

# Beacon Business Innovation Hub

Woodford Bridge Road, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex IG4 5LP

## Inspection dates

4–5 July 2017

| Overall effectiveness                        | Requires improvement        |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| 16 to 19 study programmes                    | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected    |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- This is a rapidly improving school. However, new leaders and strategies to move the school forward have yet to secure consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders are not sharp enough in their analysis of how well different groups of pupils achieve.
- Pupils do not make the progress they are capable of, particularly in key subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The curriculum, although recently improved, is too narrow and does not provide pupils with opportunities to study a wide range of subjects, including science.
- Some teachers have low expectations and do not challenge poor punctuality and the inappropriate use of mobile phones. This compromises pupils' learning, as does the low attendance of some pupils.
- Post-16 provision requires improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- Trustees and governors are determined to build a high-performing team of leaders and staff.
- Leaders have clear plans in place for September to raise standards and the quality of provision, including the curriculum.
- The school promotes pupils' welfare and safety well.
- Teaching in catering and childcare is strong.
- Pupils are polite, positive and friendly. They appreciate the help and support staff give them so gain in confidence and self-belief.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, especially in reading and mathematics, by ensuring that:
  - Pupils' strengths and weaknesses are rigorously assessed when they enter school so that targeted interventions are put in place to plug any gaps swiftly
  - pupils have work that is pitched at the right level of challenge, particularly for the most able and most able disadvantaged pupils
  - pupils know precisely what they need to do in order to achieve the learning outcome at the end of the lesson and what their next steps are
  - teachers and support staff assess pupils' understanding in lessons and adapt activities to secure a quick pace in learning
  - support staff are always used effectively to maximise pupils' learning
  - the profile of reading for pleasure and purpose is raised across the school, with more regular opportunities to practise and extend pupils' reading skills.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by:
  - assessing pupils' social and emotional skills when they enter school, and checking the impact strategies have to meet their mental health needs
  - making sure that all pupils attend lessons on time
  - raising teachers' expectations for pupils' behaviour in lessons
  - improving attendance rates for the small minority of pupils who do not attend school regularly.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - sharpening up how progress and attainment information is analysed and presented, so that all leaders can assess how well all groups of learners are performing, including the most able pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils and, compare this with national expectations
  - using this information to set specific and aspirational targets in school improvement planning
  - implementing the proposed new curriculum as a matter of urgency, providing more enrichment activities and securing more work experience placements.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Trustees have acted decisively to make sure that the school improves strongly with the recent appointments of a principal and two vice-principals. These key senior leaders have made a good start at implementing procedures to enable them to develop an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Monitoring evidence is used to gain an appropriate picture of the school's overall performance and to plan for further improvements focused on the right priorities. However, improvement planning is not sharp enough. Although there are some measurable outcomes, the lack of milestones and precise targets based on different groups of pupils' progress limits leaders' ability to evaluate the school's performance precisely.
- The newly implemented assessment system is beginning to enable leaders to hold staff to account for the progress pupils make, with regular checks on achievement. However, leaders do not dig deeper than the overall headline news and do not have a sufficient understanding of how well all groups of pupils achieve, including the most able, and the most able disadvantaged. This means leaders are not able to evaluate how well these key groups are achieving compared with national comparator groups, and whether all groups are making the progress they should.
- Trustees have made sure that expertise to support senior leaders across the multi-academy trust (MAT) bolsters much-needed leadership capacity to secure improvements in all key areas of the school's performance. Nonetheless, strategies are relatively new and have yet to secure consistency in teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, pupils' achievement is not yet good across a range of subjects.
- Pupils' previous attainment levels at the end of key stage 2 are used to set realistic and sometimes challenging targets. However, the lack of a comprehensive and incisive baseline assessment of pupils' strengths and weaknesses hinders staff from identifying precisely gaps in pupils' prior learning, particularly in key stage 3. Therefore, although some interventions are put in place to boost progress, these are not always targeted effectively, particularly in reading and mathematics and for the most able pupils.
- Leaders do not assess and monitor pupils' personal development. Given that at least one in every two pupils has mental health issues, leaders cannot be sure that strategies to meet individual pupils' needs are having maximum impact.
- Senior leaders with responsibility to improve the quality of teaching have a good understanding of what constitutes effective practice. The expertise from the teaching alliance school is used wisely and effectively. Leaders have implemented a cycle of observations with follow-up professional discussions with staff to identify strengths and weaknesses. They provide tailored support through coaching and mentoring, and share effective practice across the MAT. Despite inconsistencies, there are clear indications that the profile of teaching is improving.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Assemblies and personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons enable pupils to explore and respect differences, including different faiths and religions. Pupils show respect for their friends and for

