

# Bilbrook CofE (VC) Middle School

Bilbrook Road, Codsall, Wolverhampton, Staffordshire WV8 1EU

## Inspection dates

15–16 May 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher and head of school have worked tirelessly together to improve the school.
- Teaching over time is good across the school, in different subjects and in different year groups.
- The progress made by pupils in key stage 2 assessments has improved since the last inspection. Progress has accelerated further for current pupils.
- The school has an inclusive culture. Leaders and teachers value each pupil and encourage them to 'let your light shine' during their time at Bilbrook.
- School leaders, including governors, are highly knowledgeable and committed to securing further improvements.
- The school's curriculum has a broad range of subjects as well as diverse extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities for pupils.
- Pupils' transition to high schools after leaving the school is carefully planned.
- Disadvantaged pupils progress well and additional funding is used prudently to ensure that they have a positive experience at school.
- The school is a safe and secure environment and all staff play a collective role in safeguarding pupils.
- Pupils enjoy attending school and appreciate the opportunities they are provided with.
- The attendance of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is not as high as it is for other pupils in the school. Persistent absence is also higher for this group of pupils.
- The school needs to develop its wider leadership capacity so that it is not overly reliant on the work of senior leaders.
- The most able pupils are not consistently stretched by teachers to reach the highest standards in lessons.

## Full report

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

- Further accelerate the progress made by pupils by:
  - developing leadership across the school so that more staff take responsibility for raising standards,
  - ensuring that the most able pupils are more consistently challenged in lessons to reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Improving the provision for, and outcomes of, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities by:
  - following up rigorously when pupils are absent from school
  - checking that all teachers adjust their lessons to meet the specific needs of these pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The executive headteacher and head of school have worked well together to improve the school since the last inspection. They have shown determination and insight to make the adjustments and improvements that were required. They work extremely hard and are committed to further school improvement.
- School leaders are able to self-evaluate accurately. They successfully use information about the performance of past and current pupils alongside a range of other sources to improve outcomes and raise standards
- The school has a family atmosphere and teachers and pupils know each other very well. Leaders greet the pupils by name when they arrive at school in the morning and take the time to talk to them about the day ahead.
- School leaders have developed an inclusive and ambitious culture in the school. They inspire pupils to, 'let your light shine'. Pupils are ambitious about achieving well while contributing to the school and wider community.
- The local authority provides useful support for the school. It has given leaders useful strategies to develop aspects of their work. For example, work on developing literacy across the curriculum has led to more consistent expectations in lessons.
- Leaders have increased the focus on staff training since the last inspection. For instance, teachers have worked collaboratively to develop a common approach to lesson planning across the school. As a result, teachers understand how best to use lesson objectives to set specific targets for different groups of pupils.
- Staff morale is high. Teachers and associate staff enjoy working at Bilbrook and have faith in senior leaders' ability to continue improving the school. Staff clearly understand the actions that have been taken since the last inspection.
- Sport premium funds have been used innovatively to improve facilities around the campus. For example, table tennis equipment has proved very popular among pupils, as has the recently installed 'trim trail'. Initiatives such as these have helped to increase pupils' participation in sport.
- The pupil premium grant to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils has been used successfully. In addition to providing small-group teaching for pupils who need to catch up, money is also used to allow these pupils to access the full range of activities. For example, pupils receive subsidised music tuition and school trips.
- The school makes good use of additional funds provided to support year 7 pupils who didn't meet the required standards by the end of key stage 2. As a result of targeted intervention, the majority of these pupils have caught up with their peers by the end of year 7.
- The school's curriculum has been carefully considered. School leaders are proud to offer a diverse range of subjects to pupils in key stage 2. While there is a sensible focus on English and mathematics to prepare pupils for national tests, pupils also receive specialist teaching in, for example, design and technology, art and cookery. Pupils in key stage 3 benefit from a similarly broad and balanced curriculum.

