

Bradford Christian School

Livingstone Road, Bolton Woods, Bradford, BD2 1BT

Inspection dates	9–11 July 2013	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Adequate	3
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This school is good because

- Teaching is good; teachers create a good learning environment where pupils achieve well and make good progress.
- The curriculum is good. Pupils work on important topics from many angles, benefiting from a wide range of teaching methods and resources. As a result, they develop skills effectively in all areas of learning including in literacy and numeracy.
- Behaviour and personal development are good and pupils feel safe. The school's Christian ethos promotes significant aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leadership and management are good, this ensures that the school improves over time. Senior leaders are eager for pupils to succeed and they communicate these ambitions to staff effectively.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Although welfare, health and safety are adequate and all of the regulations are met, records of premises risk assessments are not always fully detailed.
- The school's plans for the future do not include sufficient training opportunities for staff to raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding.
- Teachers' planning does not always identify activities for pupils working at different levels. The marking of pupils' work does not always identify challenging targets and how these may be achieved.
- The quality of the curriculum is not entirely consistent across all subjects and key stages.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day’s notice.
- The inspectors observed 17 lessons taught by 15 different teachers. They looked at pupils’ work and held meetings with the senior management team, heads of departments, teachers, parents and pupils.
- The inspectors looked at the school’s documentation including schemes of work, teachers’ planning, records of pupils’ progress, assessment records and records pertaining to the professional development of staff. They checked the school’s compliance with the regulations for independent schools.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed in 23 questionnaires returned by staff and the views of 61 parents and carers.

Inspection team

Chanan Tomlin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Walsh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bradford Christian School was opened in September 1993 and was registered as a school of religious character in October 2002 for up to 225 boys and girls from three to 16 years of age. It is located in a large Victorian building in the outskirts of Bradford and has been at the current site for 10 years.
- There are 156 pupils on roll; 89 pupils are aged between three and 10 years and 67 are aged between 11 and 16 years.
- Five pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A separate unit supports pupils with special educational needs.
- Nearly three-quarters of the pupils come from Christian families who attend 25 churches. Discipleship is a central aim of the school's vision in preparing young people to live out their faith as young adults in society.
- The school has established exchange and partnership ventures with other Christian schools in this country and abroad.
- The school uses an alternative provision for some physical education activities.
- The school was last inspected in January 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers' plans always include appropriate work for pupils with varying levels of ability
 - ensuring that the marking of pupils' work always helps them improve and work towards challenging targets.
- Ensure that all records of premises risk assessments are fully detailed.
- Further improve leadership and management by improving the quality of development planning, including arrangements for the professional development of staff.
- Further improve the curriculum by strengthening the provision for music, and design and technology, and by increasing opportunities for pupils to make personal choices in GCSE options.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Good

Achievement is good. Taking account of their different starting points, all groups of pupils achieve well and make good progress over time because of good teaching and a good curriculum. Most pupils join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills as expected for their age; they achieve well and make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. They make better than average progress by the time they reach Key Stage 1. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 succeed in their learning and are well prepared for Key Stage 3. Achievement and progress in Key Stages 3 and 4 is slightly less strong but pupils make good progress overall. Pupils achieve a good number of GCSE qualifications in different subjects by the time they leave and most continue their studies in sixth form colleges in the local area.

Pupils with special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress due to the support they receive. More-able pupils attain high standards in all key stages. Pupils gain an appreciation of learning throughout their time at school; they acquire knowledge and understanding in different subjects quickly and develop and apply a range of skills well. Good achievement in reading, writing, communication and mathematics ensures that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. They are interested in a broad range of activities and are well motivated to develop the qualities and skills that will enable them to succeed in the future because of the support and encouragement they receive. The school makes good use of alternative provision for pupils' physical education and development.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Good