staff.

- The curriculum is personalised to meet some pupils' needs, aptitudes and abilities. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have tailored support because funding is used judiciously. A small number of most able pupils study for some of the time at the mainstream secondary schools within the MAT if they are able to cope socially and academically. However, this is not systematically planned for all pupils.
- The curriculum has been broadened this year. Pupils study some IGCSEs, for example in English and mathematics, and accredited courses in functional skills, including English, mathematics and information technology (IT), and vocational skills in catering, childcare, health and social care, enterprise, financial capability, health and fitness, performing arts, web design, accountancy and PSHE.
- The school recognises that the curriculum is still too narrow and does not provide sufficient breadth and depth. As the school grows, staff have been appointed, including a senior leader for the curriculum for September 2017. A new curriculum offer will include science, music, sport, media studies and psychology. However, there are too few enrichment activities to provide relevant and different experiences for pupils.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding to make sure that eligible pupils make the same progress as other pupils through individual support and interventions. The school's achievement information, which tracks individual pupils' performance, confirms this.

## **Governance**

- Governors and trustees, including the managing director of the trust, are determined to make sure that the school continues on an upward trajectory at a fast pace. The managing director leads by example, providing an exceptionally strong role model for other leaders. Following the school's opening in September 2014, governors and trustees have been faced with a series of challenges including a managed move from temporary accommodation to a permanent building. The impact of small pupil numbers on roll has presented governors and trustees with financial constraints, a narrow curriculum and a lack of subject specialism.
- The school is growing in popularity and pupil numbers are increasing. Trustees and governors are financially astute and use funds wisely. In the autumn term, they commissioned an external review of the school as a result of serious concerns about the school's performance. They acted speedily to address the areas of weakness with a clear plan of action. A new principal was appointed, who is well supported by two new vice-principals and senior leaders from the MAT. Governors and trustees work well with senior leaders, providing the right level of support and challenge.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated safeguarding lead makes sure that all the statutory requirements are met in full. She is very well supported by the safeguarding governor who regularly checks on all safeguarding procedures. Staff are trained to identify any pupils at

potential risk and are fully aware of their collective safeguarding responsibilities.

- All the required checks are undertaken to make sure adults are suitable to work with children. As a result, pupils are kept safe and secure.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies too much across different subjects. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, and particularly so for the most able, including the most able disadvantaged.
- Too often all pupils complete the same work because teachers do not use assessments well enough to plan for the wide range of abilities. Staff do not always monitor the progress pupils make in lessons. As a consequence, those pupils who find the work too easy and complete work quickly are not always identified. These pupils become bored and lose concentration, slowing their progress down over time, especially in mathematics.
- Although teachers identify what pupils are expected to learn by the end of a lesson, there is insufficient guidance on what steps learners need to take in order to achieve well, or what their targets are in order to move their learning on at a good pace. This also prevents pupils from working out for themselves how well they have achieved.
- Some teachers are adept at deploying teaching assistants to support and guide those pupils who find learning difficult or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, learning time is wasted while support staff wait for the teacher to explain activities at the beginning of a lesson.
- Some teachers plan well for pupils in specific subjects, especially in catering and childcare. These teachers have good subject knowledge. They make learning interesting and practical. As a result, pupils are absorbed and fully focused, wanting to learn even more.
- Teachers usually encourage pupils to speak clearly and explain their learning. This has a strong impact on learners' speaking and listening skills across the curriculum.
- Strong relationships and the positive rapport in lessons enables pupils to feel confident enough to express their ideas.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Requires improvement**