- The curriculum includes planned opportunities for pupils to learn about modern Britain and the role each of them can play in contributing to a cohesive society. Pupils are regularly given opportunities to discuss pertinent issues and are given the opportunity to share their views in a trusting environment.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a strength of the school. There are regular opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for relevant issues in the school and also to participate actively in the wider community. For example, a group of pupils has produced a video to help prepare first school pupils for joining the school.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is a feature of the school. The majority of pupils take advantage of these by participating in recreational and competitive sport, as well as other activities as diverse as mindfulness, dance and reading.
- School leaders acknowledge that the leadership of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities needs to improve. Although pupils' specific needs are known, much more needs to be done to help them to progress more quickly. In addition, teachers need to be provided with specific strategies to ensure that these pupils are better supported in lessons.
- The executive headteacher is aware of the need to develop additional middle and senior leadership capacity. Currently, too much reliance is placed on the head of school. Unless he can be ably supported, the scope for further school improvement will be limited.

## **Governance**

- Governance of the school is good.
- Bilbrook's governors are knowledgeable about how well pupils at the school are performing. They regularly question school leaders about further improvements and follow-up carefully to ensure that appropriate action is taken.
- There have been considerable changes to the structure of governance since the last inspection. A small group of committed individuals is responsible for overseeing the work of the school. They rigorously question the work of school leaders and have played a key role in securing school improvement.
- There are well-planned processes to manage the performance of the executive headteacher. Governors also ensure that the head of school and other teachers are held accountable for successfully fulfilling their responsibilities.
- Governors carefully scrutinise the ways in which leaders are using additional funding. They explore how this is making a difference to the pupils by carefully checking the impact on outcomes of the actions that leaders take.
- Governors regularly visit the school. They bring pertinent expertise to help guide and support school leaders in carrying out developments and changes in the school.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- There is a shared understanding among school staff of the need to work together to safeguard children. This results in a highly secure, stable and supportive environment for the pupils.
- Staff receive regular training to ensure that all are aware of the challenges facing members of the school community. This means that they are well placed to quickly spot issues and take the steps required.
- Pupils are all well looked after by school staff. Parents reflect very positively on the support that is available.
- Site security is taken seriously and adults who visit the school are carefully briefed. In addition, anyone who is going to work with the pupils is carefully checked.
- Staff know each of the pupils well and this helps to develop an atmosphere where pupils feel safe and happy.
- Pupils demonstrate they know the steps they need to take to keep themselves safe from harm. They are taught in lessons and assemblies about the risks they might face. They know to whom they should speak if they are worried about anything.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good across the range of subjects and in all year groups. The common format that teachers use to introduce lessons helps pupils to understand exactly what they need to learn.
- Teachers assess pupils' work accurately. They provide useful personalised feedback and, as a result, pupils know how to improve.
- Teaching assistants successfully support the work of the teacher in lessons. They take a proactive approach to helping those pupils who need additional help to make progress.
- The development of pupils' literacy is a focus in many lessons. The focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar in key stage 2 is continued into key stage 3. This consistency of approach means that many pupils have strong reading and writing skills when they leave the school.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils in lessons. This means that pupils typically try hard and consequently make good progress over time.
- Pupils understand the importance of independent work. When instructed to do so by their teacher, they work in silence and demonstrate high levels of concentration and persistence. At other points in lessons, pupils collaborate well together and enjoy the chance to discuss their work.
- However, more needs to be done to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Teachers are not always aware enough of the specific learning needs of these pupils and how best they can adjust their lessons to take account of this. This slows the progress of these pupils.
- The most able pupils are not always fully stretched in some lessons. Pupils report that work can sometimes be too easy. This can sometimes prevent these pupils from reaching the highest standards.

