

Inspection of Barlby High School

York Road, Barlby, Selby, North Yorkshire YO8 5JP

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils at this school feel unsafe. There are areas of the school site that some pupils, especially younger pupils, avoid. This is because they feel vulnerable, especially when teachers are not present. Many pupils told inspectors that they do not report bullying because the problem will get worse. They do not believe that teachers can deal with bullying effectively. Some pupils said that homophobic language is used regularly around school. Others told inspectors that they had been victims of homophobic abuse.

Behaviour in lessons is more orderly than during social times. In lessons visited by inspectors, most pupils were focused on the activities planned by teachers. Pupils told inspectors that this behaviour is not typical. Some pupils told inspectors that the school behaviour policy is not applied consistently and that some groups of pupils do not respond when teachers use the behaviour system. Pupils told inspectors that some poor behaviour is ignored. Expectations for pupils are not high enough.

Pupils told inspectors that there are some subjects they enjoy. Many pupils spoke warmly about relationships with teachers. Pupils with education, health and care plans receive appropriate support to help them to access the curriculum. Plans for other pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not used consistently by teachers.

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

Governors and trustees do not know what behaviour is like in the school. This is because they do not ask challenging questions about behaviour. Governors trust what leaders tell them, but leaders do not have a clear understanding of behaviour in the school. The checks on behaviour are not rigorous enough. Pupil surveys, for example, do not take account of the views of a wide range of pupils. This means that leaders' view of behaviour is inaccurate. Governors' understanding of the 'Prevent' duty lacks clarity. They do not properly understand the risks pupils may face.

Despite some pupils acting as anti-bullying ambassadors, many pupils told inspectors that bullying is frequent. Many pupils do not report bullying as they do not think it will help. It is an ongoing problem for a significant number of pupils. One pupil summed up leaders' inability to tackle bullying. They told inspectors that 'pupils that were bullies in Year 7 are still bullies in Year 11'.

Leaders' actions to help pupils with the most extreme behaviour are more successful. Work with families and pupils is having some success. However, leadership of behaviour is not spread widely enough. Lessons are often disturbed by low-level disruption. Instances of pushing and kicking happen when pupils move between lessons. Leaders do not ensure that all teachers understand the behaviour

policy and apply it consistently. Pupils told inspectors that, in some lessons, too much time is taken up by teachers having to deal with poor behaviour.

The quality of education requires improvement because the curriculum is not yet clearly sequenced in all subjects. In English, for example, the curriculum is organised to ensure that pupils build important knowledge over time. In some other subjects, leaders have not thought carefully about the order in which knowledge will be taught. Resources are not always used effectively to help pupils to build important subject knowledge.

In some subjects, teachers make regular checks on what pupils remember. Starter activities are used to help pupils recall prior learning. These approaches to assessment are not embedded across all subjects. Detailed plans are not available for all pupils with SEND. Where they are available, teachers sometimes do not use this information effectively enough. The knowledge that pupils learn and remember is therefore inconsistent.

Leaders are refining support for those at the earliest stages of reading. They recognise that some pupils need more support with phonics. The 'fresh start' reading programme, planned to start in January 2022, will be taught by adults with training in phonics teaching.

Many pupils told inspectors about the Archbishop of York leadership award that they complete. Some pupils were enthusiastic about after-school clubs they could attend, for example rugby and the astronomy club.

Leaders were able to continue with virtual visits by employers during the pandemic. Older pupils met with careers advisers to help them to prepare for further education or employment. Some younger pupils do not feel that they receive enough advice to help them choose GCSE options.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is broad but lacks depth in important aspects. For example, pupils could not recall lessons about tolerance or respect for difference. Some pupils told inspectors that they do not believe there is a culture of respect at the school. Some pupils use homophobic language unthinkingly. Other pupils told inspectors that they have been targeted with homophobic abuse. This is not dealt with effectively by leaders.

Teachers, including early career teachers, feel well supported by colleagues in their department. Some teachers told inspectors that leaders do not consider workload pressures. Many parents are positive about the support for their children during the pandemic. However, many parents told inspectors that they think behaviour is poor. A significant number of parents do not feel that their children are safe at school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Some pupils, especially younger pupils, told inspectors that they do not feel safe in certain areas of the school, including lunch queues and toilets. These pupils therefore feel vulnerable when trying to access facilities to meet their basic needs.

Record-keeping for the most vulnerable pupils is thorough and actions are clear. Leaders for safeguarding seek support from external agencies and work closely with families to provide help when it is needed.

