

North Bromsgrove High School

School Drive, Stratford Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 1BA

Inspection dates

23–24 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have not accurately evaluated weaknesses at the school and as a result their actions are not focused enough on improvements.
- Leaders and governors lack the capacity to bring about the necessary improvements to the school. Leaders and staff are not working as a cohesive team.
- Standards have been too low over time. Pupils' outcomes are low and they are not making strong progress in a range of subjects.
- Pupil premium funding has been used poorly. Disadvantaged pupils do not make enough progress and their attendance is low.
- The quality of teaching is not of a consistently good quality across different subjects and year groups. Training has had little impact on bringing about improvements to teaching and learning.
- Teachers do not make sure that work is closely matched to pupils' abilities.
- Significant staff turnover has negatively affected the quality of teaching and slowed pupils' progress.
- Leaders have failed to communicate effectively with pupils, parents and carers about changes which have taken place at the school.
- The behaviour of pupils is not good enough. Teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well, which results in learning activities being disrupted.
- Some pupils say that they are not proud of the school and feel negatively about the education they receive.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are not supported well enough in lessons to help them make good progress.
- Teachers do not develop pupils' literacy skills well enough to help them achieve in all areas of the curriculum.

The school has the following strengths

- The balanced curriculum provides pupils with appropriate pathways to follow. Pupils are supported well in their transition from the middle to the high school.
- There is capacity among leaders to improve the sixth form further and to build on some of the positive work that is already apparent.
- In some subjects, such as modern foreign languages and science, pupils are challenged effectively by their teachers. As a result, pupils are engaged by their learning and make better progress compared with most other subjects.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - strengthening governance to ensure that school leaders are well supported and challenged
 - developing senior leadership capacity and ensuring that leaders work cohesively and take responsibility for clearly defined areas of responsibility in the school improvement plan
 - ensuring that pupil premium funding is effectively targeted, monitored and evaluated to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make accelerated progress
 - accurately self-evaluating the areas that need improvement and using this information to set clear targets that can be monitored and evaluated by leaders and governors
 - recruiting and retaining teachers to ensure that pupils have a good subject-specialist teacher in their lessons
 - establishing systems for managing pupils' behaviour that are understood by all staff and consistently applied
 - improving communication with parents and carers to ensure that they feel fully informed about developments at the school.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teaching and learning activities are well matched to the differing needs and abilities of pupils
 - providing teachers with professional development opportunities which will have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning
 - checking the development of pupils' literacy across the curriculum and working collectively to ensure that pupils successfully develop and improve these skills
 - ensuring that teachers use performance information carefully and consistently to check the progress of pupils, so that they can provide effective support for pupils who fall behind.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - ensuring that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, attend school regularly and punctually and improving the attendance of pupils who are persistently absent
 - establishing clear expectations of good behaviour shared by all staff and insisting that all pupils treat teachers and other adults with respect

- taking steps to ensure that pupils have a positive experience of school life and feel proud to attend the school.
- Improve pupils' outcomes by:
 - using pupil premium funding to target the achievement of disadvantaged pupils to ensure that differences diminish, compared with other pupils nationally
 - achieving consistency of teaching across the curriculum so that it is at least good, targeting those departments where outcomes are too low and ensuring that improvements are made
 - ensuring that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well and equipped with the strategies that they need to make good progress.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to ascertain how this area of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to ascertain how this area of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Although the headteacher has worked with determination to bring about changes to the school since her appointment, there is still a great deal to do to improve the school. She is now being supported effectively by the leadership team to implement new systems and structures. However, it is too early to see their impact on improving the school because staff are not working as a cohesive team.
- Leaders at all levels have an overly positive view of the school. Self-evaluation lacks critical rigour and emphasises the achievements made, rather than focusing on those aspects that still need to improve further.
- School improvement plans devised by school leaders set unrealistic targets to aim for, which means that targets are frequently not met. There is a lack of understanding among leaders and governors about how best to bring about the required change.
- Strategies used by school leaders to improve the attendance of pupils and to reduce persistent absence have not worked.
- Funding provided to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils has been used poorly by leaders. As a consequence, many of these pupils do not attend school regularly and continue to make much slower progress than they should.
- Over time the performance management of teachers and associate staff has been very weak. New systems have been introduced recently, although these have not yet had the chance to have a positive impact.
- The school is facing considerable budgetary problems which has restricted the range of strategies that school leaders are able to take to improve the school.
- There have been considerable changes to the senior leadership team in the last year. Some of these leaders are not yet demonstrating the capacity to bring about the rapid improvement that is necessary.
- The management of pupils' behaviour has not been strong enough. The result of this is that pupils' behaviour has deteriorated over time. The school's behaviour policy is not enforced consistently by teachers and therefore pupils lack confidence in it. As a result, behaviour is frequently not good enough around school and in lessons.
- Some middle leaders do not use information about pupils' performance well enough. This means that some pupils who are underachieving are not adequately supported to make the improvements they need.
- Leaders have not ensured that the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are being met sufficiently well. They have not made good enough progress over time. Currently, pupils continue to make slow progress as many are frequently absent from school. Additionally, not all teachers meet their learning needs to help them to achieve in lessons.
- The school should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers as there is insufficient capacity among school leaders at present to support their training needs successfully.

