

Inspection of Beacon High

Hilldrop Road, Islington, London N7 0JG

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement
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What is it like to attend this school?

Beacon High is a caring school. Pupils are polite and considerate of others. Staff provide high-quality care, which makes pupils feel safe. Pupils want to do well and generally work hard. Staff reward pupils' positive behaviour and effort with achievement points. There is a culture of celebration that encourages and motivates pupils.

Leaders have high expectations of all pupils. They place the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) at the heart of the school's work. There is extensive support available to help all pupils to learn well, maintain healthy relationships and prepare for their next steps.

Pupils generally behave well and treat each other with kindness and respect. Staff deal with any bullying effectively when it does happen. Pupils appreciate the support they are given. They said they can speak to staff and feel they will be listened to. Pupils enjoy school.

Pupils attend a range of activities outside of lessons, including swimming club, football and gardening club. They have opportunities to take on responsibility. For example, pupils lead charity fundraising events, volunteer at a local community centre and take care of the school's guinea pigs. They are encouraged to respect differences and to feel that they can be themselves.

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

Leaders have planned a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. Subject leaders have thought carefully about what pupils should learn so that their knowledge builds over time. Pupils are taught to link together what they learn. For instance, in English, pupils study a very wide range of texts, connected by a common theme such as 'childhood and growing up'. In history, pupils are taught about civil rights and the growth of democracy in the UK and around the world. Leaders are ambitious to increase the proportion of pupils who study the English Baccalaureate in Years 10 and 11.

Teachers break down new information into manageable chunks. They teach pupils the vocabulary needed to understand new ideas. This helps pupils to remember what they have been taught. In some subjects, teachers sometimes do not identify and correct pupils' misconceptions during lessons. As a result, sometimes, pupils learn things that are incorrect.

Leaders know which pupils need extra help with reading. They provide appropriate support. Pupils have frequent opportunities to read in lessons and during form time. However, the teaching of phonics for those pupils are the earliest stages of learning to read in English is not routinely sharply focused on the specific phonics that they need.

Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly. In most subjects, teachers help pupils to recall what they have learned previously and understand where they may have gaps in their knowledge. In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment as effectively.

There is little disruption to learning the curriculum in class. Teachers follow clear systems to support and motivate pupils to behave sensibly. Pupils mix well together outside the classroom. There is a calm and friendly environment during break times.

Leaders prioritise teaching pupils about healthy relationships, keeping safe and staying physically healthy, to promote their personal and social development. Pupils receive effective careers information, education, advice and guidance. Pupils, including those with SEND, are well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils with SEND receive significant support tailored to their needs. In the school's specially resourced provision, specialist teachers give pupils the help they need to learn well and to participate fully in school life. Teachers support pupils with SEND in class so that they complete the same work as other pupils.

Leaders and governors have worked together effectively to improve all areas of the school's work. Staff value leaders' consideration of their well-being, professional development and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors, have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They understand the risks facing young people in the local area, and pupils are taught about these risks.

Everyone in the school community knows that they are responsible for safeguarding. This includes the pupils themselves, who know how to report any concerns. Pupils know that staff will take concerns seriously. Staff are well trained. They report any concerns without delay.

Leaders work closely with a wide range of external agencies to get the right kind of help for each pupil who needs it.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is inconsistency in the regularity and effectiveness with which teachers check pupils' learning. As a result, pupils in some subjects do not know how to improve as clearly as they might. Leaders should continue their work to ensure

that assessment is systematic, regular, and helps all pupils to understand how to improve their work.

- In some subjects, pupils' mistakes and misconceptions are not routinely identified and addressed by teachers. As a result, pupils are unaware when they have misunderstood aspects of what they are learning. Leaders must ensure that teachers in every subject address misconceptions so that pupils learn new knowledge accurately.

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.

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	100453
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	10245390
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	395
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Evans
Headteacher	Alan Streeter
Website	www.beaconhigh.org
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 May 2019

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Islington Futures Federation.
- Through its careers programme, the school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education, qualifications and apprentices.
- The school makes use of the following registered alternative provider for a small number of pupils: New River College.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history, Spanish and computer science. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work, spoke to

teachers, and spoke to some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

- Inspectors considered the school’s policies and procedures for safeguarding and supporting pupils’ health and safety, as well as their welfare and well-being. This included looking at case studies and reviewing the school’s record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors also met with leaders with responsibility for SEND, reading, behaviour and pupils’ personal development.
- Inspectors met with the school’s executive headteacher, members of the local and federated governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted’s online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Rebecca Iles-Smith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Terry Millar	Ofsted Inspector
Luke Stubbles	His Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Strong	His Majesty's Inspector

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