

Inspection of Beaufort School

Stechford Road, Hodge Hill, Birmingham, West Midlands B34 6BJ

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils receive a poor standard of education at Beaufort School. The curriculum does not meet the needs of pupils well enough. Pupils are not prepared for their next stages of development or of their education.

Frequent changes in staffing and leadership have led to many adults not knowing pupils well enough. Although pupils' needs are identified with the support of specialist professionals, they are not met sufficiently well while at school.

Leaders are beginning to offer pupils some wider experiences. For example, parents were invited to come into school and celebrate mother's day and father's day with their children. However, the breadth of opportunities is very limited. Many pupils have not experienced wider activities, including visits outside of school.

Pupils are not taught about how to keep themselves safe, for example when online. This means they cannot identify any potential dangers while using the internet. This puts pupils at potential risk of harm.

Many pupils are unsettled during lessons. They are not engaged in their learning and lose interest quickly. This is because staff have not planned lessons and activities that match the needs of pupils. Many staff do not have the necessary skills and knowledge to manage pupils' behaviour.

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

Many current leaders are in temporary roles. They are working tirelessly to recruit permanent staff members. Governors have firm plans to secure leadership at Beaufort School. Leaders are securing external specialist support and advice and prioritising staff training. Leaders want to improve the experiences of pupils. However, there is a lot to do, and leadership capacity is limited. Current plans to improve the school are too broad and disjointed.

Leaders know that the current curriculum is not meeting the needs of pupils. The curriculum has not been adapted for many years and the needs of pupils attending this school have changed over time. Leaders understand the needs of pupils currently at Beaufort. They have begun to make changes. They know what needs to be done to improve the curriculum. However, their capacity to create new plans and implement them is limited.

The curriculum does not provide a strong start for children in the early years. As pupils move through the school, they learn in a disjointed way. The curriculum does not identify the key knowledge that pupils need to learn over time. The expectation for what pupils can achieve in their learning is low. Leaders and staff want to improve the independent life skills of pupils. However, the curriculum does not

provide pupils with the necessary knowledge, skills and experiences to prepare them for this.

Staff are supported by external specialist agencies. Together they plan and deliver parts of the curriculum such as physical movement. Pupils show some improvement in this area. However, there is little opportunity for pupils to practise what they have learned. Communication systems and aids have been recently introduced in classrooms. Many pupils need these systems, as they do not use spoken language to communicate. However, they are not always used by staff. Pupils are not taught consistently different ways to communicate their thoughts and needs. Pupils are not able to communicate effectively as a result. This impacts on their development, progress and safety.

The teaching of reading has not been prioritised following the pandemic. A phonics programme has recently been reintroduced. Leaders want pupils to learn how to read, but many staff do not know how to teach phonics effectively. There is a lack of reading books available to pupils. Pupils are not supported well enough to develop a love of reading.

Staff do not know how to re-engage pupils' interest quickly in the classroom. As a result, pupils' attitudes and attention to learning are poor during lessons. Some pupils display challenging behaviours. These are generally managed appropriately by staff. However, they are not always recorded or reported to leaders. This means there are few opportunities to revise individual plans for pupils in light of this. Leaders are therefore unable to spot any patterns and trends which could help to improve pupils' behaviour over time.

Leaders have considered pupils' wider development. There is ambition in what experiences leaders want for their pupils. These are at the very early stages of planning. There is currently no relationships, sex and health education curriculum being taught to pupils. Pupils therefore are not knowledgeable about healthy relationships or consent. This puts them at potential risk.

Parents and carers have expressed their worries and concerns about their children's experiences. They want urgent changes to happen at Beaufort School.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Staff do not always report safeguarding concerns to leaders. They do not understand the reporting and recording systems well enough. Although staff know the signs of neglect and abuse, they do not consistently report these. This means leaders do not always know which pupils may be at risk of harm. That said, leaders act quickly when concerns are reported to them. They work well with external agencies to support pupils and families. However, pupils with complex communication needs are not taught how to ask for help. This means they cannot communicate to say if they are at risk of harm.

Leaders effectively check the suitability of new staff before they are employed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff do not always report safeguarding concerns to designated safeguarding leaders. The reporting and recording systems for raising concerns are not well understood by staff and are used inconsistently. This means leaders do not have clear oversight of all pupils who may be at risk of potential harm. Leaders and governors must clarify the systems for raising concerns about pupils and ensure that all staff report concerns quickly and effectively.
- There have been many changes in senior leadership, and the turnover of staff is very high. This has led to instability and weaknesses in developing and improving areas of priority. Leaders, including governors, should take action to secure permanent leadership and to stabilise staffing.
- There are many competing priorities for improvement and leaders are reliant on external support by a number of different professionals. The support is not part of a strategically planned approach. This has led to leaders becoming unclear in how to effectively make improvements across all areas of school. Governors should ensure that support is strategically planned and implemented so that improvements can be sustained.
- Many staff do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach pupils with complex needs how to read. Pupils are therefore falling behind and are leaving school unable to read accurately and fluently. Leaders must ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills they need to teach phonics and early reading effectively to pupils.
- The curriculum, including in the early years, is not well planned or sequenced. Leaders have not identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn over time. The curriculum does not meet the needs of pupils at Beaufort School, so pupils are not well prepared for the next stages of their development and education. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum clearly identifies the knowledge that pupils should learn and when should learn it.
- Staff do not use communication systems and aids for pupils with complex needs effectively or consistently. Many pupils with complex needs are not always able to communicate their thoughts, feelings and needs. Leaders should ensure that communication systems are used by all staff consistently so that pupils can communicate their needs.
- Staff do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to manage the behaviour of pupils with complex needs. In addition, staff do not always record or report challenging behaviour to leaders. Pupils therefore quickly become disengaged in their learning and leaders do not have a clear oversight of pupils' behaviour across school. Leaders should ensure that all staff can manage the behaviour of pupils with complex needs and that incidents of poor behaviour are recorded and reported effectively.

- Leaders and those responsible for governance may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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	103627
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10205152
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair of governing body	Andrew Collyer
Headteacher	Janice Farren
Website	www.beaufort.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been several changes to leadership since the last inspection. The acting headteacher took up post in February 2023. Another senior leader took up post in June 2023.
- An interim executive board (IEB) was put in place in November 2022.
- All pupils have an EHC plan for complex learning difficulties. Pupils also have additional needs, such as autism, speech, language and communication needs and/or medical needs.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. They deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons

responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- 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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with acting leaders and other senior leaders. She also met representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors held meetings with the IEB, including the chair.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders to discuss safeguarding, early years, pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, communication and physical development. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at additional areas of learning.
- Inspectors looked at individual pupils' EHC plans and checked these against the school's provision.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school.
- Inspectors observed informal times to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Safeguarding documents were reviewed, including the checks that leaders make on staff's suitability to work with children. The inspectors examined how staff implement safeguarding policies and procedures effectively across the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, and the free-text responses received during the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school policies, curriculum documents, records relating to special educational needs and/or disabilities and minutes of meetings held.

Inspection team

Anna Vrahimi, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Susan Hickerton	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Price	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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