

Beechwood Junior School

Juniper Road, Bitterne, Southampton, SO18 4EG

Inspection dates 20–21 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Beechwood Junior School is a school where pupils love to learn. As one parent said, 'This is a school where every child has a chance to shine.'
- Alongside outstanding attitudes to learning, pupils conduct themselves extremely well. They are respectful, courteous and cooperative. Pupils embrace the school's core values of respect, equality, honesty, achievement and teamwork.
- Working relationships between pupils and staff are excellent. Pupils appreciate the efforts made by teachers and other adults to provide them with challenging and enjoyable learning activities.
- Most pupils achieve exceptionally well at the school as a result of excellent teaching. They make outstanding progress and leave at the end of Year 6 with high attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- As a result of meticulous planning, teaching truly engages pupils and motivates them to do their best. Pupils have excellent opportunities to apply their skills across a wide range of subjects, often in interesting ways.
- Leaders are keen to ensure that opportunities to use numeracy across subjects match those in literacy, so that they too are outstanding.
- Marking is most often extremely effective in enabling pupils to know how to improve their work. Pupils routinely reflect upon their learning in most subjects, contributing strongly to their own learning.
- Leaders recognise the need to extend these high quality opportunities for reflection across subjects such as religious studies, art and French.
- Homework tasks provide pupils with helpful opportunities to reinforce and extend their learning, often in creative ways.
- Pupils confidently report that they feel very safe in school. They talk knowledgeably about how to keep safe both in and out of school. Parents have no qualms about their children's safety.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership. Alongside other senior and middle leaders, she has established a rich learning culture where academic achievement and personal development are highly valued.
- As a result of well-focused professional development and excellent coaching by leaders, teaching has improved strongly over the past few years. Pupils' achievement rose greatly in mathematics in 2014, and high levels of achievement in reading, writing and mathematics have been sustained this academic year.
- The school is highly efficiently and effectively run. Board members from the Edwin Jones Trust ensure that financial resources, such as pupil premium funding, are used extremely well to the great benefit of pupils.
- All staff are robustly held to account and underperformance is assiduously tackled.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well promoted.
- Pupils are extremely well prepared for life in modern Britain. They show a clear understanding of democratic processes, have tolerant attitudes and respect the rule of law.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. They looked at pupils’ work in books in class, on display and as a separate activity. Four of these activities were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with senior and subject leaders. They also met with leaders who were responsible for special educational needs, English as an additional language and child protection. Inspectors held additional meetings with the family support worker and the leader responsible for engaging with the community.
- An inspector also carried out a walk around the site with the site and premises managers.
- Meetings were also held with representatives from the Edwin Jones Trust, including the Directors of Standards, Assessment and Operations.
- Inspectors held formal and informal discussions with pupils. They listened to pupils reading and observed them at break, lunchtimes, in assembly time and during a tea dance enrichment activity set in the Second World War.
- The 26 responses to the online Parent View survey were considered, along with 86 responses to the school’s own parental survey from this academic year. Comments made to inspectors by parents during the inspection were also considered. Responses from 28 staff to a questionnaire were also analysed.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation. This included records of pupils’ attainment and progress, information about checks on teaching and the management of staff performance, the school’s development plans and self-evaluation summary. They also scrutinised external evaluations of school performance by the local authority and trust; the school’s website; behaviour logs; case studies and safeguarding information.

Inspection team

Najoud Ensaff, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Stephanie Matthews

