

# Bridgnorth Endowed School

Northgate, Bridgnorth, WV16 4ER

**Inspection dates** 21–22 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Sixth form provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Achievement in English and mathematics is inadequate. Too many students underachieve by the end of Key Stage 4.
- Disadvantaged students and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs make much less progress than they should. This is because gaps in their learning are not identified or addressed adequately.
- Teaching is inadequate. There is too much variability in the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics and science.
- Marking, particularly in English, is inconsistent and the advice given to students will not help them to make faster progress.
- Less-able students are often not given enough support to help them to make progress with tasks; while more-able students are often bored because work is not challenging enough.
- Action taken by school leaders to improve teaching and learning has been slow to start. It is too soon to see the difference this is making.
- Students are entered for GCSEs inappropriately early. They have not been prepared well enough to ensure they achieve the top grades, and are not sufficiently prepared for sixth form studies.
- Students in the sixth form do not make enough progress, particularly at AS level.
- Behaviour in lessons is not consistently good enough and is not always well managed by teachers. Behaviour and attendance information is not checked rigorously enough by school leaders.
- Inaccurate teacher assessments mean that school leaders are unable to use this information with confidence to plan actions to improve the school.
- Senior leaders have an inaccurate view of the school and governors are, therefore, led to believe the school is better than it is. Governors do not have the skills needed to hold senior leaders to account.

### The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is improving due to new systems to manage poor behaviour in lessons.
- Students are kept safe.
- The sixth form programme of study ensures personal, social and employability skills are well developed. All students in Year 12 complete a work experience.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 lessons taught by 29 teachers, including three that were observed jointly with senior leaders. A number of short visits to lessons were also carried out in mathematics and physical education and in form time.
- Inspectors observed students at breaks and lunchtimes and an inspector also observed a house assembly. One inspector visited the newly formed 'consequences room'. There were no students withdrawn from lessons at that time.
- An inspector was shown around the school by two students from Year 9, to find out their views of the school. Inspectors met formally with four groups of students and also spoke with students during social times as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders and subject leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors; and the school's improvement adviser from the local authority.
- The inspection team considered the views of 38 parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire, and a letter written by a parent to inspectors. The views of 61 staff who completed Ofsted's staff questionnaire were analysed.
- A variety of information was analysed about examination results, students' progress, their attendance and behaviour and other aspects of students' personal development and achievement. The inspection team also viewed a range of documents including reports written on self-evaluation and records related to keeping students safe.

## Inspection team

Denah Jones, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Suha Ahmad

Additional Inspector

Judith Long

Additional Inspector

Colin Lower

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- Bridgnorth Endowed School converted to become an academy school on 1 March 2013. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be 'satisfactory' overall.
- The school is similar in size to the average secondary school and has a sixth form which it shares with a neighbouring secondary school forming the Bridgnorth Sixth Form Partnership.
- Virtually all students are white British, with a very small number of students from other minority ethnic backgrounds. There are very few students who speak English as an additional language.
- A much smaller proportion of students than seen nationally are supported by pupil premium funding, which provides additional government funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is average.
- There are currently 16 students who attend alternative or off-site provision, including four that are dual-registered in both school and their alternative provision. Students attend one of the local partnership secondary schools for 'WAVE' provision for one day each week in addition to a range of part-time work placement opportunities which includes a local garage, a pet store, a golf club and Bridgnorth Town Council.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard for 2013, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 4.

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

- Improve teaching, especially in English, mathematics and science, so that all students experience teaching which accelerates their progress by:
  - making sure that work is marked correctly and teacher assessments are accurate
  - improving the quality of feedback given to students so that corrections can be done quickly and more time is spent in filling gaps in learning or challenging students to think harder about their work
  - planning work that builds on what students already know, using accurate assessment information to guide this
  - making sure that all students, in particular the most-able, are given work that is hard enough to make them have to think about what they are doing and keep them interested
  - making sure that the least-able can make progress without being overly reliant on help from the teacher or others.
- Make sure that more students, including those that are disadvantaged, make at least the progress they should in English and mathematics, and in the sixth form, through:
  - more frequent and accurate checks on their learning
  - providing precisely targeted work to fill gaps in their learning where these are identified.
- Carry out an urgent review of the curriculum for students in Key Stages 3 and 4 to ensure that:
  - no more students are entered for GCSE examinations before they are ready to achieve the top grades
  - where students have already achieved grades below the top grades, they are provided with opportunities

to continue with these subjects and to deepen their knowledge to prepare them better for study post-16.

