

Inspection of Beckfoot Oakbank

Oakworth Road, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 7DU

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Requires improvement
Sixth-form provision	Good
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Aspects of the curriculum at Beckfoot Oakbank lack ambition. Over time, pupils do not make sufficient progress in English or mathematics. Pupils who need help to read fluently do not receive effective support. Very few pupils study the combination of GCSE subjects which are collectively known as the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc). This includes English, mathematics, science, a language and either history or geography.

Leaders have recently started to clamp down on poor standards of behaviour. This work is beginning to have an impact. Pupils are well supervised throughout the school day. Staff are shown more respect than they were a year ago. However, there remains significantly more to do to ensure pupils' day-to-day experiences are not ruined by the minority who struggle to self-regulate their behaviour.

The school's academic offer for a small number of pupils who study in a separate on-site building is not fully developed. The behaviour of pupils in this facility is routinely poor and often goes unchallenged by staff.

Despite these concerns, many pupils enjoy school. They recognise the work that has taken place to begin to improve standards of behaviour. Pupils have several adults they can go to when they need help and advice.

The sixth form is well run and well attended. Sixth-form students' exam results and destinations are impressive.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Since the time of the last inspection, not enough has been done to improve Beckfoot Oakbank. School improvement priorities have not been implemented quickly enough. Trustees are ill informed about day-to-day life at the school. They do not have an awareness of the scale of the deficiencies at the school, and have not provided enough support and challenge to leaders.

However, the school is starting to show signs of improvement. The chief executive officer of the trust, in post for just over a year, has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. She is aware that improving this school is of the highest priority for the trust, and is in the process of making changes within the trust to support the school. A review of the school's governance arrangements is already underway. A new executive headteacher, in post for a few weeks, has brought in fresh ideas. The head of school, who also took up a substantive post in 2022, has already won the hearts and minds of staff. Current leaders have the aptitude to improve the school.

The standard of behaviour from some pupils at the school is unacceptable. The new leadership team has implemented a range of strategies to re-establish high expectations in the school. Many of these changes are proving to be successful.

However, there remains more to do. In the main school building, the number of lesson removals is high. On the first day of this inspection, for example, there were over 130 instances of pupils being removed from lessons.

The curriculum in English and mathematics is not well thought through. Pupils' experiences in these subjects do not prepare them well for the next stages in life after school. Not enough pupils achieve appropriate qualifications in these subjects by the end of Year 11. This is particularly so for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils who struggle to read fluently are not getting the support they need to do so. However, leaders recognise these weaknesses. They have plans in place to address them.

Elsewhere, certain aspects of the school's curriculum lack ambition. For example, very few pupils in key stage 4 study the suite of Ebacc subjects. In all year groups, a small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are taught in nurture groups. Their classroom experiences are widely variable. However, a recently appointed special educational needs coordinator is working at pace to ensure the needs of pupils with SEND are better understood and met.

Pupils do have some positive experiences in classrooms. In art, for example, pupils in key stage 3 enjoy their lessons. They are fascinated by the work of the famous artists they study. In history, a well-thought-through series of lessons helps pupils to develop a deep understanding of eras from the past. Senior leaders are supporting subject leaders to ensure the assessments used in key stage 3 closely align with the curriculum plans.

Many pupils do not attend school often enough. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. This is limiting the impact of the school's offer. However, the new executive headteacher has a very clear action plan to address this. It is too early to see the impact of this work.

In stark contrast to the deficiencies in key stages 3 and 4, students in the sixth form are accessing a quality provision. The attendance of sixth formers is high. Their lessons are purposeful and not disturbed by poor behaviour. They are supported to develop their leadership skills, encouraged to develop levels of independence and offered high-quality careers advice. They achieve well in exams and move on to appropriate destinations.

Across all year groups, an appropriate personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum is in place. It is well thought through. Leaders routinely use their knowledge of local risks and concerns to update this curriculum. This helps to keep pupils safe. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to attend purposeful educational visits, listen to expert visitors, and discuss and debate issues in society.

A small number of pupils access lessons in a separate building located in the school grounds. Most pupils who attend this provision do so because they struggle to self-regulate their behaviour in the main school. However, this facility is not well run. The

curriculum on offer is poor. The individual needs of the pupils in this building are not currently well managed or met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils are supported by a large and efficient safeguarding team. Staff have received appropriate safeguarding training. They know the signs to look out for that may suggest a child needs help. When issues arise, in or out of school, safeguarding leaders ensure pupils get the support they need.

