

Inspection of Beacon Primary School

Peter Martin Street, Horwich, Bolton, Lancashire BL6 7AL

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Beacon Primary School has one clear aim: to 'be proud'. Pupils are proud to attend the school, staff are proud to work here and parents and carers are proud that their children are part of this warm and welcoming school.

Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils live up to these expectations and achieve well in many areas of the curriculum. Pupils try hard in lessons and focus well on their learning.

Pupils behave well in classes and around the school. Routines are quickly established in the early years and the youngest children settle into school well. Pupils feel safe in school. They know that they can share any worries that they have with staff. Teachers deal with bullying effectively.

Pupils are kind and respectful to each other and adults. They have exceptional manners. Pupils take great pride in helping their school community. They enjoy many opportunities to take on leadership roles, for example as playground leaders and school councillors. Older pupils are particularly proud of their roles as Beacon guiding lights, where they organise and lead mindfulness activities for each class.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious, well-organised curriculum for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. The curriculum is equally well designed in the early years, including in the provision for two-year-olds, which means that children get off to a strong start. Leaders have carefully thought about how learning in Year 1 builds on what pupils have already learned in the Reception class.

The impact of the school's curriculum is strong in many areas. Pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well in many subjects. By the end of key stage 2, pupils are ready for the next stage of their education at secondary school.

In many subjects, the curriculum is well established and delivered well. Teachers use a range of effective strategies to check that pupils have learned the curriculum. For example, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to recap prior learning. Added to this, teachers check on pupils' understanding and address any misconceptions adeptly. This means that pupils build a rich and detailed knowledge base across many subject areas.

In a small number of other subjects, developments to the curriculum are at an earlier stage. On occasion, some teachers lack the confidence to deliver some aspects of these curriculums well. Some pupils do not remember their learning as well as they should in these subjects.

Leaders have put in place appropriate systems and processes for identifying pupils with SEND. Staff support pupils with SEND well so that they can access the same curriculum as their peers. Many parents of pupils with SEND are positive about the support that their children receive.

Leaders have ensured that teaching pupils to read fluently is a priority for all staff. This is so that pupils become confident readers who can fully access the wider curriculum. Leaders have developed a reading curriculum that gives pupils access to a wide range of books. Older pupils said that they enjoy reading.

Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start in the Reception Year. Leaders make sure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of early reading. Pupils practise reading books that contain the sounds that they have learned. Staff identify pupils who are struggling to learn to read and put extra help in place to support them to catch up quickly with their phonics knowledge.

Leaders equip pupils well to make a positive contribution to society. Pupils show a strong awareness and understanding of the needs of others. For example, pupils enjoy raising money for charity and donating to local food banks. Pupils appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular clubs available to them, such as drawing, reading and sports clubs. Pupils with SEND also benefit from attending these clubs.

Leaders have established strong routines to make sure that pupils behave well. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare and if it does happen, teachers deal with it swiftly.

Staff value the high levels of support for their workload and well-being that leaders provide. Staff benefit from a strong professional development offer from the multi-academy trust. Governors and trustees know the school well. They make sure that pupils benefit from a high-quality education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that pupils know how to keep safe in the local community. For example, there is an emphasis on teaching pupils to swim and about water safety as there is open water in the local area. Pupils are also taught about healthy relationships, mental health and well-being, drugs and alcohol, and road safety.

Staff are well trained in how to identify those pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff have strong relationships with pupils and their families. This means that they can secure appropriate and timely support from external agencies when needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very small number of subjects, the implementation of the curriculum is

relatively new. On occasion, some pupils do not learn as well as they should as a result. Leaders should ensure that staff are equipped with the confidence to deliver the curriculum consistently well.

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	146535
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10255928
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	189
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Bond
Headteacher	Debra Meekings
Website	www.beacon.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Beacon Primary School converted to become an academy school in November 2018. When its predecessor school, Lord Street Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- A new headteacher was appointed when the school joined the multi-academy trust.
- The school is part of the Forward As One Church of England Academy Trust.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- Leaders make use of one registered alternative provision.

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 met with the headteacher, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, other leaders, staff and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors talked with pupils in meetings and around the school at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the documentation provided by leaders, including the school improvement plan and school self-evaluation, minutes from meetings of the local governing body and a range of documentation relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They looked at a range of documentation and spoke to leaders and staff. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about whether they feel safe in school.

Inspection team

Collette Mather, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Samantha Birchall

Ofsted Inspector

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