The single central record is compliant. Leaders of safeguarding have a good understanding of local risks. Leaders are clear that safeguarding is a priority and they ensure that staff know how to report concerns, including if they have concerns about the headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils say that bullying is not dealt with when they report it. This means that not all pupils report incidents of bullying. Leaders do not have a clear understanding of the extent of bullying in the school. Leaders should develop, and enact, policies to ensure that pupils are confident to report instances of bullying and that follow-up actions are clear and effective.
- Many pupils hear homophobic language being used by their peers. Leaders' PSHE curriculum plans do not have enough depth to instil a culture of respect. This means that many pupils do not understand the impact of the language they use or why it is inappropriate. Leaders should ensure that the PSHE curriculum has regular, in-depth, age-appropriate opportunities to learn about diversity, respect, tolerance and the appropriate use of language.
- The behaviour policy is not well understood by all staff. This means that it is applied inconsistently. Pupils are not confident that staff can deal with behaviour effectively. Leaders should ensure that professional development for staff provides clarity around the behaviour policy.
- Leaders' quality assurance procedures and surveys of pupils' views lack rigour and depth. This means that leaders do not properly understand how pupils feel about behaviour or what the true picture of behaviour is like. Leaders should ensure that they gather the views of a wide range of pupils to fully understand behaviour across the school. They should then use this intelligence in conjunction with regular quality assurance procedures to create a complete picture of behaviour across the school.
- Governors and trustees do not properly understand the ways that the 'Prevent' duty may apply to this school. They do not ask probing questions about behaviour either. This means that they are not able to hold leaders to account effectively. Governors and trustees should ensure that they have a clear understanding of the local risks that are applicable to the demographic of the school. They should ask challenging questions of leaders' assertions and 'triangulate' these assertions more thoroughly so that they understand what behaviour is like.

- Some pupils feel that areas of the school are unwelcoming or unsafe. This means that they feel vulnerable and avoid certain areas of school at social times. Leaders should ensure that they implement systems with regard to key areas of the school so that pupils feel safe around all areas of the site.
- Leadership of attendance, safeguarding and behaviour is not spread widely enough. This means that important tasks around behaviour, safeguarding and attendance fall disproportionately on a few adults in the school. As a result, low-level disruption is not tackled as leaders only have time to focus on more serious incidents. Leaders should ensure that responsibility for attendance, safeguarding and behaviour is widely distributed so more leaders take some level of responsibility for these areas.
- The sequencing of the curriculum is inconsistent in some subjects. This means that pupils do not build knowledge over time in a way that helps them to remember it. Leaders should ensure that the best practice in the school is embedded across all subjects so that pupils are helped to remember important subject knowledge.
- Having considered the evidence, I strongly recommend that leaders and those responsible for governance do not seek to appoint early career teachers.

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.

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

Unique reference number	144929
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10200603
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	581
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tony Myers
Principal	Julie Caddell
Website	https://bhs.hslt.academy
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Barlby High School converted to become an academy school in September 2017. When its predecessor school, Barlby High School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The principal joined the school in 2017. Since the headteacher joined the school, a new vice-principal has also taken up post. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has also taken up post since 2017. The assistant principal who oversees behaviour and attendance, including safeguarding, took up post in September 2020.
- When the school converted to an academy, the board of trustees became the responsible body. Some powers were delegated to the local governing committee. The chair of the local governing committee was previously the chair of the governing body.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision. The school uses The Rubicon, a registered alternative education provider in Selby, and Evolve Sports, an unregistered alternative education provider in York.
- 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 apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspectors deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors spoke with the principal, two vice-principals, the SENCo, and the assistant principal with responsibility for behaviour, safeguarding and attendance. Inspectors also spoke with the chief executive officer of the Hope Sentamu Learning Trust and trust subject directors for English and mathematics.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from the board of trustees, including the chair of the trust, and representatives from the local governing committee, including the chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about what they learn and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders of geography and sport.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke with the designated safeguarding lead, scrutinised records of training, looked at a sample of record-keeping relating to safeguarding and met with pupils and staff. Inspectors also checked the single central record and examined an externally produced report on safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with early career teachers and their mentors as well as mentors for those undertaking initial teacher training.
- Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher of Aspire Academy, a school in the Hope Sentamu Learning Trust that has provided support for behaviour to Barlby High School.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils both formally and informally, including single-sex groups of pupils.
- Inspectors conducted behaviour walks to look at behaviour across a range of lessons, including visiting the 'refocus room' and the internal exclusion room. Inspectors also observed social times and pupils' arrival at school.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, staff and parents through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Matthew Vellensworth, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Katherine Spurr	Her Majesty's Inspector
Zoe Helman	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Fletcher	Ofsted Inspector

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