- Improve leadership at all levels, including governance, so that this becomes more strategic by:
  - making sure all leaders have the necessary skills and understanding to be able to use assessment information to quickly identify where things are going wrong
  - improve the accuracy of leaders' evaluations of the work of the school including using information about students' achievement in judging the quality of teaching
  - regularly reviewing information on behaviour and attendance, in particular that of disadvantaged students and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, and checking the ways to improve behaviour and attendance are actually making a difference.

An external review of governance, and of the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are inadequate

- School leaders reacted slowly to the sharp decline in students' attainment and progress in mathematics in 2013 and a similar decline in English in 2014. Many of the strategies to drive improvements to teaching and learning have only recently been introduced. It is too soon to see if these are going to make any difference for students currently at the school. There was some improvement in the proportion of students gaining A\*-C mathematics GCSE grades in 2014.
- Pupil premium funding is not being used effectively to make a difference to the disadvantaged students it is aimed to support. The very wide gaps in attainment and progress between disadvantaged students and others in the school are showing little sign of closing.
- Students are being entered inappropriately early for a wide range of GCSE subjects in Years 9 and 10. Some of these students who do not attain the top grades at GCSE are reluctant to re-take the examination in subsequent years. Many of those who do attain an A or A\* have a gap of one to two years before they can embark on sixth form study. They are therefore insufficiently prepared to start their studies in this, or any other, sixth form. The practice of early entry has now stopped in English and mathematics.
- School leaders, including governors, do not have a realistic view of students' achievements, the quality of teaching or behaviour in the school.
- Senior leaders do not routinely analyse patterns of unacceptable behaviour or rates of attendance. They are unaware of particular concerns with groups of students, such as the disadvantaged, those with special educational needs or disabilities and those in alternative provision and do not know if actions to improve behaviour and attendance are making a difference for these groups.
- Insufficient priority has been given to English and mathematics; there has been a focus on getting a C grade at the expense of checking all students make the progress they should in these subjects. This has led to leaders missing areas of concern such as the slow progress being made by many disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- Indications of likely outcomes for GCSE results have been widely off the mark and therefore school leaders have been unable to rely on this information to check on progress. The decline in results in 2014 was therefore not anticipated. Assessment is now improving at Key Stage 4 through using checks on learning which more closely match the requirements of the GCSE examinations. Improvements are not being seen at Key Stage 3 where teacher assessments continue to be unreliable.
- The school has not yet started to consider alternative approaches to assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels. However, the recently appointed subject leader for mathematics has introduced new schemes of learning based on the new National Curriculum for mathematics.
- School leaders have failed to make the link between the quality of teaching and students' progress. This is now improving and, from this academic year, checks on teachers' performance are using information on achievement to set challenging targets for teachers.
- Until recently, the rigour with which some subject leaders monitor the work of their departments has been weak. However, this is improving and there is now a 'monitoring schedule' which ensures all subject leaders understand the quality assurance processes that are expected of them. The best practice is demonstrated by leaders who are diligent in the way they carry out checks on students' progress. They use frequent checks on work in books and identify precisely targeted strategies to accelerate progress so that students catch-up with others.
- From observations of teaching, senior leaders identify areas for improvement across the school and have recently introduced strategies such as teachers working together to improve their practice. This is in addition to whole staff training on common areas of need.

