

Becton School

Beighton Community Hospital, Sevenaires Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S20 1NZ

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher and her team, with the support of a very effective governing body, have led the school to a position of great strength since it was last inspected.
- The vast majority of students make outstanding progress from their starting points in English and mathematics, despite significant barriers to their learning. Many students complete their GCSE examinations or other external accreditations successfully; a number return successfully to their mainstream schools.
- Exceptional care, guidance and support provided by the combined efforts of educational staff and health professionals lead to immense benefits for students who experience mental health needs.
- The quality of teaching and learning is never less than good, because staff plan lessons that always take account of students' individual needs.
- Provision for students who experience specific difficulties in their reading or their understanding of numbers is exceptional. Students receiving this targeted support make outstanding and rapid progress.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes in lessons are never less than good. Staff manage behaviour extremely well and ensure that all students are safe and secure.
- The sixth form is outstanding because staff ensure that work is carefully matched to meet individual needs. The vast majority of students advance into further education, employment or training.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is promoted extremely well across all subjects and in other aspects of school life.
- Senior and middle leaders check on the quality of teaching and learning with great commitment leading to significant improvements, for example in the teaching of reading and writing in all subjects.
- Governors ensure that staff are held fully to account for their work. They also support regular training opportunities which lead to continual improvements in the quality of teaching and support for students in lessons.
- School development-planning is clear in its intent, but could be further strengthened through more precise targets and outcomes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited all teachers, support staff and classes. They used a mixture of lesson observations and short visits to look at particular aspects of the school’s work. One lesson was observed by an inspector jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff, three governors, and three health professionals. An inspector held a telephone conversation with the local authority representative.
- An inspector observed two morning meetings about the students between school staff and health professionals.
- One inspector met with a group of older students.
- Inspectors heard primary pupils and older students reading with teaching and support staff.
- Inspectors observed students’ behaviour in lessons and around school, including break time.
- Inspectors read through a range of documents about the school’s work, including the school development plan, self-review report, information about pupils’ achievements and progress, safeguarding, health and safety and behaviour policies, subject policies, attendance and behaviour records and governor meeting agendas and minutes.
- Inspectors were able to speak with three parents in school.
- There were insufficient responses from the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) for inspectors to analyse.
- Inspectors received eight returns from the staff questionnaire about the school.

Inspection team

John Ashley, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Pauline Pitman

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school provides for 41 students between 5 and 18 years, including four students in the sixth form. Students experience a range of mental health difficulties and some have additional complex needs, such as autistic spectrum disorders, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, specific learning difficulties and speech and communication difficulties. A small number have statements of special educational needs because of their complex learning and behavioural needs.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through the pupil premium varies according to the level of admissions to and departures from the school. The school does not receive pupil premium funding as this goes to the schools from which the students have come. The pupil premium is additional funding that schools receive for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school comprises four 'lodges': Sapphire Lodge, a 14-bed inpatient and five-day patient unit for young people aged 14 to 18 years with complex emotional, mental health and behavioural difficulties; Emerald Lodge, a nine-bed inpatient and three-day patient unit for young people aged 10 to 14 years with complex emotional, mental and behavioural difficulties; Ruby Lodge, a seven-bed inpatient unit for young people aged eight to 18 years with a combination of mental health and learning difficulties; and Amber Lodge, an eight-day place unit for young people aged five to 12 years, most of whom have a statement of special educational needs because of their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The school belongs to a 'soft' federation with other special schools in Sheffield.
- The school provides outreach support to mainstream schools where students have difficulties in attending school.
- The school has links with Sheffield University and Sheffield Hallam University through regular student placements at the school.
- The school has links with Sheffield TaMHS (Targeted Mental Health Service) for mental health research and training purposes.
- The headteacher is part of the local authority team to develop the inclusion strategy in Sheffield.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that school development targets and activities can be measured with greater precision.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The areas for improvement from the last inspection have been addressed fully by the headteacher and her team. As a result, middle leaders are now very knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and the progress being made by different groups of students in each subject. Staff make use of a comprehensive range of information, including reading, spelling and mathematics assessments about each student in planning lessons, so that students achieve to the best of their abilities.
- The school has a very welcoming environment. Each morning, the ward-based health staff meet with school staff to share any issues or concerns about the students. Teaching and support staff provide safe and secure classrooms in which students develop self-confidence and excellent attitudes to learning.
- Education and health staff work relentlessly to encourage students' attendance in school. Attendance has improved. As a result, the vast majority of students become used to the expectations and routines of school life and make good or outstanding progress in their work and behaviour. The majority make successful returns to their families and mainstream schools.
- Senior and middle leaders work together extremely well to ensure that all staff think about their work in lessons and how they might develop and improve outcomes for students. Teachers have explored different methods of assessing students' abilities in English and mathematics so that now there are very clear systems in place. The checking on teaching completed by leaders has witnessed an increase in outstanding practice since the last inspection. Inspectors' findings on this occasion reflected this exceptionally positive picture.
- The school's self-evaluation document is thorough and comprehensive. Leaders, including governors, have worked together on its production so that it presents an accurate view of the school's work. The school development plan is clear in terms of what needs to be done to sustain or strengthen some of the school's work, but lacks precision with regard to its success measures.
- The policies and procedures that are in place for staff performance management, including for support staff, are very comprehensive and overseen extremely effectively by governors. Staff, including the headteacher, are held to account for their work in the classroom or with regard to their roles and responsibilities. Governors support the continual professional development of staff so that they bring new skills into the classroom to benefit the students, for example in supporting those who have specific reading or number concept difficulties.
- The curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for students who have a diverse range of needs, thus ensuring the school's commitment to equal opportunities. As a result, the most able students can resume their GCSE or A-level work either through test papers or short courses. Students also have access to subjects such as art and design technology, music, PE and online learning. Students are able to complete work-based learning, often on site. Primary pupils and students in Key Stages 3 to 5 enjoy enriching experiences when they attend residential trips to Whitby or when exploring moon landing evidence at the local museum as part of a space project. The development of students' reading, writing and communication skills across different subjects is also clearly evident.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is promoted extremely well because staff are exceptional role models for students. There are regular opportunities for students to express their views and opinions, for example during sex and relationship lessons. Students learn to develop the British values of empathy and tolerance when offered these opportunities.
- Partnership working with other agencies in support of the students is exceptionally effective, especially with regard to the work of health professionals – so much so, that teachers and nursing staff work together in lessons to combine their teaching and therapeutic skills. As a result, new students are supported extremely well both emotionally and academically when they arrive. Parents interviewed say how grateful they are for the care and support that they and their children have received and that 'the staff are amazing'.
- The local authority provides only 'light touch' support for the school and judges it outstanding in all aspects.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has recently been re-constituted so that there is a new Chair of Governors and four committees. All governors have completed a skills audit and benefited from relevant training, including safer recruitment and safeguarding training. There is a named governor for safeguarding who ensures that the school's arrangements for keeping students and other personnel safe are strong. Governors are skilled and knowledgeable, bringing a range of professional backgrounds to bear in overseeing the work of the school. Financial management is sound; bearing in mind that funding varies year by year.

