

# Inspection of a good school: Bury Church of England High School

Haslam Brow, Bury, Lancashire BL9 0TS

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Inspection dates:

25–26 February 2020

## Outcome

Bury Church of England High School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils do not achieve well in this school. In some subjects, pupils do not learn as much as they should. Some pupils do not have the knowledge that they need to succeed in external examinations or in later life.

The pupils that we spoke to said that they feel safe in school. They get on well with one another. They said that staff work hard to resolve any problems that arise between pupils. Pupils told us that bullying is rare. They are confident that staff will deal with it well.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. However, there is a lack of consistency in how staff manage pupils' behaviour. Staff and pupils told us that incidents of poor behaviour occur too often. This stops some pupils from enjoying their time at school.

Pupils value the care they receive from staff. They take part in a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and sporting activities.

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

The acting headteacher has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that need to improve. Leaders, staff and governors recognise that the current curriculum is not ambitious enough. However, they have not determined the changes that they will make to improve the curriculum.

Weaknesses in the curriculum have not helped pupils to achieve well over time. Published data shows that pupils have made significantly less progress than other pupils nationally by the end of Year 11. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is particularly weak. This is because leaders' plans have not focused on the specific needs of these pupils.

In some subjects, teachers have considered what pupils need to know. They have carefully thought about the order in which subject content should be taught. In science,

for example, teachers' plans enable pupils to make links between topics. They develop their knowledge over time. In other subjects, such as design and technology, teachers have not identified the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. This means that pupils do not gain the knowledge that they need to be successful in examinations or for future learning.

When planning learning, some teachers do not think enough about how pupils learn. Teachers do not routinely use strategies that help pupils to remember more over time. In modern foreign languages, for example, older pupils could not remember what they had been taught about France or Germany.

Leaders have the same ambitions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) as they do for other pupils. Like other pupils, the achievement of pupils with SEND is affected by weaknesses in the design and delivery of the curriculum.

Pupils and staff talk to each other in a warm and respectful manner. However, pupils and staff told us that behaviour is not good enough, both in lessons and around school. Staff are not consistent in the way they deal with weaker behaviour. Leaders are in the process of revising their behaviour policy to address this.

The school's aim is to develop pupils who are fulfilled, responsible and caring members of its Christian community. To achieve this, leaders place great value on the wider curriculum. Pupils enjoy learning about equality, citizenship and healthy relationships. They take on a range of leadership roles in school. These include becoming members of the school council and student leaders. Pupils regularly engage in fundraising for local and national charities. This is helping them to understand what it means to live in modern Britain.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all members of staff undergo regular safeguarding training. Staff understand the procedures for raising concerns about pupils and how to record them effectively. Leaders ensure that careful checks have been made on the suitability of adults who work and volunteer in the school.

Pastoral and learning support staff work closely together to identify and support pupils who are at risk. Staff understand the risks that exist in the local community. Leaders work with a range of outside agencies, including social care and the police, to ensure that pupils receive the help they need.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects, leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge and skills that pupils need to develop. In other subjects, however, leaders have focused only on the

development of skills. They have not identified the important knowledge that pupils need to have. As a result, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, have not achieved well in their GCSE examinations. Leaders should carefully consider the content of their curriculum plans so that pupils develop the knowledge and skills that they need to succeed. Leaders should design a curriculum which develops the essential knowledge pupils need to be educated citizens.

- Teachers do not routinely plan learning that helps pupils to remember more over time. This means that pupils do not retain their knowledge as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers plan and deliver the curriculum in a way that helps pupils to recall more of the content they have been taught over time.
- Leaders are currently reviewing the school's behaviour management systems. Pupils and staff report that there is too much low-level disruption in lessons and some poor behaviour around the school. This is due to inconsistencies in the way that staff manage pupils' behaviour. Leaders should ensure that all staff manage pupils' behaviour in a consistent and effective way.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 6–7 December 2011.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105365
<b>Local authority</b>	Bury
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122058
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	838
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mr Lawrence Yarwood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Tina Astley (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://burychurch.bury.sch.uk/">http://burychurch.bury.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 June 2016

## Information about this school

- At present, this school does not have any pupils at an alternative provision.
- The school was inspected under section 48 in March 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, we met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- We met with a number of governors including the chair of governing body.
- We spoke with pupils about life at school and their work.
- We met with a representative of the local authority.
- We examined a range of school documentation. This included leaders' curriculum plans, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. We scrutinised records of pupils' behaviour.
- We reviewed a range of information about safeguarding, including the school's records of checks undertaken for newly appointed staff and records of support provided to pupils. We examined the single central record.

- We considered the 71 responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire. This included 49 free-text responses. We considered the 46 responses to the staff survey and the 189 responses to the pupil survey.
- We did deep dives in the following subjects: science, design and technology and modern foreign languages. This involved meetings with subject leaders, visits to lessons, work scrutiny, and discussions with teachers and groups of pupils from the lessons visited.

### **Inspection team**

Stephanie Gill, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Craig Yates

Ofsted Inspector

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