

Inspection of Benwick Primary School

High Street, Benwick, March, Cambridgeshire PE15 0XA

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Benwick Primary School is a warm and happy school. Pupils find the new curriculum exciting and enjoy their learning. They know that staff have high expectations and are keen to meet these.

Pupils are kind to each other, and they have lots of friends. Leaders' new approach to managing behaviour has led to a calm environment with pupils behaving well. Pupils and staff have strong relationships and staff know pupils individually. Pupils believe that they should treat everyone the same, no matter who you are.

Pupils are safe in school. They understand what bullying is and that it rarely happens. When it does happen, pupils are confident that staff will deal with it.

The school embraces opportunities for pupils to work with outside agencies to expand on their experiences. A project with Heritage England ensured that pupils learned more about their local area, for example, and a famous author visited the school so pupils could find out what it is like to be an author. Pupils can broaden their horizons and be ambitious in what they achieve.

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

Leaders are determined that pupils should remember important information and be able to use accurate, appropriate vocabulary. They have changed the curriculum in the school to achieve this. It is carefully sequenced and builds pupils' knowledge and vocabulary progressively. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and use this to explain well what pupils need to understand. They teach vocabulary clearly. They check on pupils' knowledge regularly. As a result, pupils mostly learn well. However, because of the newness of the curriculum, pupils still have gaps in their knowledge in a minority of subjects. This is because teachers have not had time to revisit, check and consolidate what pupils know.

Leaders ensure that phonics is expertly taught from Reception upwards. They provide staff with high-quality training. Pupils practise the sounds they are learning by reading texts which are well matched to those sounds. Staff identify pupils who are not keeping up and put in rapid support for them. Pupils enjoy the wide variety of texts that they have available to them in their class and school libraries. They are also excited and intrigued by the stories staff read to them in class. This develops the pupils' love of reading and ensures that they are developing their reading skills well.

Leaders have introduced, and trained staff on, a new behaviour policy with clear strategies. Leaders highlight, in assembly, the school values of respect, responsibility, honesty, resilience and community. This helps pupils to understand and apply them in their school lives. When they are not followed, leaders act swiftly and in a consistent manner. They ensure that there are consequences for

inappropriate behaviour. Therefore, the number of incidents of negative behaviour has reduced and pupils typically behave well. This enables pupils to concentrate while they are learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported by staff. Staff know pupils' needs and carefully adapt what they teach. This enables pupils to learn successfully alongside their peers.

Pupils access a wide personal development programme. There is much for them to get involved with. For example, pupils recently took part in a project with a professional orchestra, and there are regular school performances. Pupils go on residential trips and attend sporting competitions. Singing is a large part of school life; this contributes to the pupils' well-being. These opportunities help pupils to appreciate the possibilities that lie ahead of them.

The new headteacher has galvanised her team since starting at the school in January 2020. Leaders have worked effectively with the local authority in improving aspects of the curriculum. Governors support leaders as well as challenge decisions. The positive work they have collectively done so far has improved the school to a good standard.

Staff well-being is carefully considered when there are changes in workload. Staff appreciate the open-door policy that leaders have and feel well supported. The staff are a strong team, and they enjoy working in a collaborative school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know and understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. There is a clear policy and procedures are in place to manage concerns. Leaders provide regular training and updates, so staff know how to identify any risks to pupils. Leaders take concerns seriously and follow up on these tenaciously.

Governors have robust systems in place to check safeguarding at the school.

Pupils learn how to stay safe, including knowing what healthy relationships are and how to stay safe online. This is part of a well-planned curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, teachers have not had time to revisit important concepts to ensure pupils have learned them well. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge in these subjects. Leaders need to ensure that teachers check and consolidate the key information they want pupils to learn 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.

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	110627
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10268152
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	95
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Darren Gore
Headteacher	Clare Talbot
Website	www.benwick.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 and 19 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently make use of alternative provision.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2020.

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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, music and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited some lessons, spoke to teachers and spoke to some pupils about their learning and discussed the work in their books.
- The lead inspector also spoke to pupils about their work in art and history and looked at pupils' work in books.

- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils from different year groups across both days of the inspection. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- The lead inspector held meetings with a range of leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, a representative from the local authority and governors.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of staff to gather their views of the school. They also considered the 18 responses to Ofsted’s online staff survey.
- The inspectors considered 44 responses to Ofsted’s online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View. An inspector spoke to parents at the school gate and considered correspondence sent directly to the team.

Inspection team

Katie Devenport, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Sonia Innes

Ofsted Inspector

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