

Inspection of a good school: The Beacon Church of England (VA) Primary School

1 Beacon Place, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 2SR

Inspection dates:

13–14 July 2021

Outcome

The Beacon Church of England (VA) Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are at the heart of this inclusive school. Leaders are determined that all pupils reach their full potential. Pupils feel safe and value the friendship they make, as part of the 'one big Beacon family'. Parents and carers appreciate the care provided for their children.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They like the range of opportunities the school provides beyond the classroom. This supports them with their personal development. Pupils say the school teaches them how to be resilient. They gain self-confidence due to the way that adults treat them.

Pupils are polite and caring towards each other. They understand the school's values and why these are important. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. When this happens, staff respond appropriately and sensitively. Pupils understand what bullying is. They say it happens 'once in a blue moon', and when it does, staff deal with it well.

Pupils develop a positive understanding of respect and tolerance. They know everyone is unique and that it is good to be different. Pupils have strong and trusting relationships with staff.

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

The school continues to provide a good quality of education. Staff have high ambitions for all pupils. There is much respect for the headteacher, who ensures both pupils and adults are well cared for.

Reading is prioritised across the school. From the moment children start in the Reception class, they learn phonics. Staff expose children to a range of rhymes and songs to develop their communication skills. Staff are well trained. This ensures a consistent approach to the teaching of reading. Books are matched to the letters and sounds pupils

are learning. When pupils fall behind, staff are quick to provide support so that they catch up.

Pupils enjoy reading. Older pupils say that reading calms and relaxes them, allowing them to use their imagination. Time is always made for adults to read to pupils. Pupils read a wide variety of texts. They know why reading is important. Staff support pupils' reading development through careful questioning. This helps pupils to 'dig deeper' into texts and improves their comprehension.

The mathematics curriculum is well organised. Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons and are keen to learn about this subject. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure that pupils secure knowledge over time. They can explain what they have learned in the past and how this relates to new learning. Pupils say that knowing your times tables is a 'crucial' part of mathematics. Children in the Reception class are provided with a range of mathematical activities to deepen their understanding of number. Adults talk with children and ask skilful questions to develop their mathematical thinking.

Staff know pupils well. Pupils with emotional and special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively. Staff provide high-quality support in lessons so that all pupils can join in. As a result, pupils with SEND thrive in a supportive environment.

Leaders help pupils to make the right choices and to take responsibility for their actions. Staff provide pupils with many opportunities to learn beyond the classroom, including how to consider their own physical and mental well-being. Pupils value these experiences of developing character and resilience. They are taught how to support others sensitively.

Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They ask sensible questions, such as 'Is it safe? Is it sensible? Is it kind?' when thinking about the way to behave. Low level disruption is rare. Staff have effective plans to help those pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour.

Leaders prioritise pupils' mental and physical well-being. Through the physical education curriculum, pupils take part in a wide variety of sports. Plans shows the skills that should be learned overtime. However, the knowledge pupils need to acquire these skills is not clear. Leaders recognise the need to identify the key knowledge and concepts pupils should know, and by when.

Governors are very knowledgeable about the work of the school. Governors play an important role in holding school leaders to account. They ask challenging questions to check the impact of school improvement priorities. They are determined that all pupils have as many educational opportunities made available to them as possible.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff act in the best interests of keeping pupils safe. Leaders ensure all staff are knowledgeable and receive frequent, up-to-date safeguarding training. Systems for reporting concerns are effective. Staff understand exactly what to do if they are worried about a pupil. They know that their concerns will be taken seriously.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. For example, they can explain, in detail, how to stay safe online. Pupils know who to go to if they have a concern. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum supports pupils' understanding of risk.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The key content and knowledge that pupils need to learn in some subjects is not explicit enough. It is not clear what pupils should know, and by when, to build their knowledge over time. Leaders need to ensure that staff identify, sequence and prioritise essential knowledge and concepts so pupils have the building blocks for future learning 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 some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, 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 convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 8 June 2011.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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

Unique reference number	113430
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10198411
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Caroline Walshaw
Headteacher	Anne Billington
Website	www.beacon-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 February 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England (Voluntary-Aided) school. It is part of the Diocese of Exeter. Its last section 48 inspection took place in 2016.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the school improvement adviser, groups of staff and representatives from the governing body.
- The inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 read to an adult.
- The inspector did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. The inspector visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

- The inspector considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspector spoke with pupils to discuss their views on the school.
- The inspector considered 85 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including 30 free-text responses, 69 responses to the pupil online survey and 21 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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