

# The Beacon Primary Short Stay School

Longdon Close, Woodrow South, Redditch B98 7UZ

**Inspection dates** 28–29 January 2016

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher and senior leaders have high expectations and have worked hard to build a cohesive staff team over the two sites. The staff team share the ambitions of senior leaders and all agree that the school is progressing well.
- There have been marked improvements in the leadership of most subjects and, in particular, English and mathematics.
- The management committee have an impressive range of skills and expertise and are a strength of leadership. They provide a very well informed blend of support and challenge to help move the school forward.
- The vast majority of the pupils stay in mainstream education following their six week placement at The Beacon. The support provided for pupils in mainstream schools is greatly valued and helps to prevent permanent exclusions.
- Pupils make good progress and are closing the gap with their mainstream peers. Progress is particularly good in writing and mathematics and good in reading.
- Teaching is effective, enthusiastic and ensures the pupils are made fully aware of what is expected of them.
- Pupils' behaviour and attendance improves significantly as they work closely with the staff. Success is founded on very positive relationships and the boosting of pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Their views are valued and contribute to school improvement.
- Pupils' welfare and progress are central to the work of the staff team and strong partnerships they have with other agencies. They provide a safe and calm setting where pupils feel secure and take pride in their school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The development of science across the school is limited and the available expertise is not used fully to promote high levels of progress.
- The pupils' activities are enriched during the school day. However, no after-school or residential opportunities are provided to help boost the pupils' progress and personal development.
- Priorities for improvement are not sufficiently linked to specific outcomes to give measures based on pupils' progress and personal development. This makes it difficult for the school to know what the precise impact of their work has been on raising standards.

## Full report

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

- Develop clearer measures for highlighting the impact of progress in school development by ensuring the specific outcomes in the school improvement plan have the desired impact on pupils' progress and their personal development.
- Extend the opportunities for the longer stay pupils, in particular, to take part in learning and play outside of the school day, to help boost progress in their learning and personal development.
- Match the improvements made in the leadership of English and mathematics by adopting the same approach in science. This includes:
  - raising the profile of science in the curriculum
  - making full use of the available expertise to provide more investigative work
  - carefully tracking pupils' progress in science to help set challenging targets and intervene if pupils fall behind with their work
  - developing the outdoor space on the Kidderminster site to provide learning opportunities to help inspire the pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Senior leaders have been very focused since the previous inspection on developing an ethos of high expectations, respect and tolerance. This has been achieved by building a strong leadership team with the confidence to build a committed and resilient staff team. They share the vision and ambition for continual improvement and have responded well to the challenges of increased responsibilities. The staff team are valued and are supportive of leadership and have a single school ethos, despite being on two sites.
- The enthusiastic and committed leadership of English and mathematics has ensured that there is high quality provision across both sites. This has happened as a result of careful planning, rigorous assessment and shared training opportunities. A wide range of interventions are used to boost progress. The same momentum is not evident in the development of science but the school has a proven track record of improvement to tackle this next priority.
- The evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development is rigorous and identifies clear areas for further improvement. However, priorities for improvement in the school development plan are not sufficiently linked to specific outcomes to give measures linked to pupils' progress and personal development. It is, therefore, a challenge for the school to be clear about what the precise impact of their work has been on raising standards. Also, the timescales for implementing the priorities are insufficiently precise to hold staff fully to account for their responsibilities.
- Senior leaders are skilled in highlighting the strengths and areas for development in teaching and learning. They feed back this information to teachers in a professional manner and the staff are receptive to the advice and challenge provided. This process, combined with high levels of mutual respect, has helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school is rigorous in the tracking of pupils' progress. The staff know each pupil very well and maintain a sharp and effective focus on their progress.
- Staff performance management is managed effectively and the staff respond well to training, which has helped to improve teaching and learning and the provision for pupils' personal development.
- The school's curriculum has a strong focus on English and mathematics to ensure that the pupils have the essential learning to prepare them for their next school. Pupils enjoy activities such as horse riding, swimming and animal care, which help to boost their personal development. The outside area on the Kidderminster site has the potential to extend the provision for subjects such as physical education and science, which are weaker areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. British values underpin the curriculum with a focus on developing mutual respect and tolerance. Display boards include a wealth of information including celebration of a wide range of festivals and reflect the good promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The pupil premium funding is managed well. The disadvantaged pupils make as good progress as the other pupils in the school. The current focus is on reading and there is also support for the pupils' social and emotional needs.
- The physical education and sport premium is used well. This funding has been used primarily to extend the range of activities available to the pupils, which they thoroughly enjoy.
- The six-week programme, working in partnership with mainstream schools, is effective and helps pupils to maintain their mainstream places. The pupils on this programme have a curriculum that is designed to maintain academic progress in combination with a focus on strong personal development. Outreach staff also have credibility and make a real difference to the reduction of exclusions from the mainstream primary schools they serve.
- The school's work with parents is good. Responses to a recent parental questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive. Parents commented on the excellent communications between the school and home. Also, one wrote that, 'the staff are very committed and really have the children's best interests at heart'. They feel very welcome when they visit the school. Parents appreciate the regular meetings and monthly newsletter to keep up to date and celebrate pupils' achievements.
- The local authority has been involved in working with the school in the drive for continual improvement. Their contribution has been valued by senior leaders, particularly in their help to develop mathematics.

