

Beaucroft Foundation School

Wimborne Road, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 2SS

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Teaching is outstanding over time, with constant day-to-day examples of lessons where pupils' learning is outstanding.
- As a result, all groups of pupils make rapid progress in all aspects of their learning across the school. This is often from a very low starting point.
- Teaching is outstanding because the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteachers and other senior leaders, set high expectations about pupils' development and are highly effective in rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching to ensure these are achieved.
- This has led to staff being very reflective in how to constantly improve their teaching, in the light of pupils' increasing level of need, so they produce lessons where learning is outstanding.
- Children make an excellent start in the outstanding Reception classes. Lessons are carefully planned and include a wide range of lively activities which engage the children so that they become keen to join in and learn.
- The sixth form is outstanding and has become very well established since the last inspection. Sixth form pupils make excellent progress and are given increasingly good opportunities to prepare for life after school.
- Pupils are extremely well cared for. They feel secure and appreciated as individuals. Pupils' behaviour improves from the day they start.
- All staff work very effectively together and support staff make a strong contribution to lessons. This ensures that all pupils join in fully and make outstanding progress.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is very effective in developing the skills of the staff and supporting them to take on additional responsibilities. This has led to constant improvement in key areas such as the monitoring of teaching and school improvement planning.
- Members of the governing body know the school very well and provide consistent support and challenge to drive improvement. The school receives very effective support from the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 lessons and a number of these were jointly seen with the senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made shorter visits to lessons to focus on specific aspects such as preparation for leaving the school.
- Members of the inspection team held meetings with two groups of pupils and discussed their reading with them.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, teaching assistants and a representative from the local authority. The lead inspector met with a small group of governors, including the Vice Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors took account of 30 responses to the on-line questionnaire for parents and carers, Parent View, as well as 45 responses to a survey for school staff, in informing the inspection findings. Inspectors also spoke to a number of parents to gather their views about the school.
- The inspection team looked closely at a range of documentation, including information on pupils' performance, their individual education plans, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding and behaviour policies, as well as policies on teaching and learning, and documents relating to the targets set for teachers to improve their work.

Inspection team

David Marshall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Joseph Skivington

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Beacroft is a school for pupils with learning difficulties. The number of pupils who have complex needs, mainly with autistic spectrum disorders or sensory impairments, has considerably increased since the last inspection.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school provides specialist provision for East Dorset, but also takes pupils from four other local authorities.
- There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children from the age of four. There is a sixth form for pupils aged 16 to 19.
- Most pupils are from families of White British heritage. In the past, the majority of pupils have usually been boys but currently almost a third of the pupils are girls.
- About 34% of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which is extra government funding given to the school on the basis of the numbers known to be eligible for free school meals, in the care of the local authority or from service families. This is above the national average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enable the outstanding quality of the teaching and learning to continue by monitoring the suitability and use of the accommodation in the light of the increasingly complex level of pupils' needs.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- All pupils have well below average attainment on entry to the school and have often missed a great deal of learning time because of their different needs. However, without exception, they respond well to the school's strong focus on 'learning to achieve' and quickly realise that learning is enjoyable. As a result, they make rapid progress and, as the school's data show, achieve consistently very well.
- Observations of lessons during the inspection, along with study of individual education plans which show increasingly difficult targets achieved, confirmed that throughout the school, including in the sixth form, all pupils make outstanding progress.
- The excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes is firmly based on meeting every individual child's needs and sharing best practice. This is built on outstandingly well in the older classes.
- The school's excellent assessment and recording systems show that their aim for every pupil to achieve their potential, often based on making the ambitious points progress each year, is being successfully accomplished.
- The school's many links with mainstream schools provide many excellent opportunities to promote pupils' outstanding progress. The many work experience activities for Year 13 and 14 pupils show the excellent progress made and how successful these links are throughout the school. The number of GCSE or equivalent passes gained by Year 11 pupils has risen substantially because they are now offered a wider range of courses which lead to qualifications. Pupils do particularly well in practical and work-related subjects. There are numerous examples of sixth form pupils coming back to the school to share their successes, made possible by the education they received.
- The pupil premium funding is targeted very effectively to raise achievement, for example through providing mentoring, additional individual support, residential visits and intervention programmes for identified pupils. For example, in 2012 the average points score (which is a method of measuring pupils' attainment) for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in both English and mathematics was above that for all pupils in similar schools nationally.
- Within the context of the pupils' needs, they make excellent contributions to their own and the wider community through their work experience and community activities in their coursework. Careful planning ensures pupils concentrate on communication, literacy and mathematics across the school, which helps their development of basic skills to ensure they are well prepared for their future lives.
- Almost all the parents or carers who responded to the online Parent View survey agreed that their children make at least good progress at the school.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Almost all parents who responded to the Parent View survey on the Ofsted website thought that their child was taught well. Pupils also say they are taught well.
- Teaching is outstanding over time because teachers repeatedly produce lessons where pupils' previous learning is constantly built upon so that over time, all groups of pupils make exceptional progress. For example, in a lesson for Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils, they made outstanding progress in developing their thinking through a range of high speed 'yes or no' questions they all enjoyed. Very effective use is made of question and answer sessions in lessons, with teachers and teaching assistants rigorously checking pupils' understanding of what they are learning. This is a constant feature in lessons and is one of the reasons why pupils make quick and consistent progress.
- Teachers are constantly looking to improve their own teaching and are very receptive to ideas that will help them produce even better lessons. Consequently teachers and other staff share

