

Inspection of a good school: Beeches Infant School

Beeches Road, Birmingham, West Midlands B42 2PY

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2022

Outcome

Beeches Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy, welcoming school. Teachers nurture pupils' character, interests, and abilities. They set high expectations for pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy the challenge. They work hard and achieve well.

Pupils feel safe. They trust staff and know what to do if anything is worrying them. Leaders work closely with families to make sure that pupils are happy and thriving. One parent commented, 'Children feel safe and loved at this school. Staff care for every child and push them to be the best they can.' This reflects the views of many parents.

Pupils behave well. They are taught to value and respect themselves and others. This fosters a strong sense of right and wrong. Class behaviour charters guide pupils to do the right things. Staff provide good support for pupils who need help with behaviour. Bullying is rare. Staff listen to pupils and deal quickly with any problems. Leaders keep detailed records about this.

Pupils enjoy learning a full range of curriculum subjects. They enjoy music and art. Pupils enjoy wider curriculum experiences such as working with local artists, well-being activities and raising money for charities. This helps to raise their awareness of the community and the wider world.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. The school's mission for 'all children to be happy and fulfil their potential' is reflected in the school's inclusive ethos.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly and accurately. They work closely with a range of agencies to assess pupils' needs and to identify appropriate support. Pupils with more complex needs receive tailored care and support from skilled adults. They access the full curriculum and achieve well. They are included in all aspects of school life.

Leaders have improved the way that early reading is taught. Pupils follow a well-structured phonics curriculum. Books match the sounds that pupils are learning. Leaders and staff use assessment information effectively to identify any pupils at risk of falling behind. They then put extra support in place. However, a small number of these pupils do not get enough opportunity to practise using new sounds frequently enough. This reduces their fluency and confidence in reading.

The mathematics curriculum is logically sequenced and taught effectively. Children in the early years make a strong start in learning about number. They explore number through practical activities. For example, children use cups and counters to explore different ways of making four and five. This prepares them well for learning in Year 1. Pupils enjoy sessions that help them to recall mathematical knowledge with speed and accuracy. One pupil explained, 'It helps us to remember what we have learned and to learn more'.

Leaders and staff have worked hard to develop other subjects. In most subjects, the curriculum is well sequenced and ambitious. Assessment works well. Pupils are curious and eager to learn. Teachers skilfully engage pupils' interests and teach the curriculum effectively. In art and design, for example, pupils enjoy talking about their previous work and how it helps them to become better artists. They talk confidently about art techniques and artists such as Jackson Pollock and Arcimboldo. Pupils enjoy looking at books about art in class libraries. This feeds their interests and love of reading.

In a minority of subjects, the curriculum is at an earlier stage of development. In these subjects, the curriculum does not identify the precise knowledge, skills and vocabulary leaders want pupils to know and remember. This leads to pupils having gaps in their learning.

Pupils are very accepting and respectful of others. They visit different places of worship and learn about different faiths and cultures. Pupils talk confidently about human rights and demonstrate a mature awareness of global issues such as the difficulties faced by refugees.

There is a clear focus on the mental well-being of pupils and staff. Staff feel valued and are highly positive about leaders. They say that leaders are mindful of their workload and make sure it is reasonable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established an effective safeguarding team in school. Staff are vigilant and fully trained to spot any changes in pupils' behaviour or character. Everyone works together to make sure that those who need help are quickly identified. The school's senior learning mentor knows the community well. Nothing is left to chance. Records are meticulous. Leaders seek help from external agencies when needed.

The curriculum offers many opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including online, and the importance of healthy relationships.

Leaders carry out all the correct checks on adults in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all curriculum subjects identify the precise knowledge, skills and vocabulary that leaders want pupils to know and remember, including in the early years. This leads to pupils having gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need to achieve well across the curriculum.
- Teachers do not ensure that all pupils who have fallen behind in their reading have sufficient time to practise the sounds that they have learned. This reduces their fluency and confidence in early reading. Leaders should ensure that all children who fall behind in reading frequently practise new sounds so that they become fluent and confident readers.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

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	103164
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10240709
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Maureen Bowyer
Headteachers	Vicky Colley and Rita Devi
Website	www.beechesinf.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 and 28 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The role of headteacher is currently shared between two people.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteachers, senior leaders, subject leaders, the leader of SEND and one governor. She also met with the school's improvement partner.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, discussed curriculum guidance, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at work in pupils' books.
- The inspector met with all staff to talk about the curriculum, workload and the behaviour and personal development of pupils. She also met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and well-being.

- The inspector considered curriculum guidance and observed some pupils from Years 1 to 2 reading to a member of staff.
- The inspector checked the school's single central record of checks on staff. She spoke to the headteachers and senior mentor about safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. Records of attendance were checked.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and lunchtime and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- The inspector talked to parents after school and considered the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the 32 free-text responses. She gathered the views of pupils and staff on site through discussion with them and from their online questionnaire responses.

Inspection team

Marilyn Mottram, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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