- The quality of support paid for by the school has been variable. This is particularly evident in the recent inaccurate review of the school. The support provided by the school improvement adviser, commissioned from the local authority, is effective and has driven improvements in the areas identified as having greatest need.
- Students receive good quality independent careers advice from Year 8, including in the sixth form. The personal, social, health and citizenship education course covers areas such as e-safety, gang crime, drugs and alcohol abuse and helps students to make informed choices. However, there is less focus on the promotion of British values and raising awareness of how to keep safe from extremist views.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the school should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors do not have the necessary skills to challenge school leaders and to hold them to account using data on the school's performance. Neither do they have enough information on progress across all key stages to give them an accurate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
  - Governors do not know enough about strengths and weaknesses in teaching. However, they are able to explain what has been done to tackle underperformance and know why teachers have not been allowed to make progress on the salary scale due to concerns about their performance.
  - Records of Governing Body meetings confirm that questions are asked of senior leaders, but do not show if actions have been agreed in response.
  - Governors know how the pupil premium funding is being spent and know the gaps are not closing rapidly enough but have failed to do anything about this. They were not aware of inadequacies on the school website such as there being no information on the difference being made by the pupil premium funding. They were also unaware that the 'SEN Policy' had expired and that other policies are overly detailed making them inaccessible to some parents.
  - The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meets statutory requirements and are effective, as seen in a recent concern which was reported immediately to the local authority designated officer and effective action was taken in response.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement.
- In some lessons there is low level disruption because teachers fail to match the work set to students' needs. Where students are given work to do in lessons that interests them and where they feel challenged, they show excellent attitudes to learning.
- Students told inspectors there are some lessons where teachers do not control the class as well as others, which was confirmed by inspectors' observations of lessons. Senior leaders know who these teachers are, and are providing support to help them with classroom management.
- In an assembly, students lined up quietly before leading in to the assembly hall, sensibly, and with minimal supervision. Students generally treat each other, and adults, with respect and they move around the school site between lessons, at breaks and lunchtimes in a responsible way.
- Students work well together in groups and inspectors saw this in an 'Opening Minds' lesson involving the creative arts. A group of more-able boys thoroughly enjoyed their computer science lesson in which they were committed to supporting one another to improve their understanding which made a marked difference to their rapid progress.
- Staff have welcomed the new 'three strikes' behaviour management system which, together with the 'consequences room' used to withdraw and support students with particular concerns about behaviour, they say is starting to make a difference and behaviour is improving. There were no students in the 'consequences room' during the inspection.

- There have been two permanent exclusions, upheld by governors, in the last year for serious behavioural incidents. The number of temporary exclusions is low.
- Students move quickly between lessons or at the end of breaks and lunchtimes. There are very few students who are late at the start of the school day. The 'same day' detention is an effective deterrent.
- Students in the sixth form often need to travel from this school to the partner school for lessons. There are no punctuality concerns or concerns about their behaviour as students move between sites, or in the partner school.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement.
- Awareness of other faiths and cultures is not a strong feature of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences, in this is the reason that the work to keep students safe requires improvement. They do have opportunities for a wide range of enrichment activities such as sports and music.
- Students know about the different forms that bullying can take including cyber-bullying. Bullying incidents are rare and students told inspectors they are confident that, when they tell an adult, it will be quickly dealt with and will stop.
- The threats posed by gang culture and knife crime are understood by students and they know how to keep themselves safe.
- Attendance is similar to the national average and is improving slightly.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- Inadequate teaching over time has resulted in too many students failing to make the progress they should in English and in mathematics. There is too much variability in the quality of teaching across the school and within subjects such as mathematics and science.
- The policy of early GCSE entry has created a culture where students that are unsuccessful in their first attempt at a GCSE examination can 'have another go' at a later date. These low expectations have led to poor attitudes to learning in some subjects. More-able students have mistakenly come to generally like this strategy because they think, erroneously, they would not be capable of taking eight or nine exams at the end of Year 11.
- Teachers do not use the information about what students can already do in planning work of the right level of difficulty for them. Inspectors saw lessons where less-able students were unable to start tasks because they were too difficult, and more-able students were bored because they were repeating work they could already do. Work in student books showed this has continued for some time, with low ability students being unable to complete very much work in a lesson, while more-able students found time to doodle or to colour-in squares in their mathematics books.
- Sometimes too much time is spent on 'Fix It', where students are given time to respond to teachers' comments given in marking, and valuable time to learn new work is lost. Students make good progress when the time spent at the start of lessons on improving their work is short, before quickly moving to the main focus of the lesson.
- Students do not always show pride in their work. Sometimes work is poorly presented, such as diagrams drawn in pen, or charts and graphs drawn without a ruler. Expectations of presentation are too low in some subjects. Where there was evidence of graffiti, teachers had not always stopped this and in some cases it continued throughout books.

- Marking varies across the school and inspectors saw examples of books that had not been marked for several weeks which goes against the marking policy. Sometimes the feedback given to students seen in their English books and some other subjects does not help them to fill gaps in their learning or to accelerate their progress. For example, 'use colours', 'what level are you?', 'think of a few more'.
- Support for literacy varies considerably. Spelling errors, including subject key words, are not routinely checked by some teachers leading to students continuing to make the same error in the future.
- Inspectors did not see teaching assistants working with students during the inspection, but a technician was seen working with small groups of students in a textiles lesson which very effectively improved their knowledge of the key parts of a sewing machine and the purpose served by each.