their good ideas and work well together to plan and deliver lessons that are highly effective in meeting pupils' needs and maintaining their interest.

- Teachers also have good subject knowledge and have the understanding and skill to change a lesson if they feel that it is not pitched at the right level or tasks are not enabling pupils to move on in their learning.
- Marking and feedback are excellent because teachers and teaching assistants are very good at advising pupils how to improve and pupils are given the time to respond and put into practice the advice given. In an outstanding Year 3/4 lesson, the teacher and teaching assistant were providing excellent support for pupils through prompting and questioning pupils' responses to the background of their stories. Consequently pupils were making rapid progress in their use of language and simple grammar.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Both pupils' behaviour and their safety in school are outstanding. The vast majority of parents and carers fully agree with inspectors' judgements.
- The school places a high level of importance on focusing on pupils' individual learning of life skills and it shows this, for example, by its commitment to completely individual timetables for each pupil, based on careful assessments.
- Pupils respond extremely well to encouragement to maintain a healthy lifestyle in relation to diet, exercise and emotional development.
- Pupils gain high levels of self-esteem and dignity due to the excellent relationships they have with adults and the sensitive way in which their needs are met, as when specific care or medical support are provided. It is clear that all pupils enjoy learning at the school.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are extremely rare and any school records show that the very few occurrences are dealt with very well. Staff, pupils, parents and carers report that behaviour is handled very effectively in all lessons and bullying or discrimination of any type is unheard of. Pupils agreed that they feel safe all of the time. Pupils gradually acquire an understanding of how to take care of themselves and one another.
- Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual despite the distance that some have to travel.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school's leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education noted at the time of their last inspection. The drive to continually improve outcomes for every pupil and to make sure that everyone has the chance to succeed is at the heart of the school's developments. However, the need to adapt to meet the many more complex needs of pupils is increasingly difficult in parts of the present accommodation.
- The leadership team shows a determination to be successful and have attended to the key issue from the last inspection exceptionally well. The new teaching block being built to extend the numbers of post-16 pupils is seen as the logical development of their outstanding provision.
- The very experienced headteacher and management team attach great importance to staff training and support this by regular observation of teaching, and by setting demanding targets for individual staff to improve their work. The high level of professional support for all staff is linked closely to setting performance targets that hold teachers accountable for pupils' progress very well. Weaker teaching has been tackled vigorously, and better teaching rewarded accordingly.
- The local authority provides effective support, through an experienced school evaluation partner who is providing very helpful guidance to the teachers across a range of issues and outcomes.
- The school fosters and maintains very strong links with a wide range of partners, including parents and carers. The strong links with the local community and other schools and colleges

ensure that there are very good learning opportunities for those pupils who are ready for a more adult learning experience or for an added focus on vocational activities.

- The leadership team skilfully weaves together academic, personal and therapeutic aspects so that the curriculum meets the individual needs, aspirations and interests of each pupil. The curriculum supports pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development exceptionally well through creative activities such as music groups and drama activities, horse-riding and many visits. The upcoming BGT (Beacroft's Got Talent) is really focusing pupils extremely well. The bass and drums rehearsals were particularly impressive.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body know the strength and weaknesses of the school very well through regular visits to classes in the school. The governing body have a good knowledge of data that compares the school to schools nationally. They use this information to robustly hold senior leaders to account.
- The spending of the pupil premium and the difference it is making is closely monitored. For example, governors know that the school very successfully closes the gap between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and all pupils nationally.
- The governing body has good systems to monitor the performance of staff and ensure that any salary increases are very clearly linked to teacher performance. Governors undertake regular professional training through the local authority. The governing body ensures that the school's safeguarding policies are very thorough and reviewed regularly, and that all procedures are robust and secure and staff are fully trained.

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	113956
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	403789

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	149
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	8
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Botterill
Headteacher	Paul McGill
Date of previous school inspection	6 November 2009
Telephone number	01202 886083
Fax number	01202 848459
Email address	office@beaucroft.dorset.sch.uk

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