- The local authority identified the school as a concern and provided support and challenge with some initial impact. However, progress stalled in recent months.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of the pupils is planned across the curriculum. However, the implementation of this by teachers is too inconsistent. As a result, not all pupils get the same opportunities to develop these aspects of their education.
- Pupils are taught about British values and how they can successfully contribute to a cohesive society. However, some pupils' conduct at school indicates that these values are not yet fully understood.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is not yet having an impact on improved standards. A range of useful training opportunities for teachers as well as improvements to school policies are planned. However, it is too early to judge the success of these.
- Leaders have not communicated well with members of the wider school community. A high number of parents expressed concern about their queries not being responded to or acknowledged.
- The curriculum provided for the pupils is broad and balanced. Leaders carefully review this and make changes in response to pupils' needs as well as reforms to qualifications. Different groups of pupils are provided with a curriculum that is appropriate to their needs.

Governance of the school

- Governors do not have the capacity, or the confidence, to support and challenge school leaders successfully to bring about rapid improvement. Governance of the school is inadequate.
- Governors' understanding of the work of school leaders is not good enough. They are provided with information by the headteacher, but lack the expertise to use this in a critical way to help lead improvements.
- The effectiveness of pupil premium funding has not been well evaluated by governors. There is a lack of clarity about where the money is best used and whether any of the different strategies employed by the school have worked. School leaders have not been successfully held to account for their failings in this area.
- Governors are aware that they have not provided appropriate challenge to school leaders over time. Recent additions to the governing body have sought to provide more effective challenge, but it is too early to judge the impact of this.
- Many governors lack the training to understand information provided to them by school leaders. This restricts their ability to carry out their roles effectively.
- Governors expressed concern to the lead inspector about behaviour and safety at the school. However, they have not successfully challenged school leaders about these issues.
- Governors describe current school performance as 'inadequate' and the school as being in 'turmoil'.

- The governing body have been ineffective in their support for school leaders in how best to tackle challenges brought about by many members of staff leaving the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has appropriate systems for checking on the suitability of adults to work with children. In addition, all adults visiting the school are briefed about their responsibility with regard to safeguarding. This ensures that pupils are safe at school.
- All staff understand how to keep children safe and are provided with relevant and timely training to ensure that their understanding develops appropriately over time.
- School leaders work effectively with external agencies, when required. Referrals are followed up robustly and leaders keep accurate and useful records.
- Curriculum time is provided for pupils to learn about how they can keep themselves safe and healthy. In discussion, most pupils showed that they understood the steps they should take if they have concerns. However, some pupils were less aware of who they should speak to if they have concerns.
- Some pupils and parents express concern about bullying and fights at the school. The school's records and inspection evidence do not indicate that this is a significant problem. However, school leaders have not successfully reassured these pupils and parents that this aspect is under control.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- There is too much inconsistency in approach from teachers across different subjects and in different year groups. This means that too many pupils are not taught well enough over time.
- A large number of teachers have left the school in the last year. This has meant that many pupils have had to cope with a number of changes of staff. This has had a negative impact on pupils' progress, which both parents and pupils have commented on.
- Where teaching is inadequate, too often pupils easily lose focus and do not work hard enough in lessons.
- In some lessons, pupils are not stretched enough. Teachers' expectations of what they can achieve are far too low. This means that lessons can be too slow-paced and work insufficiently challenging.
- Teachers do not consistently follow the assessment policy determined by school leaders.
- Teachers do not routinely adjust their lessons to take account of the different learning needs of pupils. For instance, some of the work set is too challenging for some pupils and too easy for others.
- Significant and justifiable concern has been expressed by pupils and parents about the quality of teaching at the school. There is a lack of confidence among these groups

that the situation will improve.

