

# Inspection of a good school: The Misbourne

Misbourne Drive, Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire HP16 0BN

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Inspection dates:

24 and 25 May 2022

## Outcome

The Misbourne continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The 'Misbourne Way' underpins leadership, behaviour and community involvement here. Pupils are taught to be ready, respectful and responsible. Staff set high expectations of behaviour and pupils rise to these high standards. Pupils told inspectors that the clear and fair behaviour system helps them to behave well.

Pupils enjoy school and say they feel safe. Pupils feel a strong sense of wanting to act sensibly in lessons so they can learn well and not adversely affect the learning of their peers. Pupils are well mannered and hold the door open for each other as a sign of courtesy.

Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils report that there is very little bullying, but it may occasionally go unreported. Leaders know they need to enable pupils to feel confident enough to speak up when bullying does occur because staff make an effective response when it is reported.

The provision for the wider development of pupils is a strength of the school. Students in the sixth form speak positively about the leadership opportunities afforded to them. For example, senior students relish the opportunity to train as mental health ambassadors, some mentor younger pupils and others offer reading support.

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

Leaders have planned an ambitious and broad curriculum. However, in some subjects, the recent curriculum thinking is not yet as finessed as leaders would like it to be. Where there is still work to do, leaders are clear of the requirements and have a definite timescale for completion. Leaders plan a change to the structure of lessons in key stage 3 next academic year, to enable pupils to study a wider range of subjects for longer. Leaders are working hard to increase the proportion of pupils who study the English Baccalaureate in Years 10 and 11 by strengthening the offer of modern foreign languages.

There is a high degree of consistency of teaching approaches across subjects and year groups. Lesson content in most subjects is carefully designed and coherently sequenced. An effective personal social and health education (PSHE) programme is expertly delivered by tutors.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They design appropriate activities to engage pupils of all abilities in lessons. In most subjects, teachers use the recently introduced 'responsive teaching' approach. Teachers revisit learning routinely. Typically, lessons start with deliberately planned 'do now' activities, which reconnects previous content and skills. This enables teachers to check that pupils have remembered key knowledge and helps pupils to make sense of new information. Assessment is used to check how well pupils understand and remember key knowledge and concepts. In most lessons this enables teachers to spot and address any errors or potential misconceptions.

Support for reading is developing. There are many different approaches in place to support the teaching of literacy across the curriculum. A more coherent approach to improving the fluency and confidence of the weakest readers is being introduced gradually.

No low-level disruption was observed in any lessons. Pupils' conduct around the school is orderly and calm.

Leaders and staff share high ambition for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers, with modified or adapted work carefully designed to enable them to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Pastoral care puts the child at the heart of everything the school does. Families are seen as an essential part of a pupil's success at school. Expert help and guidance is available to those in crisis. Graduated support is offered for those with less time-critical but nonetheless important needs and issues. Pastoral staff are trained in specialist areas such as trauma-informed approaches.

Careers education, information, advice and guidance is a strength of the school. Ambitious and capable leadership brings expertise and enthusiasm to the coherent programme offered to all year groups. Students in the sixth form value the personalised and extensive approach to the individualised support and advice they receive.

There are a growing number of extra-curricular activities on offer. Sports clubs are popular, as is the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. There is an active eco-club and performing arts is a strength. The recent 'we will rock you' show was an extremely popular community event.

Staff say leaders support them well. The school assessment policy supports teachers' well-being. There are many opportunities for professional development and to work collaboratively with colleagues. Subject leaders speak positively about their autonomy and also the collegiate nature of working together with senior leaders on whole-school developments.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that their systematic processes quickly identify pupils who may be at risk from harm. Their recording system enables the strong safeguarding team to work effectively and swiftly to provide appropriate support to those who need it.

The PSHE programme equips pupils with appropriate knowledge to keep themselves safe. Assemblies and visiting speakers are used to further inform pupils about relevant risks and timely interventions.

Leaders, including trustees, are diligent in their safeguarding duties. They are knowledgeable and thorough in the required pre-employment checks and ensure that staff are thoroughly and regularly trained in current safeguarding practice and policies.

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

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

- The school's recent developments in curriculum thinking are not as well developed in some subjects as they are in others. The carefully constructed sequence of learning in these subjects is not as finessed as leaders would like it to be. Subject leaders should continue to refine their curriculum thinking so that the recent developments are embedded securely and consistently in all subjects.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, The Misbourne School, to be good in May 2017.

## 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

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|---|--|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                    | 145322   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                            | Buckinghamshire  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                          | 10227670   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                             | Secondary  |
| <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>        | 1,066  |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b> | 172  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                      | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                             | Kate Goodwin   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                                | Richard Peters   |
| <b>Website</b>                                    | <a href="http://www.themisbourne.co.uk">www.themisbourne.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                | Not previously inspected   |

## Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. There are currently six pupils attending this provision.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider (at four different sites).
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 11 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The Misbourne converted to become an academy school in February 2018. When its predecessor school, The Misbourne School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector also visited other lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff, and pupils.
- The lead inspector also met with members of the board of trustees.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records, including the school's record of recruitment checks. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, pupils and parents to gather their views. They considered 268 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 178 free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of 83 responses to the staff survey and 123 responses to the pupil survey.

## Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Beverley Murtagh

Ofsted Inspector

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