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Beechwood Junior School is larger than average and has grown in pupil numbers this year. In Year 3, pupils are taught in three classes and in Years 4, 5 and 6 they are taught in two classes.
- The school converted to become an academy school in October 2013. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2009, it was judged to be good.
- The headteacher has been in post for two years, as has the deputy headteacher. Both they and other members of the senior leadership team are used by the Edwin Jones Trust, other academy trusts and the local authority to support local schools and a school on the Isle of Wight. They are viewed as local leaders of education.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with the remainder coming from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. There is an above average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, although only a small number are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils entitled to pupil premium funding is above average. This is additional government funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the outstanding teaching practices by making the most of opportunities for pupils to use numeracy creatively across subjects so that the use of numeracy becomes outstanding.
- Ensure that the high quality opportunities that pupils have to reflect upon their learning extend across subjects such as religious studies, art and French.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leading strongly by example, the headteacher, supported very ably by the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, has successfully created a highly effective learning culture which permeates the school. There is a clear expectation that all pupils can and will thrive at Beechwood. Along with governors, senior leaders have ensured that both progress and standards have improved strongly over recent years.
- The six elements of learning introduced by leaders, such as resilience and independence, shape the way in which pupils approach learning in lessons. These, alongside the five core values in the school (respect, equality, honesty, achievement and teamwork), ensure the positive and productive ethos of the school, where respect and courtesy are the norm.
- The leadership and management of teaching and assessment are excellent. Teachers are extremely well supported in developing the necessary skills to ensure that pupils achieve exceptionally well. A programme of very well-targeted professional development and in-house coaching helps teachers and additional adults to improve their practice.
- Robust self-evaluation and critical reflection by senior leaders mean that development plans focus effectively on the right areas so that weaknesses are quickly and convincingly addressed. For example, concerted efforts by staff to close gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their school peers led to them outperforming their peers in Year 6 this year.
- The skills of new middle leaders are developed very well so that they make an increasingly full and useful contribution to school improvement. They take an active role in checks made on the quality of teaching over time, looking at work in books and plans for learning, for example. They provide extremely useful and effective guidance to teachers about best practice in their subject areas, accurately assessing strengths and weaknesses.
- There are excellent systems in place to ensure that staff are held fully to account for pupils' achievement. Ambitious targets are set for staff and pupils, with both demonstrating exceptional commitment to the school's vision for pupils' high achievement.
- Leaders ensure that equal opportunities are promoted well and that any discrimination, should it occur, is tackled strongly. Excellent leadership has ensured that all groups of pupils reach high standards, including disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium. The programme to support this group is extremely well tailored to match their needs, so that they outperform other pupils nationally and have outperformed their peers in Year 6 this year.
- The school provides a carefully planned range of subjects built around interesting topics, which enables all groups of pupils to shine both academically and socially. Excellent coverage of English and mathematics, complemented by a basic skills programme, ensures that all pupils receive a strong grounding in core skills. Substantial and highly effective opportunities to apply literacy skills across other subjects ensure that pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education. Leaders are keen to make the most of opportunities for pupils to use numeracy creatively across subjects.
- There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, involving sport, team building, the arts and music, from which pupils benefit greatly. For example, every Year 3 pupil has an opportunity to learn an instrument. Other examples cited by parents and pupils were the 'Rock Challenge' where pupils perform in a community dance project set to music, and a residential trip to Avon Tyrell.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well promoted through whole-school and class assemblies, the five school values, enrichment activities and lessons. Beechwood is a school which values pupils' opinions. They actively contribute to decisions through democratically elected school council representatives and suggestion boxes. Pupils gain an acutely developed sense of what it is to be an active participant in modern, British society, understanding the values which underpin this.
- Pupils apply for and take up a wide range of roles within school, thus developing a real understanding of what it means to contribute to a community. Pupils have a very clear understanding of, and respect for, the importance of tolerance, diversity and the rule of law. They value the importance of rules, recognising their strong contribution to their feelings of safety. They respect difference and show tolerant attitudes to others. One pupil represented many when she said, 'People are who they are and you respect them for who they are.'
- The use of the primary physical education and sport premium is planned for and used effectively to provide a wide range of sporting clubs, such as fencing, dodge ball, football, additional training for staff and to increase participation in competitive sports. As a result, the profile of sport across the school has been heightened, teachers' and pupils' skill levels have improved and rates of participation in sport are high.

- Safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements. This ensures that pupils feel safe and are safe. All staff have received the relevant level of high quality up-to-date training in child protection. Risk assessments for in-school and off-site activities are wide ranging and up to standard. Policies are regularly reviewed and updated, including by governors. These arrangements ensure that safety is given utmost importance in the school's work.
- The school works extremely effectively with parents, including those who find coming into school more difficult. A family support worker and community leader liaise with parents and support them. Alongside the work of the senior leaders, they ensure that parental concerns are addressed quickly and effectively. Outcomes from parent surveys are acted upon to improve the school. Records kept by senior leaders indicate the thoroughness with which they respond to parental concerns. The school website is very informative about the life of the school. Responses to Parent View indicate that the vast majority value the school's work greatly. Most parents wholeheartedly recommend the school to others.
- The local authority rightly regards the school very highly. Leaders are viewed as local leaders in education because of the strong contribution they make to raising standards in other local schools. As Beechwood Junior School is an academy, the local authority does not supply any formal support. The Edwin Jones Trust provides highly effective support through regular visits with focuses on achievement, teaching and finance, for example. Extended support is also offered through professional development training and checks on assessment practices with other schools in the Trust.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is an extremely well-organised and highly skilled group. Governors have a very clear understanding about school performance, the quality of teaching and achievement in the school.
 - With clearly delineated roles, governors ably ensure that resources are used prudently, the site is safe, staff are appropriately vetted and the school is run efficiently. They are ambitious for pupils and hold staff strongly to account for pupils' achievement.
 - Governors ensure that teachers show the impact of their work on maintaining or raising standards before they receive increases in salary. They ensure that arrangements to check how well teachers perform are robust. In the very few cases where it has been appropriate in the past, underperformance has been decisively tackled.
 - Governors ensure that there are regular audits of safeguarding, that staff training is up to date and that there is a regular cycle of policy review.
 - Governors proudly recognise the friendly and inclusive nature of Beechwood.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They talk with great pride and interest about their work, and are keen to share their achievements.
- Pupils report that low-level disruption in lessons is very rare. They say that when these few minor instances do occur, they are quickly and easily dealt with. Behaviour logs support this view.
- The school has been successful in raising attendance over the past few years, so that it is now high.
- Clear and effective systems for the management of behaviour have ensured that the number of fixed-term exclusions has reduced to below average. There have been no permanent exclusions in the past few years.
- Parents overwhelmingly agree that behaviour in the school is excellent.
- Pupils are courteous and respectful, greeting visitors with politeness and healthy curiosity. In their everyday actions, pupils embrace the five school values. They treat others with tolerance, work cooperatively in lessons and play harmoniously at break times.
- Pupils show maturity in all that they do. They value the opportunities they are given to contribute to the school community – on the school council, as house captains, by starting up after-school clubs or by taking up a responsibility in the computer room, for example.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils confirm that they feel completely safe in school. They say that this is because of the bully-proof toilets, the clearly understood and implemented school rules and because of checks on attendance, for example during a fire drill.

