

# Brigshaw High School and Language College

Brigshaw Lane, Allerton Bywater, Castleford, West Yorkshire, WF10 2HR

**Inspection dates** 15–16 May 2013

|                                |                      |             |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Good        | 2        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good        | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Students achieve well in nearly all subjects. Their achievement in English is outstanding. Attainment is above average and is much higher than at the time of the last inspection.
- The school's accurate tracking data show that the current Year 11 students are set to make even better progress given their starting points.
- As a result of the good and sometimes outstanding teaching they receive, students make good progress from their below-average starting points throughout their time at school.
- Students who are disabled or who have special educational needs achieve well also.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons and around school are good overall. They are extremely proud of their school and say they feel safe and well cared for.
- Relationships with teachers are extremely strong, with one student commenting, 'Teachers work really hard for us so we can do our best.'
- Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, keep a keen eye on how well the school is doing. The headteacher and her effective leadership team give a clear steer to the staff. The leadership of teaching and learning is very effective. Consequently, this is an improving school.
- The sixth form is good. As a result of good leadership and management and better teaching, students' achievement has improved significantly since the last inspection.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Teachers do not always provide more-able students with work that challenges them. Consequently, some higher-attaining students, particularly in mathematics and science, do not achieve as well as they could.
- In a small minority of lessons students' behaviour is not always as good as it could be. Strategies to manage behaviour are not applied consistently by all teachers.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 53 lessons and 52 teachers. Four lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders. Tutor periods were observed, as was one school assembly.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including those relating to how the school cares for and protects students, development planning, the monitoring of the quality of teaching and, also, information about teachers’ professional development and their performance management.
- Discussions were held with school leaders and managers, including the Principal and vice principal, the head of the sixth form and several middle leaders. Discussions took place with four members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body and a separate meeting was held with a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also met with five groups of students representing all ages in the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 53 parental responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the school’s own surveys of feedback from parents. The lead inspector also held two telephone conversations with parents.
- The 78 responses to the staff questionnaire given out during the inspection were analysed.

## Inspection team

|                                |                      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Anthony Briggs, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Jane Alexander                 | Additional Inspector |
| Mary Lanovy-Taylor             | Additional Inspector |
| James McGrath                  | Additional Inspector |
| Jonathan Woodyatt              | Additional Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is bigger than the average sized 11 to 18 secondary school.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is above average.
- The proportions that are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are broadly average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly in line with the national average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority).
- The school has specialist facilities for students with physical and learning difficulties.
- The school is part of the Brigshaw Trust, which consists of a partnership with seven local primary schools.
- The school works in partnership with Temple Moor High School to offer a broader range of subjects in the sixth form.
- The school meets the current government floor standards that set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that all students, including the most able, secure high levels of achievement in relation to national figures by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of how hard the more-able students can work and through setting work that challenges them in every lesson, particularly in mathematics and science
  - providing students with sharper, clearer instructions so that learning starts earlier in lessons
  - increasing the proportion of lessons in which students are presented with a range of activities that enable them to be actively and independently involved in their learning
  - ensuring that all students behave as well as they should in every lesson.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students' prior attainment on entry has been declining and is now below average. Over the last three years attainment by the end of Year 11 has been above average overall and students achieve well over time. Attainment in relation to the proportion of students gaining five GCSE grades at A\* to C including English and mathematics has risen significantly since the time of the last inspection.
- Attainment has been consistently above average in English and significantly above in English literature. Attainment in art and design, German and physical education was significantly above average in 2012.
- The percentage of students securing the higher grades of A\* and A in 2012 was lower than that seen nationally, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Although the proportion of students that make expected progress in relation to their individual starting points compares favourably with national figures, the school is aware that not enough students who enter the school at the higher levels are making good progress, particularly in mathematics and science. The school's own data and inspection evidence show that the current Year 11 students are on track to make much better progress.
- The policy for entering students early for examinations in mathematics has been reviewed as it previously limited the potential of the most able students. Now, if any student does not make at least expected progress they are re-entered for the examination. In 2012 the school experimented with entering the whole cohort for the GCSE statistics course. As this was unsuccessful, only selected students are now entered for this examination.
- As a result of good use of government funding, the attainment gap in English and mathematics between those students known to be eligible for free school meals and those that are not, when average points scores are measured, is closing and is the equivalent of half a GCSE behind. Their progress compares favourably with the national picture. Good use is also made of the Year 7 catch-up funding, particularly in relation to the support given to underachieving students in the nurture groups. Consequently, the school is successful in promoting equality of opportunity.
- Students who are disabled and those with special educational needs, including those with physical and learning difficulties for whom specialist provision is made, make good progress and achieve in line with their classmates because their needs are expertly identified and supported extremely well by the array of high-quality support staff and the provision within the specialist resource area.
- There is an appropriate level of awareness of the importance of literacy across the school. Students read a good range of books and make good use of the library facilities. Overall, they achieve well in literacy and mathematics.
- The progress that students make throughout the sixth form is good and improving, helped by the high proportion of specialist teaching and the sixth form's strengthening overall effectiveness.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Students make good progress and attain well because of the good, and occasionally outstanding, quality of teaching they receive over their time in school. Although some of the teaching is outstanding, there is not yet enough to ensure that all students make outstanding progress. In addition, it is not yet consistently good or better as there is a small proportion of teaching, particularly in science and mathematics, that requires improvement.
- The teaching of English is extremely good. There is a consistency of practice throughout the department that ensures that all students, irrespective of their starting points, make at least

good progress. Students are successfully taught a wide range of literacy skills that enable them to do particularly well in English and in English literature examinations. The teaching of and achievement in literacy within other subjects is good but is not consistent. The development of numeracy within other subjects is less strong.