Staff are confident to pass on any concerns they have about the conduct of colleagues. However, they do not do this in line with the school's policy consistently. While this discrepancy has not left children at risk of harm, leaders are aware of the need to address this. When concerns do arise, leaders handle these concerns appropriately.

Leaders make appropriate checks on new staff when appointed to work at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Aspects of the school's curriculum model for pupils in Years 7 to 11 are not well thought through. The model does not consistently meet the needs of the more vulnerable pupils, nor does it stretch and challenge pupils who have the potential to learn more. Leaders must revisit their curriculum offer and raise its ambition.
- Many pupils in Years 7 to 11 cannot communicate, read, write and apply mathematics sufficiently well for their age. Pupils requiring specific support to read fluently are not getting appropriate help. The plans in place to address ongoing poor performance in GCSE English and mathematics do not go far enough. Leaders must provide these departments with additional support to address these matters of concern.
- The most vulnerable pupils in Years 7 to 11 do not benefit from a high-quality education consistently. Disadvantaged pupils make poor progress. Pupils with SEND do not routinely benefit from high-quality classroom experiences. While leaders have begun to address these concerns, this work must continue with a sense of urgency.
- A significant minority of pupils in Years 7 to 11 show a lack of respect towards each other. Some pupils do not routinely display good manners. This results in poor behaviour around the school and particularly in the separate on-site building. Leaders must continue to address unacceptable standards of behaviour.

- Too many pupils in Years 7 to 11 do not attend school regularly. This includes those attending alternative provision. While new momentum has been brought to this school improvement priority, the actions taken over time to address this have not gone far enough. Leaders must ensure that pupils attend school more regularly.
- The school's provision for the cultural development of pupils in Years 7 to 11 does not currently go far enough. This weakness limits pupils' understanding and appreciation of the cultural influences that have shaped the world around them. Leaders must extend their personal development offer by providing pupils with opportunities to broaden their cultural capital.
- Whistleblowing procedures are unclear at the school. Some staff are unclear about who to report issues to. Leaders must ensure the policy in place for reporting concerns is clear and that staff know and follow this policy.
- Trustees' awareness and oversight of the school is weak. They are not providing leaders with enough support and challenge. The improvements they have enacted have been implemented too slowly. The trust must reconsider the local governance arrangements in place for this school. They must ensure the school's new leaders are provided with clear direction and support.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	143112
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10249704
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1568
Of which, number on roll in the sixth-form	154
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of the trust board	John Winkley
Head of School	Liz Hart
Website	www.oakbank.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Beckfoot Trust multi-academy trust. It became part of the trust in September 2016. A new chief executive officer (CEO) took up post in September 2021. A new executive headteacher for the trust started their role in July 2022.
- The headteacher has changed since the previous inspection. The current head of school was appointed to a substantive post in September 2022.
- A small number of pupils who attend the school access education in a separate on-site building known as the 'Captain Tom Moore Centre'. This facility is managed and run by school staff.
- The school uses two off-site alternative providers of education. One of these is a registered provider and subject to inspection by Ofsted. The other is an unregistered provider.

- Through its careers programme, the school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeship.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the head of school and several other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with leaders from the trust, including the CEO and the executive headteacher. Two representatives from the board of trustees, including the chairperson and a member of the local school committee, were also spoken with.
- To evaluate the quality of education, deep dives were carried out in English, mathematics, art, history, and design technology. These involved meeting subject leaders, reviewing curriculum plans, visiting lessons, speaking to teachers, talking to pupils about their learning, and looking at samples of pupils' work.
- The school's PSHE curriculum was also reviewed. Inspectors considered the school's provision to support pupils to read. Inspectors met leaders of SEND, reviewed SEND paperwork and spoke to pupils with SEND. They also visited additional lessons to review the classroom provision for pupils with SEND.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons in the main school building and in the 'Captain Tom Moore Centre'. They also spoke to pupils and staff about standards of behaviour and safeguarding matters. Behaviour, bullying and attendance records were reviewed.
- As part of the evaluation of the effectiveness of safeguarding, the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and other records were reviewed. The checks made when appointing new staff were scrutinised. An inspector visited an unregistered alternative provider of education used by the school.
- The views of parents and carers, staff and pupils who responded to Ofsted's surveys were also considered.

Inspection team

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