

Inspection of Barton Manor School

Spring Lane, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1SU

Inspection dates:	13 and 14 May 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Richard Morgan. This school is part of the Barton Court Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Kirstin Cardus, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Robert Waterson.

What is it like to attend this school?

A palpable sense of ambition is evident in all aspects of school life. Pupils live up to the school's motto of 'Aspire, Believe and Achieve'. They try their best because staff recognise and celebrate the unique qualities and achievements of each pupil. Pupils participate enthusiastically in all that the school offers them. Careers education weaves through academic learning. Pupils understand real-world application of classroom learning in industry and they are extremely well informed to make ambitious plans for their future.

Clear routines and high expectations of behaviour help pupils feel safe. Lessons are calm and focused as teachers are consistent with their expectations. Pupils arrive at lessons on time, with the appropriate equipment. Pupils contribute to the culture of kindness that permeates the school. Social times are vibrant and fun, with pupils taking part in a plethora of lunch clubs or happily chatting to each other and staff. Positive relationships, built on trust, mean that pupils are confident that staff will help them if they need it.

Most pupils enjoy learning and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive thoughtful help to engage fully with education and school life. The school carefully identifies and meets the needs of pupils with SEND. The school provides effective support to ensure disadvantaged pupils achieve well.

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

The school has meticulously designed a curriculum that meets the different needs of pupils. The curriculum follows a logical sequence, purposefully designed to help pupils build on prior learning. External speakers, such as poets, visit the school and enrich pupils' classroom learning. This enables pupils to connect their learning to real-life situations.

Staff prioritise the development of pupils' literacy skills. Teachers encourage pupils to use precise technical vocabulary in their discussions and written work. Pupils who need help to read or speak English receive support effectively. Staff support pupils with SEND to learn with independence. The school tailors an ambitious curriculum for pupils in 'nurture' classes, ensuring they receive enhanced support. Here, pupils thrive due to thoughtful care and attention from expert staff.

Teachers routinely check how well that pupils understand what they are learning. At times, some teaching does not ensure that all pupils understand some complex ideas. This means that pupils do not fully understand new concepts and limits how well they remember and apply this learning.

Many pupils attend very well. The school works sensitively with families to identify and remove the barriers to positive attendance. When pupils do not meet the school's high expectations, staff apply the behaviour policy fairly. The school offers a wide range of support to help pupils build confidence and manage their emotions in a positive way. However, for a small minority of pupils, this support does not effectively target the

challenges that they have. This means that these pupils experience repeated consequences and suspensions, potentially leading to disrupted education.

The school's exceptional personal development approach prepares pupils very well for life. Pupils learn how to manage their finances and take care of their health and well-being. Pupils articulate themselves very well. They debate confidently about current affairs and ethical dilemmas. A wide enrichment offer encompasses accessible sports activities to ensure that pupils of all abilities have fair representation. Pupil leadership empowers pupils to influence positive school changes. The school has forged strong partnerships with local universities, colleges and alumni. These people inspire pupils to achieve all that they can. Pupils benefit enormously from an excellent careers education that provides them with impartial information about next steps in education and employment, including apprenticeships.

Leadership at all levels is precise and strategic. Leaders' approach to school improvement is robust and based on an accurate and deep understanding of the school. The school utilises its position in the trust to collaborate and share best practice. Trustees and governors know the school especially well and hold leaders to account effectively. Staff receive high-quality professional development to enable them to meet the needs of pupils. Staff are proud to work at this wonderfully warm, welcoming and inclusive school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Though the school has started to put in place support for the small minority of pupils who find it more difficult to manage their behaviour, actions are not fully meeting pupils' needs. Therefore, some pupils receive regular consequences and suspensions which potentially increase the risk of further disengaging them from education. The school must ensure these pupils have the support they need to help them manage their behaviour positively.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers do not always adapt their teaching in response to gaps in pupils' understanding. This means, at times, learning moves on before pupils understand concepts correctly. The school must ensure that all staff have the expertise they need to identify misconceptions and adapt learning so that pupils are able to achieve the ambitious aims of the curriculum.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	149039
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10379938
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	450
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Robert Waterson
CEO of the trust	Kirstin Cardus
Headteacher	Richard Morgan
Website	www.bartonmanor.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Barton Court Academy Trust.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school currently provides education for pupils in Year 7 to Year 9. The school does not currently have any sixth-form students on roll.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school’s education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. The inspectors also met with representatives from the board of trustees and representatives from the local governing body, including the chair. They also met with the CEO of the trust.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and physical education. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils’ work. Inspectors also looked at other aspects of the school’s curriculum, visited additional lessons and looked at further samples of pupils’ work on the second day.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed and scrutinised a range of the school’s documentation, including leaders’ plans for improving the school, minutes of trustee and governor meetings and records of attendance and behaviour incidents.

Inspection team

Michelle Payne, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Dijana Piralic	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Baker	Ofsted Inspector

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