Governors know that pupil premium money and Year 7 catch-up funding does not come directly to the school. However, they know that disadvantaged students are making progress comparable to that of their peers in school in English and mathematics, based upon school assessment information. They are fully aware of the outstanding progress made in reading and writing by pupils with specific learning difficulties. Governors know that the small amount of sport funding has been used to purchase trikes and bicycles for primary pupils so that they can develop their play and social skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Staff are extremely skilled in encouraging students with significant barriers to learning into school and into the classroom. Students interviewed say that staff know them well and that they feel cared for and supported in school and lessons.
- Most students develop outstanding attitudes to learning and, with growing confidence, begin to partake in group discussions or reading games. Even students with challenging behaviour conform well to staff expectations and instructions, for example when brought back quickly to a reading task following a period of distraction.
- Students arrive calmly into school, either from the wards or as day students. They show respect to each other and staff throughout the day. There is a similar atmosphere at the end of the day. Any occasional misbehaviour is managed swiftly and sensitively because of high levels of supervision and the great skills of staff.
- Students benefit from individual behaviour plans to which they contribute. As a result, clear boundaries are set and referred to consistently.
- The daily meetings between health and school staff ensure exceptional sharing of information that helps to inform staff lesson-planning on a given day. Adaptations can be made quickly in terms of grouping arrangements or activity. On occasion, nursing staff will sit in lessons to offer emotional support. This helps to reassure and calm vulnerable students.
- Each student's attendance is tightly monitored as part of his or her individual plan. Attendance improves as students respond to therapy received and strong teaching and support in lessons.
- Students look after their school. Displays are bright, attractive and unspoilt. The rooms and corridors are maintained well, clean and free from graffiti.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. The staff team seeks students' views about behaviour and bullying regularly. Students interviewed say that staff deal very effectively with any concerns so that bullying is not seen as a concern in school.
- Students interviewed say that they receive information and understand about cyber-bullying, radicalisation and sexual exploitation online through PSHE (personal, social and health education) lessons. They are also taught about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.
- Safeguarding arrangements are extremely thorough. Staff receive regular update training and ensure that supervision around school is tight.
- The premises are very secure and arrangements for admitting visitors to the school are secure.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Checks of teaching by senior and middle leaders has led to sustained improvements since the last inspection so that now teaching is never less than good. Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that the quality of teaching overall is outstanding.
- Students interviewed say that there is a 'more open atmosphere' and that 'staff understand us' so that they feel more confident, for example when partaking in class discussions. Inspectors agree that the atmosphere in classrooms is consistently calm and supportive of learning and emotional well-being.
- In the primary department staff work extremely well to establish clear routines and expectations which are understood by pupils. Pupils know that 'choice time' is something to be earned once they have completed a reading, writing or number task. It is clear that pupils begin to concentrate and work hard when learning new words because staff explain what they are learning and why and how well they are doing. Staff adapt their explanations or questioning skilfully so that pupils with differing levels of understanding engage well

in the lesson.