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Students start at the school with attainment that is just above average in English and mathematics. They leave Year 11 having made much less progress than similar students nationally in these subjects. The proportion of students who achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics was just below the national average in 2013 and has fallen this year.
- Few students achieve the highest grades in science. More-able students choosing to study the three separate sciences of biology, chemistry and physics are not being taught the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to be successful in these courses.
- Disadvantaged students achieve far less well than those not supported by the pupil premium in the school and far less well than all students nationally in English and in mathematics. Although teachers' assessments indicate improvements for current students in Year 11, senior leaders cannot be confident in the accuracy of these indications. In considering the difference being made by the funding, senior leaders have recently changed some of the approaches used and have appointed two additional teachers in English and mathematics to work directly with students at risk of falling behind. It is too soon to see if this is leading to students making better progress.
- In 2014, disadvantaged students in English were almost a whole grade behind that of others in the school and also compared with others nationally; the gap narrowed slightly compared with that of 2013. In mathematics, disadvantaged students were almost two grades behind that of others in the school and there was a similar gap with other students nationally; the gap widened further compared with that of 2013.
- School leaders have not done enough to ensure that barriers to learning are removed for disabled students and those with special educational needs. These students make much less progress than other students from similar starting points in the school in English and mathematics. Indications for current students in Year 11, based on teacher assessments, suggest this trend of underachievement is set to continue.
- Students in many subjects, outside English and mathematics, are successful in achieving grades A\* to C, and in some subjects the proportions are above the national average. This reflects the focus of the school on achieving at least a grade C. However, attainment at the highest grades of A\* and A, for higher ability students, is below national averages in all subjects except art and design, business studies, languages, design and technology (graphics) and physical education.
- Where students were entered for GCSEs in Years 9 or 10, this strategy has prevented more-able students from attaining the highest grades in a range of subjects and does not adequately prepare them for sixth form studies in these subjects. The early entry policy in English and mathematics has stopped but continues in other subjects.
- Improvements in attainment and progress are not secure as evidence from students' books and their performance in lessons shows that indications made by school leaders of improved performance in the future are unlikely to be achieved.



- Students who were eligible for support through the Year 7 catch-up funding in the last academic year, are all indicated to have achieved Level 4 by the end of Year 7 in English, with about half of the group having 'caught-up' in mathematics.
- The small number of students who attend alternative provision are entered for courses appropriate to their needs and interests including key skills and Level 1 courses in motor vehicle studies, construction and hairdressing. No information was provided by the school showing success in courses studied by students in alternative provision.

### **The sixth form provision** requires improvement

- Sixth form attainment has been low at AS and A level, being below national averages overall, and for most individual subjects. In 2014 there were some improvements, particularly at A level, because school leaders have improved teaching in the sixth form.
- Based on the broadly average starting points of students on entry to the sixth form, students make less progress overall than similar ability students nationally. Students make less progress in AS level than A level. A review of sixth form courses on offer has resulted in the removal of subjects where results have been low.
- The school meets the government's current 16-19 minimum standards.
- Sixth form numbers are falling and only about a third of the Year 11 cohort choose to continue with their post-16 studies in the school. Students have opportunity to follow courses of study across the sixth form partnership that meet their needs and interests, though students say they would like a wider choice.
- The extent to which teaching and tutorial work leads to all groups making good progress over time is inconsistent. Teaching is not yet consistently good but has made a contribution to improving the progress of students in Year 13. Not all tutorial time is used effectively.
- The very small number of students who receive support through pupil premium, are monitored, but no analysis was presented showing the impact of any interventions used.
- Courses are delivered jointly across the Bridgnorth Sixth Form Partnership and leaders work collaboratively in making sure that checks on attendance, behaviour and achievement are carried out across the partnership.
- Students who have not yet achieved a grade C or above at GCSE in English and mathematics have the opportunity to continue with their studies and virtually all students are successful in achieving a C or above in their re-sit examination.
- Students' personal, social and employability skills are very well developed and students take part in a wide range of opportunities in addition to their chosen programmes of study such as, 'A Taste of Tanzania', Duke of Edinburgh awards, Sports Leadership awards and the China exchange visit. All Year 12 students take part in a work experience opportunity which they organise themselves.

## 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>	139143
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	447995

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>	Academy converter
<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>	839
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ann Bamford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Philip Loveday
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01746 762103
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