

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Backwell School

Station Road, Backwell, Bristol BS48 3BX

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 February 2025

## Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Jon Nunes. This school is part of the Lighthouse Schools Partnership Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Gary Lewis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Adele Haysom.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Backwell School. They feel safe and have trusted adults who they know will help them if they are experiencing difficulties.

Pupils meet the high expectations the school has for their behaviour. Pupils are keen to do well. Around the school site, pupils are calm and sensible.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils do well in national examinations. Sixth-form students secure the qualifications they need to move on to further education.

Pupils know the value of being active citizens. Their views are sought and acted upon. Pupils can see tangible changes to the school that have been made as a result of the work of the student and house councils.

The school provides a vast array of opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. School productions are a source of pride for many pupils. The school makes sure these events are inclusive for pupils with different interests and levels of experience. Sixth-form students are supported to plan their own extracurricular events, helping them to develop their own organisational skills and sense of responsibility.

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

The curriculum is ambitious. Pupils learn a broad range of subjects. Students in the sixth form take qualifications that are well matched to their interests and ambitions. The curriculum is sequenced logically so that pupils can build on their knowledge over time. Leaders have sustained strong academic outcomes for pupils.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use this to explain new learning clearly and to design lessons that align with the ambition of the curriculum. However, the checks that teachers make on what pupils know and can do are not consistently effective. This means that some pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or are disadvantaged, have misconceptions that persist. Sometimes, the work pupils are asked to complete does not take into account their starting points. Consequently, it does not build their knowledge well enough.

The school identifies pupils with SEND promptly. Clear information is provided to staff to help them to understand how best to support pupils to learn. However, the needs of pupils with SEND, or other barriers to learning, are not always well considered when staff adapt the curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not learn as much as they could.

The school ensures that pupils read widely and often. This helps them to develop their vocabulary and a love of reading. Pupils who cannot read well enough get help to improve their fluency and comprehension.

Poor behaviour rarely disrupts learning. Pupils work hard and produce high-quality work. The school has taken effective action to significantly improve the overall attendance of pupils. Most pupils attend well and are punctual to lessons.

Pupils receive helpful information and guidance about careers and further education. They gain an insight into the world of work through events such as the annual careers fair and assemblies. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment. Sixth-form students are particularly positive about the support they receive when applying to university.

Pupils learn about important topics, such as healthy relationships and consent. Leaders use their knowledge of the local area to ensure that the curriculum supports pupils in staying safe. The wider personal development of pupils is well catered for through the many clubs, trips and visits that the school provides.

Leaders have reduced staff's workload. Staff are very positive about their well-being. The school and trust provide the training and support that staff need in order to have the expertise they need to fulfil their roles.

Those responsible for governance and leaders within the trust work together well to ensure that they have an accurate picture of the school. They provide both challenge and support, ensuring that actions taken are well aligned with the shared vision for the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

#### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, staff do not check what pupils know well enough. When this is the case, pupils' misconceptions persist and the work that pupils complete is not well matched to what they already know and can do. This prevents them from learning as much as they could. The school and trust should make sure that teachers are supported to identify what pupils have learned so that learning activities take pupils' starting points into account.
- Pupils who have particular needs, such as some pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, do not consistently get the extra help they need in lessons. This means that some pupils are not able to fully access the curriculum and learn as much as they could. The school and trust should ensure that staff use the information they have about pupils to remove the barriers to learning that exist.

## 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2020.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136722
<b>Local authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10344605
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,630
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	276
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Adele Haysom
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Gary Lewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jon Nunes
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.backwellschool.net">www.backwellschool.net</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 January 2020

## Information about this school

- The school uses four unregistered alternative provisions and three registered alternative provisions.
- The school is part of the Lighthouse Schools Partnership Multi-Academy Trust.
- 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.
- 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.
- An inspector met with a governor, a representative of the trustees and staff from the trust, including the CEO.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the views of staff and pupils in Ofsted's online surveys. Inspectors also spoke to pupils and staff in meetings and around the school site.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

### **Inspection team**

Sarah Favager-Dalton, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Deirdre Fitzpatrick

Ofsted Inspector

Jerry Giles

Ofsted Inspector

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