

Inspection of Beal High School

Woodford Bridge Road, Ilford, Essex IG4 5LP

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Beal High School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Beal High School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened in Beal High School's effectiveness before and after it converted to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils describe the school as being like a family, where diversity is celebrated and equality promoted. They said that teachers always support them and have high expectations, and that they get lots of opportunities to learn. Pupils' professional relationships with their teachers are especially positive and they get well-directed advice about next steps and careers. Pupils feel safe in school and know that teachers always have time for them if they are worried about something. Pupils' pride in their school is unmistakable.

Occasional cases of bullying are sorted out effectively by staff. Teachers deal with concerns speedily and effectively. Behaviour is calm and orderly. Pupils move quickly and calmly around the large campus with a minimum of fuss. Occasionally, pupils get a bit silly in classrooms but this is dealt with well by teachers. As a result, learning is rarely interrupted.

Leaders successfully prioritise pupils' personal development. The school's programme strongly encourages pupils to understand healthy relationships. This includes how to identify inappropriate behaviour and language from their peers. For example, issues around consent are dealt with clearly in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons, and through assemblies and form time. Pupils are taught to report any concerns. Leaders respond to any issues effectively and swiftly.

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

There is much that the school does particularly well. Leaders have made sure that their clarity of vision is translated effectively into a culture of mutual respect. There is a strong focus on pupils' well-being and learning. Pupils are given a great deal of support to do well and many take the opportunities available to extend their learning. For example, there is a wide range of after-school clubs and activities as well as planned trips and visiting drama groups. The quality of the help available to pupils is a particular strength.

In many subjects, the curriculum is planned effectively to ensure that pupils build their learning in a structured and logical way. This is especially so in mathematics, where the attention to detail means that pupils learn exceptionally well. This is also the case in the sixth form. The wide range of academic and vocational subjects offered means that nearly all students find a pathway that is right for them. Their achievements are first-rate.

In other subjects across the school, pupils learn well because the curriculum plans identify the essential knowledge needed to achieve at a high level. For example, in art, pupils learn how to use colour in increasingly sophisticated ways. In history, the order in which the fundamental concepts are taught enables pupils to make connections. This means that they know more and remember more as they move up the school.

Teachers have a thorough understanding of their subjects. Subject leaders have done much to ensure that teaching plans identify the key content and skills that they want pupils to learn. For example, in design and technology, teachers have identified where they want pupils to get to and the knowledge needed to reach this point. There is a strong focus on recalling knowledge so that pupils can build on previous learning.

However, in a few instances, these plans are not being implemented quite as effectively. This is partly the result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of working remotely. Nevertheless, the quality of the work produced by some pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 is not as strong as it should be. In a few cases, the sequence of learning is not as carefully organised. In other cases, the work is occasionally undemanding. These small inconsistencies mean that some pupils are not learning as much of the curriculum as they could.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including for those who attend the additional resource unit, is well planned. The wide range of support available for pupils, and the well-devised systems to continually check their learning, contribute strongly to the development of pupils' knowledge and skills. As a result, pupils with SEND gain the skills for later life.

Senior leaders' clear vision for the school ensures that staff are highly ambitious for pupils and students. Staff workload is managed effectively. Leaders evaluate the school's work thoroughly. They know where the weaknesses are and tackle these pragmatically. For instance, an innovative project to develop pupils' confidence, as well as their technical vocabulary and creativity, is under way. High-quality leadership in the sixth form ensures that students' personal and academic development is top-notch. Students are thoughtful and mature. They leave the sixth form very well prepared for their future lives.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there are rigorous procedures to promote pupils' welfare, safety and well-being. Up-to-date policies mean that the most recent government guidance informs practice. Teachers have a secure understanding of the safeguarding procedures and to whom they need to report concerns. Training for staff is comprehensive.

With the strong support of governors and trustees, leaders ensure that staff vetting checks are carried out effectively. The strong links with outside agencies mean that help for pupils is provided quickly. Leaders employ an impressive range of support staff to enhance further the support they provide for pupils. The PSHE programme and assemblies ensure that pupils are taught about staying safe, including online safety, cyberbullying and peer-on-peer abuse.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum has many strengths, for example in mathematics, geography and in the sixth form. Subject leaders are clear about what they want pupils to learn and by when. They have identified end points and the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn to reach these. However, there are inconsistencies and variabilities in the way the curriculum is delivered in some subjects. This results in pupils not making as much progress in their learning as they should, especially at key stage 3. Curriculum plans need to be implemented effectively across the school, so that learning is carefully structured in all subjects.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	140575
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10199443
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	2697
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	907
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Elizabeth Sidwell
Executive Principal and CEO	Kathryn Burns
Website	www.bealhighschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Beal High School provides education for pupils aged 11 to 18 in the London Borough of Redbridge. The school converted to academy status in 2014 and is part of the Beacon multi-academy trust.
- The school has an on-site unit, the Beacon Communication School, for 42 pupils with SEND.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, geography, design and technology, art and design, and religious studies. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Meetings were held with the principal and with senior leaders, staff and pupils, Inspectors also met with the chair of trustees, trustees and the chair of the local governing body.
- Meetings were held to discuss safeguarding arrangements, and inspectors scrutinised school records of the safeguarding checks on adults working in the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of 69 members of staff who responded to the staff survey and 143 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey, including the free-text responses.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils and students to discuss their views about many different aspects of their school. Inspectors also considered 233 responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

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