

Bushloe High School

Station Road, Wigston Magna, Wigston, LE18 2DT

Inspection dates 25–26 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students achieve well throughout Year 6 and Key Stage 3, including in English and mathematics and in some foundation subjects.
- Although standards are average by the end of Year 9, they are improving, and demonstrate students' good progress through the school.
- Standards are rising because teaching is consistently good and sometimes better. Interesting and demanding teaching is a key factor in students' good progress.
- The curriculum provides good and sometimes rich opportunities for students to develop academically and as young citizens, both in lessons and activities outside the classroom.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in this inclusive school which values the contribution of all students.
- Students behave well and show respect towards others. They show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- The school is led very well by the co-headteachers who mould and drive the staff and hold them to account, so that teaching and achievement continue to strengthen.
- Effective senior leaders and subject leaders are developing their areas rapidly, with accountability for achievement in their areas, and add to the school's ability to keep improving.
- The governing body's broad ranging knowledge about achievement and teaching, and its understanding that there is more to be done, enables it to challenge and support the school well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More able students are not consistently given work that challenges them to achieve their potential.
- Students' literacy and numeracy skills are not well enough developed in other subjects.
- Teaching does too little to ensure that students systematically improve the accuracy of their spelling.
- The quality of marking is variable in the information it gives students about what they know and what they need to do next. Students do not as a matter of course respond to marking by doing their corrections.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed students' learning in 32 lessons, of which eight were observed with either one of the two co-headteachers or with a member of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors spoke with students during lessons, break and lunchtimes. They observed an assembly. They watched several students being supported in small groups.
- The inspectors held meetings with four groups of students to find out what they think about their school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteachers, senior and subject leaders and members of the governing body. The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including information about the achievement of the students, the school's improvement planning, governing body minutes, samples of students' work, and the policies to keep them safe.
- The inspectors took into account the 27 parental responses to the on-line Ofsted questionnaire (Parent View) and the 35 responses to the staff questionnaire, in carrying out the inspection.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jeremy Seymour	Additional Inspector
Douglas Folan	Additional Inspector
Alan Gray	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bushloe High School converted to become an academy in November 2012. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted in September 2011, it was judged to be good.
- The school is smaller than other schools of its type. The number on roll is declining steadily due to population changes in the area.
- Students join the school in Year 6 and leave at the end of Year 9. Half of the students come from within the catchment area. 80% join from the three main feeder primary schools within the area.
- The school shares a site with Abingdon Academy, which is also a middle deemed secondary school, and with Guthlaxton College, which caters for students aged 14-19.
- A large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. Over time, the proportion of students from minority ethnic groups has increased.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average at just under one in five.
- The pupil premium provides support for about one fifth of the pupils in the school. This is below the national average. The pupil-premium funding is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, including those who are eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- It works closely with the other schools on the site. It is also part of the Thomas Estley Learning Alliance, both receiving and offering support. The Teaching Alliance provides support for newly qualified teachers and for staff training to be senior leaders. In return, Bushloe High School provides support in areas such as community cohesion and school leadership.
- The school does not use alternative places for the students to learn away from school.
- It does not enter any students early for GCSE examinations.
- The two headteachers have part-time roles, for three days a week each. One of the headteachers is a Local Leader of Education and delivers school improvement support in the city and within the county, including mentoring new headteachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the standards that the students achieve including in English and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - more able students are consistently challenged through tasks that make them think hard about their learning and enable them to apply what they know in a range of situations
 - students practise, secure and refine their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects
 - all teachers ensure that students strengthen their capacity to spell accurately
 - marking gives students helpful information about what they know well and what to do next, and teachers make sure that students act on this advice.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The co-headteachers show great determination to improve the school, including by holding staff to account for their performance. They make an effective team and together with the senior leaders, they plan carefully to ensure that students' develop well both their academic and personal skills throughout the school. This is supported by thorough checking of the school's work to ensure that it keeps improving.
- This is reflected in the well-planned curriculum, which incorporates a range of subjects and activities to prepare the students well for the next stage of their education. An appropriate programme of careers education and personal and social education, ensure that the students are well-informed about their future options and have the information by which they can make informed decisions.
- Students know the right and fair way to behave and demonstrate other British values as they take up roles of responsibility, based on democratic practices. Students enjoy the wide range of lunchtime and after-school activities and the visits and visitors that enliven and broaden their learning. The school ensures that it includes all students in all that it offers and does not tolerate discrimination. Good teaching enables them to have an equal chance of success, although leaders recognise that more needs to be done to make sure that the more able students reach their full potential.
- The school's records show that sports funding for Year 6 students has led to a greater range of sporting activities and students' increased participation rates. There are new Year 6 boys and girls' football clubs which are very popular and a dance club.
- The quality of teaching is checked regularly including by subject leaders, who are growing in confidence and skills at checking the quality of students' learning in their areas. Leaders and inspectors' judgements on the quality of learning and the overall effectiveness of teaching, matched each other very closely.
- Staff's performance targets focus very appropriately on the priorities set out in the school's improvement planning. They include challenging and yet realistic targets to raise achievement further.
- The staff are positive about the training and development opportunities they have to strengthen their practice and work towards their goals. The school makes good use of its partnerships with other schools to provide much of the training and also mutual support between schools. Although an academy, the school continues to work with the local authority, which helps it to review its performance and provides helpful pointers to further develop and strengthen its work.
- The school has accurate information about the rate of students' progress, which is checked very regularly. Senior leaders have ensured that subject leaders have responsibility for checking achievement in their respective areas and they meet regularly with them to ensure that students continue to make good progress.
- Subject leaders are making an increasingly helpful contribution to the school's knowledge of how well it is doing. Their department reviews show they know well the strengths and areas of development in their areas, based on thorough analysis of students' progress.
- Safeguarding procedures meet the statutory requirements. A senior leader oversees this aspect very well, with robust checking that everything is in place to help students and ensure they are kept safe. It includes good procedures for checking attendance, which continues to rise. The gap between the attendance of students supported by pupil premium spending has narrowed because of this emphasis on careful checking.
- The focused leadership of the provision for disabled students and those with special educational needs and good communication between the staff leads to the good progress of these students, both academically and in their behavioural, personal and emotional development.

