

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Brigshaw High School

Brigshaw Lane, Allerton Bywater, Castleford, West Yorkshire WF10 2HR

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 October 2024

Outcome

Brigshaw High School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Duncan Roberts. This school is part of The Brigshaw Learning Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Aidan Sadgrove, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stuart McDougall.

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils value the recent changes to improve their school. Pupils work with staff to promote respect and tolerance. Pupils learn to respect equality and learn important knowledge about the protected characteristics. They are proud of the 'not in our school' approach to tackle unwanted behaviours. Pupils understand the high expectations the school has of them and respond to these. Most pupils know they are safe in the school.

The school wants the very best for pupils. Pupils' improving outcomes are representative of the quality of education they receive. These outcomes help them progress to aspirational next steps. Many sixth-form students have high goals for their employment and higher education.

Pupils enjoy a breadth of extra-curricular activities. Many pupils participate in a wide variety of clubs, including Chinese Mandarin, and choir. Such experiences broaden pupils' talents and interests. Students in the sixth form enjoy taking on different responsibilities. For example, students support the running of clubs, such as for debating and games. These provide valuable leadership opportunities, developing pupils' self-confidence.

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

The well-sequenced curriculum ensures pupils are prepared well for their next stage of learning. The school considers what pupils learn in primary school and builds on this. The curriculum anticipates what pupils need to know to succeed in further education. The

school uses well-informed strategies to check what pupils know. Leaders make changes to the curriculum to make sure that learning securely supports further progression. For example, the school makes sure that Year 10 pupils understand complex topics such as graphing and inequalities. This additional depth provides a grounding for those considering further mathematics in the sixth form.

Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum. The school ensures that an increasing number of pupils are studying the English Baccalaureate. This helps pupils to develop important knowledge across a range of subjects.

The use of focused activities at the start of lessons helps pupils to settle to their learning quickly. Staff help pupils to remember by regularly revisiting previous topics. For example, Year 10 pupils draw on their previous learning of cell structure to understand cell division in science. However, at times the school does not check that pupils' knowledge is secure. On occasion, pupils are moved on to new learning before they are ready. This means that some pupils have misconceptions.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. The school identifies the support they need and ensures adults know this too. For example, strategies such as targeted questioning help pupils with SEND access the curriculum. For those who need further support, the flexible learning group offers personalised approaches. Such support helps pupils with SEND to access the same ambitious curriculum and achieve well.

Pupils enjoy reading a range of carefully chosen books. Pupils in Year 7 describe how the novel 'Cardboard Cowboys' deepens their understanding of bullying. They are clear that they should never tolerate this. Pupils who are at the early stages of reading access bespoke support. Some pupils access phonics sessions. Students in the sixth form are trained to support pupils to develop their reading skills. Older students act as reading leaders. They support pupils in Year 7 during twice-weekly sessions. The school's approach to reading helps pupils to access the curriculum.

Attendance is a priority for the school. Pupils who attend the school on a regular basis benefit from the education the school provides. The school works closely with families to remove any barriers to attending well. The school has effective approaches to help pupils maintain high attendance. Pupils enjoy 'be here, be great' activities. Fun events, such as karaoke, celebrate being present in the school. Despite these approaches, some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, continue to have low attendance. This means they miss out on these valuable experiences and learning.

The school has developed 'forge your greatness'. This approach is to help pupils feel they belong. Pupils understand that school is more than just the classroom experience. Pupils learn about healthy relationships in personal, social and health education in an age-appropriate way. Pupils also enjoy meaningful experiences about careers. Pupils in Year 11 meet with employers to prepare to apply for jobs. Sixth-form students connect with an international business. They benefit greatly from their work experience with this business.

The school, local school committee and trust have an accurate overview of the school. They are determined to give the pupils of Brigshaw High School a memorable experience. Adults in the school are proud to contribute to the aims for excellence. They say their workload and well-being are considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, pupils are moved on too swiftly in their learning. This means that misconceptions can persist and gaps in learning can appear. The school needs to check that that pupils' learning is consistently secure to ready them for new learning.
- Strategies to reduce the persistent absence of some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, have not been sufficiently successful. As a result, too many pupils miss out on the education the school provides and do not achieve as well as their peers. The school should develop further strategies to work with parents and external agencies to improve the attendance for those who are persistently absent.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Brigshaw High School and Language College, to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2013.

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	143238
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10346619
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
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	1,369
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	132
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stuart McDougall
CEO of the trust	Aidan Sadgrove
Headteacher	Duncan Roberts
Website	www.brigshaw.com
Date of previous inspection	2 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There has been changes in the senior leadership of the school since the last inspection.
- The school uses four alternative providers. One is unregistered.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with physical disability and complex medical needs.
- 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

- 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 the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers during the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with trustees, including the chair of the trust board. They also spoke with members of the local school committee, including the vice chair.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of the trust.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspectors considered the views of staff and pupils through meetings held with them and through their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Andrew Gibbins, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Vicky Callaghan	Ofsted Inspector
Pritiben Patel	Ofsted Inspector

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