Behaviour and personal development are good. Pupils' behaviour in and around school is consistently good and they have good attitudes towards learning. They are aware of the different forms of bullying but state that bullying at school is very rare and that they feel safe. Behaviour in lessons is good and this contributes to an environment that is conducive to learning where pupils are interested and engaged and disruptions are rare. This has a good impact on pupils' learning resulting in good achievement and progress. The atmosphere at school is friendly and calm; pupils get along well together and help each other to succeed as learners. Teachers enjoy good relationships with pupils; as a result, they are well placed to encourage and support pupils' good personal and social development. Attendance is good and lessons start punctually.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision in these areas is effective and this is reflected in how pupils conduct themselves. The school's strong Christian ethos helps them grow spiritually. They pray every day and have opportunities for reflection. Pupils consider and discuss moral issues among themselves and with teachers, regularly. They frequently uphold high moral standards and challenge behaviour and attitudes that they consider unacceptable. Pupils acknowledge that there is a community feel to the school where pupils and staff respect each other and try to understand each other's views. One pupil commented 'We are all like one big Christian family!' In Year 8, pupils take part in a 'Bar Mitzvah' programme when they prepare for their responsibilities as young adults. This programme focuses on pupils' place in their families, the world and the church and one module helps them learn about changes from childhood to adolescence.

Pupils grow in self-esteem and confidence when teachers praise their accomplishments, when they take pride in their work during an annual presentation night and take part in school performances. Representatives from each class form a students' council that influences some aspects of the school's provision. This gives pupils insights into democracy and working for the community. Pupils take part in fundraising activities such as a Strawberry Tea event, Christmas Market, Mothers' Day

Cookies and Soap Sale, fashion show and 'Name the Chicken' at Easter.

Pupils have a good knowledge of their own religion and culture; they are committed to their faith. Pupils take part in a 'Near Neighbours Project' when they socialise and go on trips with Muslim pupils from another school. They performed a play called 'The Hiding Place' about Corrie Ten Boom that gave them insights into the persecution of Jews during the Second World War. These activities help pupils gain an appreciation of other religions and cultural traditions in a way that promotes harmony between different communities. Pupils learn about the British legal system and public services through citizenship and history; there is no evidence that political views are presented in an unbalanced way. As a result, pupils develop the qualities and attitudes that enable them to make a positive contribution to multicultural British society.

Quality of teaching

Good

Teaching is good and this ensures that pupils achieve well and make good progress. Teachers plan lessons well enabling pupils to develop knowledge and understanding in all areas of study, although the planning to meet the learning needs of pupils with varying abilities does not always feature clearly in written plans. Lessons are paced well and involve a good range of teaching methods and resources. Targeted support and intervention, either in the special education unit or by teaching assistants, ensure that pupils' particular learning needs are met. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able, achieve well and make good progress over time. Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively; often, discrete subjects contain important elements of different subjects. For example, a science lesson on symbiosis included elements of information and communication technology (ICT), language and grammar. A religious education lesson on the book of Samuel focused on contemporary society and questions on leadership. Behaviour is managed well and lessons are seldom disrupted.

Teachers know their pupils well and are fully aware of their needs and abilities; they listen to pupils' questions carefully and reshape tasks, explanations and guidance when necessary to ensure that all pupils understand and learn well. They create a positive learning environment where pupils are interested, engaged and maintain concentration. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to work independently or in groups. For example, Year 10 pupils worked diligently in groups to determine the chronological order of the events referred to in Mark's Gospel during a religious education lesson. Teachers assess and track pupils' progress regularly and accurately. As a result, pupils are usually aware of how well they have done and areas that need to improve. However, the marking of pupils' work does not always include comments on how to improve or include personal targets for pupils to strive towards. As a result, some further opportunities to improve learning are missed.

Quality of curriculum

Good

The curriculum is good. It provides valuable experiences in all of the required areas of learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in all key stages so that they achieve well. The curriculum meets the needs and interests of the majority of pupils and provides them with good opportunities to make good progress especially in developing their reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills. It is well organised and demonstrates how pupils of varying abilities are to be challenged and supported. The curriculum is supported with detailed planning and schemes of work that indicate clear progression routes from one year to the next. Education for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good; as a result, pupils are keen to adopt healthy lifestyles and have good attitudes towards health and sociability. Pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being through a strong focus on English and mathematics; older pupils receive appropriate careers guidance from senior members of staff. Provision for

English, mathematics and science is very strong. However, the curriculum for music and design and technology, although adequate, is slightly less well developed and this reduces the opportunities to excel in these areas of learning. Pupils have access to a range of GCSE subjects, which enable them to achieve success and continue into further education, but a few pupils would like more opportunity to select from options, which reflect their personal strengths and interests.