- The additional money received by the school to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. The school has ensured that this pupil premium is used to best effect to identify, monitor and support such students and to make sure that they have access to all the school to offer. Consequently the gap between these students and others in the school is narrowing steadily.
- Leadership is not yet outstanding because the drive of leaders to ensure excellence has not yet resulted in a high enough proportion of outstanding teaching. Consequently, although students' progress is good, too few make rapid progress across all year groups and subjects over time.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Governors' checks of the school's work focus equally on the students' academic and personal well-being.
 - The governors are well-served by the headteachers' thorough, accurate and regular reporting of the school's performance. Minutes of their meetings show that they question leaders regularly about a range of issues. The governors through, for example, their links with subject leaders, find out a lot for themselves and this enables them to query, challenge and support the school more widely.
 - They attend training courses to ensure they have the necessary skills to carry out their roles although they would appreciate further training about how to interpret what national data is telling them, more sharply.
 - The governors know the importance of performance targets in making teaching consistently strong and their link to pay increases. They know how pupil premium money is spent and that the gap between the achievement of these students and that of other students is narrowing.
 - The budget, which is sound, is planned carefully and spending managed and checked carefully so that the budget does not go into deficit.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Students enjoy school and say that they are proud to be students at the school.
- Students are polite, friendly and move round the school in an orderly way. They respect the building and help to keep it tidy and smart.
- Students show good attitudes to learning. They throw themselves into their work and concentrate very hard.
- Occasionally, if teaching does not challenge students well enough, a few students switch-off and become restless and therefore learning slows.
- The large majority of students arrive at lessons ready to start learning. They say that they particularly enjoy working with each other, and discussing their learning.
- Students are good ambassadors for the school and in their roles they develop important skills for the next stage of their education. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also promoted well through opportunities for students in each year group to practise their team work and decision-making skills through, such as, representing other students on the school council and eco-council and being sports leaders.
- Students have regular opportunities to develop their understanding of other cultures and to appreciate the richness of society through, for example the curriculum and visits.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Students' attendance is above average and helps ensure students' safety and their opportunities to

progress well.