### ■ The governance of the school

- The management has a wide range of skills and expertise. They are able to provide a well-informed blend of support and challenge to school leaders as they have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development.
- Members of the committee regularly visit both sites and they take their particular responsibilities very seriously. They also evaluate their own work closely to ensure that they are making an effective contribution to the school.
- They carefully scrutinise and understand the progress information and ask probing questions.
- The committee holds the school to account for the use and impact of additional funding. This includes pupil premium funding which is mainly focused on developing the pupils' reading.
- Members of the management committee attend training to ensure that they can complete their duties effectively.
- The committee are aware of the link between teachers' performance and pay. The committee understands that good teaching is central to promotion and increases in pay.
- The committee makes sure that all statutory requirements are met in relation to the pupils' welfare.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Policies, procedures and training are in place to maintain vigilance on keeping pupils safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers have high expectations for pupils' learning, and progress has been boosted by the effective management of pupils' behaviour. All of the time in lessons is used fully, which helps to re-engage pupils in their learning and develop a positive work ethic.
- There have been marked improvements, since the previous inspection, in the tracking of pupils' progress. Staff track and praise the pupils' small steps in their learning and this information is used to agree challenging targets. The targets are displayed clearly in classrooms to make sure that pupils are aware of expectations and give them the opportunity to help track their own progress. Staff intervene quickly if a pupil is not making expected or better progress and put strategies in place to get them back on track.
- Strong subject expertise is used to plan very thoroughly and provide an essential clear structure in pupils' learning. This ensures that learning is tailored to meet pupils' individual needs and promotes good progress. However, the lead teacher for science does not teach the subject, which limits her contribution to the quality of her subject.
- Staff develop attractive and stimulating learning environments, which help to motivate the pupils and promote a pride in their work. Learning is made fun and pupils increase their confidence to tackle challenging text in their reading. They develop the confidence to learn from their mistakes, which is not easy for many of them but essential if they are to return to mainstream education.
- Literacy and numeracy are effectively promoted in all lessons. There is effective challenge in the development of the pupils' specialist vocabulary for each subject. Pupils are keen to answer questions and are given the time and support to answer fully to show their understanding. This was particularly the case in a lesson where pupils made rapid progress in their understanding of managing budgets. Learning was made relevant to everyday life and pupils responded very well to the high level of challenge.
- The teaching assistants work very effectively with the teachers to develop pupils' positive attitudes to their learning. This team work is now a strength of the school. Praise is used effectively to highlight pupils' successes and help sustain their interest. Effective communication between teachers, teaching assistants and other specialist staff provides the consistency to ensure that the pupils' individual needs are met.
- Pupils are made aware of how well they have completed their work and are asked to give their views. Parents appreciate the regular information they are provided to keep them up to date with their child's progress. They feel part of the school and enjoy the genuine partnership with the school.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Staff are excellent role models and are determined to make sure that the pupils have the same opportunities as their peers in

mainstream schools. Parents made comments about the 'amazing support' provided for the pupils and their families. There is a 'can do it' approach with a focus on the positives.

- Staff have great expertise and a clear understanding of each pupil's strengths and aspects that limit their personal development. Pupils help to set their own targets, which helps to raise their motivation to succeed. A range of therapies and work with other agencies are accessed to meet the pupils' complex needs. Parents appreciate this support and can see the difference that it makes to their child's personal development.
- This is a welcoming school where the well-being of pupils and staff is embedded in the culture. Pupils are effectively re-engaged with their learning and provided with the stability to make good progress. The pupils are made very welcome at the start of the day and are pleased to see the staff. Staff eat their lunch with the pupils which is a relaxed and positive opportunity for them to talk together. Pupils would benefit from time after school and on residential trips to further develop their social skills and make up for missed time in their education. This is particularly the case for pupils who remain at the school for longer periods.
- Opportunities are provided for pupils to express their views with the motto, 'your voice your choice'. They take on responsibility and have written to a local school about tree planting and to the management committee requesting the development of the school's outside areas.
- Behavioural incidents are carefully recorded and rigorously monitored by the management committee. These records show that bullying is a rarity and systems are in place to effectively manage any incidents.
- Staff training includes a focus on emotional and mental health which helps them meet the pupils' needs. Staff new to the school are effectively inducted and learn when and how to intervene when pupils become distressed. Staff training is also provided in issues around radicalisation and extremism, e-safety and other key aspects of keeping pupils safe.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good, which is a marked improvement for most of the pupils. The management of their behaviour is carefully planned and they are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour. Systems are in place to manage challenging behaviour to help settle the pupils into the school. They learn that positive behaviour is praised and negative behaviour cannot be used to avoid work.
- There is a collective responsibility for the school and pupils take care not to damage the attractive displays in corridors and classrooms. They have a high regard for care of the environment and are keen to develop the garden area on the Kidderminster site. Pupils take an active part in local events by, for example, helping to raise money for charities.
- Pupils' abilities to cope with challenges and avoid conflict are very effectively developed by the staff and other professionals. They make clear progress and there is a significant reduction in incidents as they develop the skills and capacity to remain calm. Pupils develop the skills to learn and play together. They make joint decisions and are willing to take turns.  
Pupils feel safe in school, bullying is a rarity and there have been no exclusions this academic year. They are confident to talk with staff if they have concerns. Their responses to the questionnaires, asking for their views about the school, were very positive.
- Attendance is tracked very carefully. Many pupils with a history of non-attendance in their previous school make good progress and improve their attendance. This year, pupils' attendance is averaging over 92% with equally good attendance by disadvantaged pupils. Attendance of individuals and groups of pupils is carefully monitored and any non-attendance is responded to rapidly.