- Pupils understand very clearly the importance of maintaining private settings when using the internet and of walking in groups rather than alone. They show an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe when cycling, swimming and in the event of a fire.
- Pupils have a very clear understanding about what constitutes bullying and about the different forms this might take. They know about verbal, physical, racist, cyber and homophobic bullying. They are adamant that bullying is really rare and are confident it is effectively handled. Pupils are confident that any form of discrimination is not tolerated because this goes against school and British values.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers plan very effectively for pupils' learning, so that their skills develop exceptionally well.
- Teachers make learning interesting and fun, showing secure subject knowledge and promoting pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills and their social and creative skills exceptionally well.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning superbly to check on pupils' understanding and probe their learning. They encourage pupils to take risks and develop their own ideas, deepening their grasp of subjects. Pupils report that they are always challenged in lessons.
- The teaching of reading is highly effective. Three reading texts are studied each year with themes linked to termly topics, such as the Second World War and Africa. A focus on pupils' basic reading skills, additional support for phonics (links between letters and sounds) where needed, and the teaching of more developed inference and deduction skills ensure that Year 6 pupils leave the school with attainment in reading which is high.
- The teaching of writing is outstanding. The literacy leader's focus on promoting published products means that Beechwood is a school where the written text is highly visible. Newspaper reports, radio scripts, stories and application letters are just a few examples of writing found on display in the school. Alongside basic skills input, and a focus on grammar, spelling and punctuation, teachers provide pupils with creative opportunities to write at length across subjects. As a result, pupils' writing skills are much better than those of pupils nationally.
- Mathematics teaching, too, is very good. Teachers ensure that pupils have a very secure grasp of times tables and basic number calculations before developing their ability to apply skills to problem solving and deepening their understanding. Pupils have good opportunities to apply numeracy skills across subjects, and during 'active learning' days. Year 6 pupils' Victory gardens, where they had to determine the most efficient way to use a plot of land to harvest fruit and vegetables during war time, and Year 5 pupils' costings for a business venture built around healthy eating, are two such examples. Leaders are keen to extend further these opportunities for pupils to use numeracy creatively across subjects, in order to make the most of pupils' achievement.
- Regular and highly effective marking provides pupils with excellent opportunities to reflect upon their learning in English, mathematics, science and foundation subjects such as geography and history. As a result, pupils know extremely well what they need to do to improve their work. Leaders recognise that opportunities for pupils to reflect in subjects such as art, religious studies and French need to extend further to ensure that pupils' excellent achievement continues to flourish.
- There is a well-considered rationale for pupils' homework which is adhered to by staff and which enables pupils to consolidate and build upon their excellent learning in lessons. Pupils are often given opportunities to suggest creative homework that they can complete over a half term, with many impressive examples such as robot models and hieroglyphic panels and Egyptian mummies adorning school corridors.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- In 2014, Year 6 pupils' progress in mathematics improved strongly and, this year, the school's track record of success has been sustained.
- Pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 having made much better progress than pupils nationally. Their attainment in reading and writing has been significantly higher than that of other pupils. Their attainment in mathematics was impressive in 2014 and this year it continues to be high.
- Pupils in all year groups achieve highly, with any minor differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils in Year 3 reducing as they progress up the school. By the time pupils leave the school, all pupils, including White British pupils, achieve exceptionally well. Beechwood is a school where, regardless of their heritage or background, pupils achieve highly.
- Disadvantaged pupils make exceptional progress across the school. In 2014, these pupils in Year 6 attained standards which were one-and-a-half terms ahead of other pupils nationally in reading, one term ahead in writing and one term ahead in mathematics. Although the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 lagged behind that of their peers in 2014 by two terms in mathematics and writing and one term

in reading, leaders have tackled these gaps decisively. This year the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 has risen further still so that they have outperformed their school peers in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least good progress as a result of the school's focus on basic skills, teaching which meets their needs in lessons, and well-tailored support outside of lessons.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make at least good and often rapid progress. This is as a result of the carefully planned subjects which help to develop pupils' skills progressively, effective questioning by adults and the outstanding assessment practices in the school.
- The most-able pupils make at least good and often rapid progress so that they achieve exceptionally well by the time they leave the school. This is because of the challenging material and carefully tailored work presented to them in lessons. An excellent example of this was in a Year 5 English lesson where pupils were successfully challenged to use their recent reading of *The Lady of Shalott* by Tennyson to inspire their own poems written in archaic language.

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	140263
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	450379
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Rafter
Headteacher	Susan Rees
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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