- Some pupils continue to make the same mistakes repeatedly over time as they do not respond appropriately to the instructions of their teacher. This is not checked and followed up thoroughly enough by teachers.
- Not all pupils know the targets they have been set for their GCSE work. They do not show a full understanding of the steps they need to take to meet these targets. As a result, many pupils have low expectations about what they can achieve.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are not appropriately supported in many lessons. Teachers do not make the reasonable adjustments required to help these pupils to make the progress that they are capable of.
- Teaching of literacy across the curriculum is inadequate. In consequence, many pupils show basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Additionally, many teachers have low expectations about pupils' extended writing.
- In some subjects, notably in modern foreign languages and art, pupils make good progress over time a result of well-planned teaching. This stimulates their interest and meets their needs.
- In some science lessons observed, teachers proved able to engage pupils. The high level of interest shown by pupils helped them to make better progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- A significant minority of pupils have lost confidence in the school and feel that school leaders and their teachers are not able to help them to become successful learners.
- Pupils expressed concerns about fights that have taken place among school pupils and stated that bullying can take place. Pupils are not confident that these issues are always appropriately dealt with by school staff. Inspectors found that when leaders are informed about these issues, they are dealt with appropriately.
- Not all pupils receive effective careers guidance at the school. There are plans in place to improve this aspect of provision, but it is too early to judge the effectiveness of these.
- The small number of pupils who attend alternative provision are well supported. Their attendance and behaviour is regularly checked by school leaders. Pupils attend regularly and behave well. Their performance and progress is also monitored well.
- Pupils receive guidance about how to stay safe and healthy in and out of school. Many successfully learn from this, although a minority of pupils do not exhibit the behaviours and conduct required to be successful in the future.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Too many lessons are disrupted by off-task behaviour. Some teachers are ineffective

when dealing with this. Pupils easily lose interest when they are not engaged in lessons and instead use valuable learning time to chat to their peers.

- Inappropriate behaviour was observed by inspectors around the school site. This included pupils openly defying the instructions of their teachers, as well as foul and abusive language and crude behaviour.
- During the inspection some pupils openly demonstrated their poor behaviour in front of inspectors.
- Several pupils approached inspectors to tell them about their disaffection with school and their lack of respect for school leaders.
- The attendance of pupils is lower than the national average and is falling. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is well above the national average. Attempts by leaders to improve this situation have failed.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities have particularly low attendance and too many are persistently absent from school.
- Some pupils are not punctual to school or to lessons. These pupils do not always respond positively when challenged about their lateness.
- A large number of parents have, rightly, expressed concern about poor behaviour at school.
- Not all pupils felt confident enough to say that they always felt safe at school.
- Too many pupils do not feel proud to attend the school. Staff do not ensure that expectations about the wearing of uniform are adhered to by pupils.
- Some groups of pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions for poor behaviour has fallen, including fewer exclusions for disadvantaged pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils' examination results in 2016 and 2017 were poor. The proportion of pupils in key stage 4 achieving grades 4 or above at English and mathematics is below the national average.
- Outcomes in 2017 were below the floor standard expected by the government. The progress made by pupils was in the bottom 10% nationally. The school met the coasting school definition in 2016 and 2017.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress is much too slow and there are widening differences between their achievements and those of other pupils nationally.
- Progress has been too slow across the curriculum for all groups of pupils over time. Pupils from all the different prior-attainment groups progress less well than other pupils nationally.
- Pupils' current progress is not improving well enough. Although school leaders see improvements, particularly in English and mathematics, inspectors did not see compelling evidence of this acceleration in progress.
- Pupils' literacy skills are not well developed and hamper their progress in many

subjects. This negatively affects their ability to succeed across the curriculum and restricts their ability to gain higher grades at GCSE.