## Outcomes for pupils

## are good

- Since the previous inspection, pupils have made marked improvement in their writing and mathematics because of good leadership and the more effective tracking of all aspects of the pupils' progress. This shows that the school has a good track record of leading improvements. The current focus on reading, particularly for the younger boys, is having a positive impact and progress is now also good. The teaching assistants are playing a major role in helping to develop the pupils' ability to read with confidence. Pupils often volunteer to read aloud in class, which is a measure of their growing confidence.
- The proportion of pupils making expected or above expected progress in English and mathematics, from their starting points at the school, compares positively with other pupils nationally. However, progress in science is not as good as in English and mathematics. Staff do not track pupils' progress with the same level of rigour, making it difficult to make a secure judgement on the extent of their progress in science. There is variability in the level of challenge in the work and too few opportunities for pupils to learn independently or

take part in practical activities.

- Assessment information illustrates that the available pupil premium funding is used well to ensure that the high proportion of disadvantaged pupils make equally good progress as the other pupils in the school.
- The pupils that the school identifies as being the most able are fully challenged and make good progress. They are making good progress in reading independently and for pleasure. There is no overall difference in the progress of boys compared to girls, as shown in the progress information from last year.
- Pupils' workbooks, teachers' records, photographs and displays show that pupils make good progress in a range of subjects, including geography and history. This is evident in the topics studied by the short-stay pupils. Each of these topics has a key book linked to it to help develop the pupils' accuracy and understanding of what they read.
- Reading and spelling are set for homework as part of the school's focus on developing pupils' communication skills.
- Pupils are prepared well for their move back to mainstream education or special schools. Most of the pupils on the six-week course have a successful return to their host school.
- Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work and they should be proud of their books. There are few gaps in the work showing that they typically work hard and complete their tasks.
- Pupils' social and emotional skills are developed effectively in activities such as horse riding and animal care.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130987
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002458

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	8
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Management committee
<b>Chair</b>	Angela Beddow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lesley Hatton
<b>Telephone number</b>	01527 514068
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.thebeaconpru.org.uk">www.thebeaconpru.org.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@thebeacon.worcs.sch.uk">office@thebeacon.worcs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23–24 October 2013

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has expanded and has now an additional base in Kidderminster and the overall capacity to educate 25 pupils.
- The headteacher was permanently appointment in January 2014.
- Most of the current pupils have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools. At other times, the school has groups of pupils who are at risk of exclusion. These pupils are dual-registered, as they remain on the roll of their mainstream school. The dual-registered pupils attend this school part time for six weeks and have the rest of their education in their home primary schools.
- All of the pupils currently on roll are boys but the school is also designated for girls.
- All pupils have special educational needs as they have social, emotional and mental health needs. A few have education, health and care plans and others are undergoing integrated assessment.
- The school provides outreach support to primary schools through advice to staff and work with pupils.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is well above average. This extra government funding is provided to give extra support to pupils who are in the care of the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals. The home schools have the funding for the dual-registered pupils.
- The school has additional primary physical education and sports funding.
- Nearly all of the pupils are from families of White British heritage.

## Information about this inspection

- Discussions were held with pupils and the responses of five pupils to the online questionnaire were analysed.
- The inspection team observed teaching in five lessons, most of which were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held conversations with the leadership team, school staff, members of the school's management committee and a representative of the local authority.
- Phone conversations took place with other professionals that work with the school.
- Inspectors reviewed school documents including: the self-review form, school development plan, external reports, behaviour and incident logs, safeguarding records, lesson plans, examples of pupils' work and the school's progress information.
- Inspectors had meetings with three parents and took two written responses from parents into account. Six parental responses to a recent school questionnaire were also analysed. There were not enough responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, to add to the evidence base.
- The inspection team analysed responses to questionnaires completed online by 10 members of the school staff.

## Inspection team

David Smith, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rowena Green	Ofsted Inspector



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