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Case studies confirm that as pupils settle into school their confidence and self-esteem grow. They begin to believe in their capabilities, which in turn promotes a culture of success where pupils are better able to access their learning.
- Pupils appreciate the additional guidance and help they receive from staff. They say that staff 'keep us out of trouble'. They trust adults to listen to their views and concerns. Pupils told inspectors that the coaches help them with their personal issues, including how to manage their anger better. Pupils have access to counselling.

However, leaders know this needs to be developed still further.

- Increasingly, pupils are given a voice, including through the recent formation of the 'Hubbers' who organise assemblies, charity events and reward trips, as well as interviewing new staff for September. These foster pupils' confidence, motivation and sense of responsibility, promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Courses in childcare, catering and social care provide pupils with key life skills vital for their successful transition to adulthood. Staff, including coaches, support pupils with financial management, enterprise and IT. This helps to prepare pupils for their next stage of education, employment or training effectively.
- The school works closely with outside agencies to promote pupils' welfare and safety, and there are plans to secure broader on-site support, including speech and language therapists and educational psychologists.
- Throughout their time in school, pupils develop good insight into their own behaviour and how this affects themselves as well as others. As a consequence, they gain greater self-control and usually behave appropriately.
- Pupils know how to keep safe and to manage any potential risks through good advice and information, including on grooming, knife crime and cyber-bullying. They told inspectors that it is their responsibility to prevent and report any bullying behaviour, although they confirmed that there are few bullying incidents. Pupils have confidence in seeking help if they need it. PSHE lessons help pupils to make the right choices.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- There is clear evidence that incidents of poor and low level disruption have declined over the academic year. Staff are successful in managing some challenging behaviour(s) of pupils when they begin school.
- Most pupils conduct themselves well, around the school and in lessons. Learning usually proceeds in calm and quiet manner.
- However, there are some pupils, particularly the most able pupils, who do not have positive attitudes to their learning because teachers do not challenge them to think hard about their work. Some pupils show a lack of respect for the school rules and use their mobile phones inappropriately. This is not always challenged by adults, reflecting low expectations which hinders pupils' learning and progress.
- Punctuality is also improving. However, a small minority of pupils repeatedly attend lessons late, slowing their progress down still further.
- Attendance for the vast majority of pupils is improving. In most cases, pupils significantly increase their regular attendance. However, overall attendance remains below other schools nationally. This is because a few pupils do not attend as regularly as they should.

**Outcomes for pupils**

**Requires improvement**

- The majority of pupils start the setting with lower starting points than is typical for their year group in all subject areas. Many pupils have considerable gaps in their learning, as a result of past non-attendance and/or sporadic attendance in mainstream schools.
- All pupils achieve some form of accredited qualifications in functional and vocational skills. The school is particularly successful in ensuring that all pupils achieve well in catering, childcare, and health and social care.
- One in three pupils are predicted to achieve grade C or above in IGCSE but only one in two pupils in mathematics. This is also the case for Year 12 and 13 students.
- Leaders recognised that pupils had previously been limited to studying at levels which lacked aspiration, and introduced level 2 courses this year in some subjects. However, there remain insufficient opportunities for the most able pupils to study and achieve at higher academic levels. As a result, these pupils do not make the progress they are capable of.
- The school's achievement information confirms that progress is inconsistent across subjects. Most pupils achieve their academic targets in speaking and listening because teachers ensure that these skills are promoted at every opportunity. However, although pupils make stronger progress in writing, too few pupils achieve well in reading, mathematics and IT.
- Pupils told inspectors that they do not like reading. Although inspection evidence confirms that pupils generally read accurately, there are few opportunities for pupils to engage in reading for pleasure, or to read for a purpose in a variety of different contexts.
- Overall, those pupils eligible for the pupil premium, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more vulnerable make similar progress to their peers.
- A small number of pupils in Year 11 spend part of their timetable studying off site. The arrangements for checking their work, attendance, punctuality and behaviour are effective.
- Every pupil goes on to further education, either in this setting or other colleges, or training and employment.