- Teaching and support for pupils with a disability or with special educational needs is carefully pitched to ensure that pupils become involved in learning and develop improved attitudes in lessons. For example, students with autistic spectrum disorders showed enjoyment and understanding when sharing and acting out a story about a teddy and his car seat belt. Staff's deep insight into the learning, emotional and behavioural needs of students ensures that students make small steps of progress in terms of on-task behaviour or being able to recount parts of a story.
- At Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students engage well and make progress because teachers make excellent use of accurate assessments of students' levels in mathematics and English. Teachers and support staff respond sensitively when students ask for assistance, but encourage and challenge them to work independently. This was observed when students researched the meaning of scientific terms or when they used their understanding of numbers to solve fractions problems.
- Specialist teachers in the teaching of literacy to students with specific learning difficulties make exceptionally effective use of accurate information about students' abilities to plan lessons. Students respond enthusiastically when asked to observe, remember and record a number of presented objects or letters. They know that they are being taught to remember simple strategies to remember new information in future lessons.
- The use of fossils and shells in a science lesson led to students questioning the teacher about how old they were and how they were formed. Because of excellent teacher knowledge and skills in questioning and explaining, students became absorbed in finding out about the 'carbon cycle'.
- Students respond very well to teachers' written and verbal feedback about their work. They are encouraged to listen and follow up any mistakes or errors in all subjects, especially in their spelling, punctuation or grammar.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is central to all lessons. Opportunities in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons are provided for students to air their views and, importantly, to listen to the views of their peers so that they learn tolerance and respect.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- On arrival to the school, many students have had to cope with challenging and often traumatic experiences, mostly with regard to their mental health. Many students have additional complex needs such as autistic spectrum disorders or learning and behavioural difficulties. From their individual starting points, the majority of students, including disadvantaged students, make good or outstanding progress in English, mathematics and, importantly, in terms of their behaviour, attendance and emotional well-being.
- When students leave, many of the most able have resumed some of their GCSE studies to then gain accreditation at this level. Other vulnerable or less able students succeed in achieving functional skills accreditation in English and mathematics, certificates in food safety and hygiene or online qualifications in first aid, money matters or time management. Over the past three years, the vast majority of leavers have moved on to further education, employment or training.
- Since the last inspection, senior and middle leaders have ensured that all teachers have clear information about students' individual needs and abilities in reading, spelling and mathematics. This information is used to provide individual learning and behaviour plans which are then incorporated into class lessons or targeted support.
- More able primary pupils make good use of their knowledge of letters and the sounds that they make in their reading and spelling activities during a space topic. In mathematics, they are able to select and add different numbers together to make the same amount, demonstrating good mathematical thinking skills. Less able pupils respond very well to sensitive guidance and support with reference to visual prompts when sharing a story.
- Students in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 demonstrate good independent reading and writing skills, for example when writing up an account in science. They routinely correct their spelling across different subjects, including subject-related terms. They ask questions of their teachers about particular terms, for example 'respiration', when talking about the 'carbon cycle' in science.
- Because of accurate checks made on students' abilities in mathematics, teachers set challenging but realistic targets for students. The most able work at national expectations when engaged in more complex problem-solving. Students demonstrate good mathematical reasoning skills when talking through how they have solved a fractions problem.
- Students who experience specific learning difficulties in their reading and spelling make outstanding progress in lessons run by a specialist teacher. They become confident and self-assured as they learn strategies to learn new words. These strategies are then used well in other lessons.

The sixth form provision**is outstanding**

- Leadership and management of the sixth form are outstanding. Staff make adjustments to the curriculum and availability of courses to meet the individual requirements of students. As a result, the most able students can succeed with A-level taster courses and Bronze and Silver Arts Awards. Less able students have the opportunity to continue with GCSEs or take functional mathematics and English courses.
- The wider opportunities provided for students to explore opportunities beyond school lead to their increased confidence and independence, so that the vast majority go on to further education, employment or training. This has been the case for the past three years. A number of students retain links with their mainstream schools, with some making a successful return.
- The role of health professionals in partnership with school staff and parents ensures that students are supported extremely well in their transition from the sixth form to the next stages.
- There is a strong focus upon the personal, social and health education (PSHE) provision in the sixth form. Students learn to become responsible and caring young people, for example when discussing sex and relationship issues. They are skilful at using and applying their mathematics and English skills, for example when planning to raise funds for a local hospice by making and selling cakes that they have made.
- Students also demonstrate exceptional spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when designing and presenting a bid to the headteacher for additional funds for use in the purchase of 'virtual babies.'
- Sixth form students conduct themselves with great maturity and are outstanding role models for younger students.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	107184
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	455943

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	41
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	4
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sam Watson
Headteacher	Sacha Schofield
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2012
Telephone number	0114 305 3121
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	enquiries@becon.sheffield.sch.uk

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