clear awareness of pupils' abilities and the teaching that is required to drive their progress. For example, in mathematics, there was consistent evidence of planning informed by progress information and teachers who adapted teaching to move the learning on when pupils had demonstrated understanding. Clear routines and high expectations of work secured good progress in health and social care.
- Although in discussions pupils identified an increase in the amount of homework they receive, questionnaires provided a more mixed picture and 40% of parents disagreed with the statement that their child received appropriate homework for their age. Senior leaders confirmed that children do not receive enough homework, leading to a lack of opportunities to purposefully extend their learning.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum lacks coherence and at present there is no clear way of assessing the impact of strategies on pupil progress. In some lessons, teachers use helpful prompts to support pupils' writing and develop their vocabulary, but this approach to supporting learning is not consistently evident. Rarely do teachers use information on pupils' reading ages to pitch work accordingly.
- The approach to providing pupils with feedback on what they are doing well and how to improve weaker areas of their work is highly variable. This is an aspect of teaching, learning and assessment that requires review and revision by senior leaders.
- Teaching in the additionally resourced provision for pupils with physical disabilities is consistent with that in the main school.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistently positive and this affects the progress they make. On occasions, they lack confidence in their abilities and this can restrict their engagement in learning and their willingness to articulate and develop views and opinions.
- Pupils feel safe at school. In both parental and pupil questionnaires, statements referring to pupil safety received highly positive scores. The safe curriculum addresses subjects such as bullying and child sexual exploitation to help pupils identify and avoid possible risks to their safety.
- The school is an extremely caring environment that commits fully to the needs of its most vulnerable pupils. Intensive support is provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, while the emotional welfare of pupils is addressed through a range of counselling services.
- Much work has been done to improve attendance which is now broadly in line with national averages, and there is convincing evidence that the school is doing well to sustain attendance, given the challenging circumstances of its most vulnerable pupils.
- Careers education and guidance is well led and managed and contributes positively to pupils' personal development and well-being.
- Staff in the additionally resourced provision for pupils with physical disabilities ensure that those pupils are well cared for and integrated as far as possible into school routines.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Exclusion figures are high and the figures for this academic year are already higher than for the whole of 2014/15. This reflects higher expectations through zero tolerance of behaviours such as physical violence towards others. It remains to be seen if this deterrent will work and figures subside once pupils accept that poor behaviour will not be tolerated. The good practice of staff in the learning support unit is beginning to have an impact on pupils at risk of permanent exclusion.
- Behaviour in lessons is calm. Pupils show respect for staff and their peers and are largely self-disciplined. They are punctual to lessons and behaviour around the site is generally orderly.
- The school does have incidents of bullying, a view that was reflected in the pupil questionnaire where 28% of pupils disagreed with the statement that there was little bullying in the school. However, almost all pupils believed that bullying incidents would be dealt with effectively by staff. These views were confirmed in the formal discussions held with inspectors.

## Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- In 2015, the percentage of pupils who achieved five A\* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics rose to 40%, a 13% increase on the extremely poor results of the previous year. The percentage of pupils who received A\* to C grades in English and mathematics alone was 49%, emphasising the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in other subjects.
- In 2015, pupil progress improved in English and mathematics. In English, expected progress increased by 23% on the extremely weak figures of 2014. In mathematics, rates of progress were even stronger such that the percentage of pupils making expected and more than expected levels of progress are now more closely in line with national figures. These improvements are a result of better teaching and considerable additional support.
- Current assessment shows an overall upward trend in attainment and progress, but within this there remains considerable variation between subjects and groups of pupils which further reflects inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Progress in mathematics continues to accelerate as a result of strongly improving teaching. This was evident in lessons and in the positive comments of pupils in meetings with inspectors. The high expectations, thorough planning and sharp assessment are leading to consistently strong outcomes.
- The outcomes for disadvantaged pupils improved significantly in 2015 in both attainment and progress from a low base in the previous year. The gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally have narrowed over a three-year period, showing that strategies to close the gaps are

beginning to have an impact. At present, the school's own assessments show faster gains by disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 3. However, inspectors' reviews of pupils' work and observations of teaching found significant weaknesses in literacy remain for disadvantaged pupils, and these are not being tackled robustly in classrooms. In Key Stage 4, gaps are narrowing more quickly in mathematics than in English.

- In Year 11, wide gaps still exist between boys and girls in their attainment and expected levels of progress. These gaps are narrowing in mathematics in Year 10 but persist elsewhere.
- The current progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at Key Stage 3 varies considerably across subjects and cohorts, reflecting the uneven quality of teaching across the school. This variation is also seen in the additionally resourced provision for pupils with physical disabilities.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111733
<b>Local authority</b>	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10011306

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	551
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jan Anderson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Henderson
<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 586262
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bishopsgarth.org">www.bishopsgarth.org</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:enquiry@bishopsgarth.org">enquiry@bishopsgarth.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28–29 January 2014

## Information about this school

- Bishopsgarth is a smaller-than-average secondary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The school has an additionally resourced provision for pupils with physical disabilities who travel from across the local authority area to be educated.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.
- The school has its own internal exclusion unit to support better behaviour.
- The school is supported through a school improvement adviser and through specialist leaders of education in collaboration with Stockton-on-Tees local authority.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 32 part-lessons, a number of which were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors carried out scrutinies of pupils' work with senior leaders and looked at pupils' work in their visits to classrooms.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, and additional members of staff. Discussions were also held with the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke formally to pupils in a series of meetings and informally in lessons and around the school.
- The inspection team looked at documents provided by the school, including the school's self-evaluation and its development plan; safeguarding documents and those relating to attendance and behaviour; pupil progress information; records of the monitoring of teaching and learning; and local authority monitoring and evaluation reports.
- Inspectors took into account 15 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, 10 responses to the online pupil questionnaire and 388 pupil responses to the school's own questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector

Cathryn Kirby

Nicholas Whittaker

John Paddick

Her Majesty's Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

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 looked after children, 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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

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 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2016