### **16 to 19 study programmes**

**Requires improvement**

- Students are taught with younger pupils, and they too make inconsistent progress across different subjects. They make better progress in English than in mathematics.
- Students become increasingly independent because they benefit from one-to-one support from the coaches. They can be very mature and responsible and, as a result, the school is effective in preparing each student for their next stage in education, employment or training. Predictions for this year indicate that all students will go on to appropriate destinations. Nonetheless, there is a small minority of students who do not attend school as regularly as they should.
- Students complete a work placement either within school or with local employers. Nevertheless, leaders acknowledge that opportunities are limited. Although careers guidance and advice are provided by coaches and external advisers to support students

to make choices about their future, the lack of wider work placements restricts students from always making independent and informed decisions about their future.

- As with younger pupils, students have opportunities to study both vocational and functional courses. A small minority of students who are emotionally and academically able study some core subjects at AS and A levels at the secondary academies.
- There is no sixth-form leader for this phase.



## School details

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Unique reference number | 141006    |
| Local authority         | Redbridge |
| Inspection number       | 10031695  |

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

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Type of school  | Secondary alternative provision                    |
| School category                                       | Academy free school                                |
| Age range of pupils                                   | 14–19  |
| Gender of pupils                                      | Mixed  |
| Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes         | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll                   | 61   |
| Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes | 28   |
| Appropriate authority                                 | The governing body/academy trust                   |
| Chair   | Michelle Fuller                                    |
| Principal   | Lise Thompson                                      |
| Telephone number                                      | 020 8551 4954                                      |
| Website   | <a href="http://www.bbih.org">www.bbih.org</a>     |
| Email address   | <a href="mailto:admin@bbih.org">admin@bbih.org</a> |
| Date of previous inspection                           | Not previously inspected                           |

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Beacon Multi-Academy Trust (BMAT), and located with all the schools within the MAT. It is overseen by a managing director and trustees. It is led and managed by its own principal and governing body.
- This is the school's first standard inspection since it opened in September 2014.
- The school provides a range of alternative education for pupils who are unable to access mainstream secondary schools for a variety of reasons.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The number of pupils who have a statutory statement of special educational needs and/or an

education, health and care plan is above average.

- The school does not receive catch-up funding.
- Most pupils are White British, with a small minority of other pupils from a variety of ethnic groups. A very small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. There are currently a few pupils at an early stage of learning English.
- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what free schools should publish.
- There have been some significant changes to the leadership team. A new headteacher was appointed in April 2017. The two acting vice-principals' posts were made substantive in May 2017. The school is currently being supported by senior leaders within the MAT, including the principal of the teaching alliance school, the principal of Forest Academy, and the special educational needs leader on a part-time basis.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons in most classes and observed a variety of activities. Leaders accompanied inspectors on all the visits to lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school was observed. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's records of behavioural incidents, including bullying logs.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils about their learning in lessons and met with two groups of pupils. Inspectors observed pupils reading in lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders to evaluate the impact of their work to improve pupils' outcomes and strengthen the quality of teaching. This included meetings with the leader for teaching and learning and the leader for personal development, behaviour and safety.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body and trustees, including the managing director of the trustees and the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors were not able to review work in pupils' books because none were available. They scrutinised the school's current assessment information on how well pupils achieve and examined leaders' monitoring records.
- A range of documentation related to safeguarding was examined. This included the single central record of pre-employment checks and records relating to the school's work to safeguard pupils at risk of harm.
- There were no parental responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, or to staff and pupil questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Mary Hinds, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joan Deslandes

Ofsted Inspector

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