- Not all lessons in key stage 3 are taught by specialist teachers. This means that in some lessons teachers do not plan the use of the time effectively. This means that some lessons move too quickly for some pupils and too slowly for others.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to develop pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils at Bilbrook enjoy being at school. They dress smartly and appreciate the education they are receiving.
- Pupils from different backgrounds get along well together. Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect, which contributes strongly to making the school a happy place. Politeness and courtesy are expected at all times.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know what to do in a variety of situations if they encounter problems. The school works very closely with parents and carers to help educate the whole community about safeguarding children.
- The transition to high school is managed well. Pupils are given detailed guidance about making GCSE options, which includes one-to-one interviews for each pupil. This ensures that they make the correct choices and can get off to a good start in year 9.
- Pupils are positive about their experience of attending the school. They enjoy their lessons and appreciate the different extra-curricular opportunities they are provided with. They particularly appreciate the weekly celebration assemblies. Awards presented to pupils at these events are highly sought after and proudly received.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school site is consistently positive. Distractions to learning do occur, but these are rare and are dealt with well by teachers. Because pupils want to do well they consistently show high levels of concentration and effort.
- Pupils report that bullying is rare and when it does occur, they have been taught what to do. As a result, teachers deal with any problems swiftly. The school keeps accurate records of bullying incidents
- A new system of rewards and sanctions is clearly understood by the pupils. They appreciate the impact this has had on improving behaviour in lessons. All pupils know what the expectations are of them in lessons and around the school. This makes the school an ordered working environment.
- Parents and staff reflect positively on the good behaviour at the school.
- The attendance of pupils is a little lower than national averages and this has not yet improved. More work needs to be done by school leaders so that all pupils are attending school as much as possible. The attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is lower than that of other pupils.

- A small number of pupils, including some who have SEN and/or disabilities, are persistently absent from school. Attempts to improve these pupils' attendance have not yet proven successful.
- Some pupils expressed concern that behaviour can be less positive in areas of the school where staff supervision is less apparent. School leaders are aware of this and have taken steps to address it.
- The number of pupils who are excluded from school has increased this year as the school has raised expectations and demanded higher standards from pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils' attainment in key stage 2 tests improved markedly in 2016. Although fewer pupils met the expected standards in 2017, the progress made by pupils improved. Pupils make progress in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils achieved well in key stage 2 science in 2016 and 2017. Current pupils in all years continue to achieve highly in this subject.
- In recent years, pupils have achieved more rapidly in English than in mathematics. Performance information on current pupils indicates that this difference in achievement has reduced and that pupils now progress as quickly in mathematics.
- Current pupils in key stage 2 are now progressing more rapidly than has been the case in recent years. Year 6 pupils are thoroughly prepared for external assessments.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now making faster progress and diminishing the differences with other pupils nationally. In key stage 2 assessments they make progress in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in key stage 3 progress well across the curriculum. The school checks how well they are doing by comparing performance information with other middle schools nationally. This indicates that many of those pupils who do not meet the expected standards in key stage 2 have caught up before they leave the school.
- The work in pupils' books across a range of subjects shows that they are progressing well. They cover a range of relevant and useful content, practise different skills and develop strong literacy and numeracy skills.
- However, more needs to be done so that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities can successfully access learning resources and make rapid progress.
- Too few of the most able pupils reach the highest standards in key stage 2 assessments.

## School details

Unique reference number	124453
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10048235

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	112
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Andrea Dawson
Head of school	Andrew Tilley
Telephone number	01902 840910
Website	<a href="http://www.bilbrookmiddle.com">www.bilbrookmiddle.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@bilbrook.staffs.sch.uk">office@bilbrook.staffs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	24–25 May 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation with Codsall High School and Perton Middle School. The executive headteacher is responsible for all three schools and is supported by heads of school. There is a single governing body for the federation and a governors' sub-committee for the school.
- The head of school was permanently appointed in May 2018 after acting in the role from June 2017.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector observed teaching and learning in a range of different subjects and different year groups in order to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in key stage 2 and key stage 3 read.
- Pupils' work in books and files was carefully examined in lessons and the lead inspector spoke to pupils in lessons to check their understanding of the lesson content as well as their progress over time.
- Pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtime, as well as when they arrived at school, was observed. In addition, the lead inspector met with groups of pupils from different years to evaluate their experience of school life.
- Questionnaire responses from 11 members of staff and 15 parents were considered. The lead inspector also met with a group of parents at the beginning of the school day to discuss their views of the school.
- The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair of governors. In addition, a telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, development plans, information about managing teachers' performance and external reviews carried out by the local authority. Information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety was also analysed.

## Inspection team

Thomas Walton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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