The curriculum is enriched with activities that are well suited to pupils' needs and interests. Topic work on medicine and health, politics and the environment afford opportunities for pupils to examine subjects from a variety of angles and across subjects such as history, science and physical education. During a unit on politics, pupils taught lessons to parents and took part in lively debates between themselves and with their parents and carers. Activities to support the curriculum are enjoyed and valued by all and include visits to farms, pond dipping, and walks in the countryside.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Adequate

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is adequate and all of the independent school standards are met. Senior managers and staff are clearly committed to pupils' best interests. They have produced policies and procedures related to the health and safety of pupils including policies for first-aid and anti-bullying. Policies are reviewed regularly, comply with government legislation and guidance, and are nearly all implemented consistently. There have been occasional lapses in attention to the recording of detail in some premises risk assessments and leaders now recognise the importance of making improvements in this regard.

Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are adequate; a policy is in place that is regularly reviewed and the designated person for safeguarding and all staff have attended appropriate training in child protection at the required levels and intervals. The school has a policy for the safe recruitment of staff that is implemented effectively; required checks are conducted for new staff and are recorded in a single central register. The school prepares detailed risk assessments for school trips and conducts regular checks on the premises and accommodation. There is a satisfactory level of fire safety; a fire risk assessment has been completed, equipment is checked regularly and fire drills are regular events that are duly recorded.

Arrangements for the supervision of pupils both in school and on trips are suitable. The school promotes good behaviour; as a result, there is a calm, purposeful environment for learning where pupils can flourish. Staff deal with any incidents of bullying swiftly and effectively; there is a culture in school where bullying is not tolerated. Most pupils are keen to achieve healthy lifestyles and all feel safe at school. The school works with parents, carers and other agencies to secure a safe environment for pupils. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, all adults are well deployed to support children's learning and welfare.

Leadership and management

Good

Leadership and management are good. Senior leaders communicate high expectations and ambition to staff. As a result, teaching is good and this ensures that pupils achieve well and make good progress. Senior leaders have created effective policies to ensure that all pupils make good progress in all areas of learning including literacy. The curriculum is well organised and provides all pupils with opportunities to succeed in their learning and make good progress. Policies and procedures for welfare, health and safety are in place. The school has now made plans to ensure that records of premises risk assessments are fully detailed. Although leaders are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have ensured that teaching is good, there is not enough rigour in the school's plans for the future and insufficient focus on staff development to raise the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding.

The school's ethos promotes good behaviour; the personal development of pupils is good including all aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff and resources are deployed well for the maximum benefit of pupils and the school works well with parents and carers to create and maintain an environment where pupils can thrive in all aspects of their learning. Parents and carers have positive views about the quality of education provided.

The school's premises and accommodation are suited to support the curriculum and effective learning. They include a large central hall, a suitable number of classrooms, an art room and science laboratory. Outdoors there is a large area for play with picnic tables, football nets and an area for planting and environmental studies. The Early Years Foundation Stage setting is well-equipped for young children and includes an area for outdoor education that is accessible from the classroom. All areas of the school are suitably maintained and do not compromise health and safety. Some physical education takes place at a local leisure centre that has suitable changing and showering facilities. The school meets all of the requirements related to the provision of information to parents and carers and the complaints procedure includes all of the required details.

The proprietor and school managers have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	107461
Inspection number	420166
DfE registration number	380/6110

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Christian day school
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	3–16 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	156
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Trustees of Bradford Christian School
Chair	Rachel Jacobs
Headteacher	Mr Philip John Moon
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,100 - £4,080
Telephone number	01274 532649
Email address	office@bradfordchristianschool.com

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