- Parents are rightly concerned about standards at the school. The vast majority of parents who contributed to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, would not recommend this school to another parent.
- Outcomes are better in modern foreign languages. In 2016 and 2017, pupils achieved in line with national averages in these subjects. Current pupils continue to make good progress due to good teaching over time.
- A greater proportion of pupils achieve the English Baccalaureate than is typical nationally.
- Pupils successfully gain places in education, employment or training after finishing Year 11. A minority of pupils continue to sixth form at the school.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Students have not made consistently strong progress over time. In 2016 progress was in line with national averages but in 2017 it was below average.
- While overall current attainment is broadly in line with national averages, there are gaps in attainment between different groups of students. Gaps are not closing quickly enough. For instance, girls achieved less well than boys in 2017 and this remains true for current students.
- The most able students do not achieve as well as they can. In 2017, too few reached the highest grades that were necessary for them to gain places at the most selective universities.
- Students do not have a consistent experience of teaching and learning across different subjects. They expressed concern about the impact of frequent changes to their teachers during their time in the sixth form. This was particularly true for those students studying sociology, media studies and drama.
- School leaders' actions to increase attendance have proved successful for Year 12 students. However, attendance is too low for current students in Year 13, particularly girls. This has a negative impact on their ability to make good progress.
- Although students benefit from some sessions on topics such as sexual health and drugs awareness, a group of students expressed concern that they do not receive enough guidance on how to stay safe as they become young adults. Leaders agree that more should be done in this area.
- Comprehensive and valued guidance is provided for students to support their university applications. However, there is less effective provision for those who are considering employment or seeking apprenticeship opportunities. Sixth-form leaders acknowledge this and are actively taking steps to improve this aspect.
- Sixth-form leaders are very well regarded by students. Leaders work very hard to bring about improvements to provision and outcomes. They show awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the sixth form and have the capacity to improve further.
- Students are given a range of enrichment opportunities to help them to develop social

and employment skills successfully. For instance, students support younger pupils in lessons and also volunteer in nearby first and middle schools.

- Careful guidance is given to students to help them develop independent study skills. This knowledge supports them when completing private study.
- The curriculum offered to students enables them to take a wide variety of A-level subjects. They are guided in making these choices through useful individual careers interviews.
- The progress of students is checked regularly through a well-planned system of assessment and mock examinations. Sixth-form leaders use this performance information well to target students who need additional support.
- Students behave well in lessons. They show a mature attitude to their work and want to do well. They dress smartly and conduct themselves appropriately in both study and social areas.

School details

Unique reference number	116928
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10047731

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	13 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	819
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	121
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Elaine James
Headteacher	Angelina Robin-Jones
Telephone number	01527 872375
Website	www.northbromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk
Email address	nbhs@northbromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 December 2014

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in January 2017.
- The school has a specialist resource provision for pupils with autism. A small number of pupils are currently supported in this base.
- Pupils join the school in Year 9 from a small number of middle schools.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than is typical nationally.
- The school uses alternative provision for a small number of pupils at Academy 21 Virtual School, Aspire Academy and The Forge.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards in 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 45 lessons in different subjects and different years to assess the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Many of these lessons were jointly observed with the school's senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, middle leaders and class teachers.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body including the chair of governors. In addition, the lead inspector met with school improvement representatives from the local authority and spoke to one via telephone.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils in all year groups and also took the opportunity to have discussions with pupils in lessons and during breaktimes.
- Pupils' books and files were carefully examined in lessons when inspectors visited classrooms.
- A range of documents were scrutinised, including governing body minutes, performance information on past and current pupils, the school's own self-evaluation and improvement plan, school policies and curriculum plans. Inspectors checked records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance and documents relating to how pupils are kept safe.
- Inspectors considered 365 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, including 313 free-text responses. In addition, the lead inspector had telephone conversations with a small number of parents and considered a number of letters that were submitted by pupils and parents during the inspection.
- The inspection team took account of 22 pupil questionnaire responses, as well as 78 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Thomas Walton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Considine	Ofsted Inspector
Graham Tyrer	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Rob Hackfath	Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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