- From Year 6 onwards, they feel safe and have a good understanding for their age of potential dangers. All students speak confidently about the advantages and disadvantages of using the internet and how to use it safely.
- School records support the students' views that bullying is very infrequent and dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Students value the way they are treated fairly by the school and understand that every person should be treated equally and with respect.
- They understand the ways in which prejudice and discrimination manifest themselves, including through race, religion and homophobia.
- Parents endorse inspection findings that their children are happy and safe in school and behave well.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Well-established routines, respect between students and staff, and interesting teaching are key factors in the good progress that students make in Year 6 and through Key Stage 3.
- Most teachers have high expectations of their students. Students are encouraged to want to learn well and respond to the teachers' demands to give of their best. This includes in the layout and presentation of their work.
- Students in Year 9 were seen to make rapid progress in mathematics when carrying out reversing percentages. They were able to explain how and why they needed to carry out the calculation because teaching was carefully planned. Individual questioning and guidance through the lesson took into account the different levels at which the students were working and ensured that students were able to achieve very well. The students showed very business-like attitudes to working out the answers.
- Students learn well overall in literacy. Extra attention is being given to building-up students' reading skills. They read daily and enjoy the wide range of fiction and non-fiction books.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to students, although effective in some classes, lacks consistency across the school. Not all teachers provide clear enough advice for students about how to further improve their work and do not always make sure that students follow up this advice by applying it and showing their teachers that they have understood.
- Where teaching is less effective, tasks are not always as carefully planned as they could be in ensuring that work offers accurate challenge to the students, especially for those working at higher levels.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are not always promoted well enough across other subjects to secure and strengthen the students' skills. Leaders recognise that further planning across subjects is still needed to further drive up standards in writing and number work.
- The teaching of spelling across all classes lacks consistency and not all teachers offer enough guidance and help to strengthen this area of weakness in some students' writing.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students achieve well through Year 6 and Key Stage 3. From their well below average starting points into Year 6, they make good progress.
- Progress in all year groups in a wide range of subjects is good. Students achieve particularly well in

subjects such as music, drama, art and physical education throughout the school, because of consistently good teaching that promotes students' creativity and activities out of lessons that enable them to practise and develop what they know.

- Although standards are one term behind in reading and writing and two terms behind in mathematics, compared to nationally at the end of Key Stage 2, school data shows that they are improving. This is because the school is checking very rigorously any gaps in students' learning in Year 6 and providing extra support, including in mathematics. Standards are above average in the proportion achieving expected levels, including in English and mathematics.
- Good teaching is supporting the most able to achieve well. However, in a few lessons, teachers do not challenge these students sufficiently by moving them onto harder work when they demonstrate their understanding. They do not then make the rapid progress they are capable of.
- There is very little difference in the rates of progress made by most groups of students, including boys and girls. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their class mates. This is because, these students are identified quickly and receive the necessary regular support to enable them to achieve well, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have successfully focussed on the achievement of disadvantaged students, including those eligible for free school meals. Very appropriate support is in place, such as in reading, writing and numeracy skills and in ensuring full access to activities, such as visits. Standards attained by disadvantaged students at the end of Year 6 are one term behind in reading and writing and two terms behind in mathematics compared with other students and those nationally. Inspection evidence and school information shows that across all year groups the gap in the rate of progress compared to other groups is narrowing.
- Those students who do not achieve the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 are given extra support to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. The majority of students supported by the funding reached the level expected of them by the end of Year 7. Of those who did not, the majority made the progress expected of them towards the goal.

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

Unique reference number	138892
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	449452

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	10–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	622
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jim Rixon
Headteachers	Ann Webster, Ian Cox
Date of previous school inspection	14 September 2011
Telephone number	0116 2881692
Fax number	0116 2880856
Email address	bbrand@bushloe.leics.sch.uk

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