- Students are appreciative of the good-quality teaching they receive. One stated, 'Teachers always have time to help us work things out.' Several stated that the strength of the school was the quality of its teachers.
- The resourced support provided for students with learning and physical difficulties is of high quality. Teaching observed in this area was outstanding.
- Key strengths of teaching lie in teachers' secure subject knowledge and the way they ask probing questions to check the depth of students' understanding. In many lessons the pace of learning was brisk and resulted in students making accelerated progress. The quality of teachers' planning and feedback is also a strength, as was seen in a Year 7 English lesson where marking was highly informative and diagnostic, enabling students to understand exactly what aspect they needed to focus on in order to make better progress. As a result, progress was rapid for all students, irrespective of their starting points.
- In a minority of lessons observed, some of the strengths identified in the best lessons were missing. In some lessons teachers do not match the work to the needs of the students, choosing to provide a 'one size fits all' approach to delivering a lesson. In these lessons students' progress was mixed and higher-attaining students, in particular, were not stretched enough because the work given to them was too easy. Other weaknesses included teachers talking for extended periods of time, resulting in a slower pace of learning, particularly at the start of lessons when instructions lacked clarity, and students becoming restless and, on very rare occasions, misbehaving. In a few lessons seen, teachers did not provide students with a wide enough range of activities to enable them to work independently or collaboratively.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good and some seen during the inspection was outstanding. The quality of teaching is promoting better achievement in both Year 12 and Year 13.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Students' attitudes to learning are good overall. They enjoy school and behave well in the vast majority of lessons and as they move around the school. They are polite to each other and adults and show respect towards each other's viewpoints.
- The majority of parents and staff who responded to questionnaires consider behaviour over time to be good. A very small amount of low-level disruption was observed during the inspection. However, due to the inclusive approach of the school several students have particular behavioural issues that are generally managed extremely well, although on occasion they flare up and become difficult to control.
- The school considers the personal development of the students to be a major priority. Staff work relentlessly to ensure that students flourish in a safe and caring environment. The school is fully inclusive in the way it welcomes all students into its community. Consequently, students hold their school in high regard and are very proud of it.
- Students say that they feel very safe in school and understand how to keep themselves safe, including when using modern technologies. They are keen to point out that bullying, including racism and homophobic bullying, is rare. Staff and students do not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- Overall attendance rates compare well with the national average. The proportion of students who are persistently absent is reducing and punctuality is good.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The school is led extremely well by the headteacher. She has very high expectations and is held in high regard by the students, staff and parents. Two students spontaneously described the headteacher as 'amazing' and comments on staff questionnaires indicated a high level of confidence in the headteacher and the leadership of the school.
- Leaders and managers understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their forensic analysis, combined with a total lack of complacency, ensures good capacity to improve further. However, some identified weaknesses have had their significance underestimated, for example the number of more-able students who did not make four levels of progress in mathematics.
- The leadership and management of the quality of teaching are of high quality. Accurate records are kept and systems to identify and support weaker teachers have been successful.
- Performance management targets are appropriate but some are not particularly challenging. Underperformance in teaching is tackled robustly and salary rises are approved only when teachers' performance justifies them.
- Leaders are aware that some teachers' expectations are not high enough, particularly in relation to the more-able students, and that the management of behaviour is not always consistent. These issues are being tackled through targeted coaching and mentoring, and good practice is becoming more widely rooted.
- Middle leaders are held to account for the performance within their subjects. They, in turn, hold their teachers to account for students' progress and the quality of teaching.
- The curriculum, including that of the sixth form, is regularly reviewed and adjusted. Leaders have tried out a variety of initiatives, some of which have been taken on and others left by the wayside. The result is a curriculum that matches the needs and aspirations of the students well.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted through different subjects and through encouragement to participate in multicultural activities such as the Brigshaw Trust 2012 Olympics project, which saw 200 international children from 10 different countries joining 4000 children from the Trust at Brigshaw for a week of Olympics-related sporting and cultural activities.
- The leadership and management of the sixth form are good and have resulted in many aspects improving since the previous inspection.
- Some external support is provided by the local authority, but as the school is deemed to require a 'light touch' approach it is currently limited to termly visits by the link adviser.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity very well. Safeguarding processes and procedures are of high quality and all current requirements are met.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The highly effective governing body understands the context in which the school works. It has its finger on the pulse, understands how well students are making progress and holds leaders to account accordingly. Strengths and weaknesses of teaching are known and governors are clear about how the performance of staff is managed and linked to pay progression. There is a clear understanding of how the pupil premium funding is spent and how its impact is evaluated.

## What inspection judgements mean

| School  |                      |  |
|---------|----------------------|--|
| Grade   | Judgement            | Description  |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding          | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
| Grade 2 | Good                 | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.   |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate           | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

## School details

|                                |        |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 108090 |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Leeds  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 413399 |

This inspection of the school 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>                    | 11–18               |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                       | Mixed               |
| <b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>     | Mixed               |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>    | 1,287               |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b> | 193                 |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                  | The governing body  |
| <b>Chair</b>                                  | Martin Dove         |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                            | Cath Lennon         |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>     | 2 December 2009     |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                       | 0113 336 8100       |
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