

Inspection of Beckfoot Phoenix

Braithwaite Avenue, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 6HZ

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Sarah Lloyd. This school is part of Beckfoot Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Shirley Watson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Winkley. There is also an executive headteacher, Claire Robbins, who is responsible for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are valued highly and nurtured exceptionally well. Highly skilled staff provide carefully designed care and support. There are high expectations for all. The trust's core purpose for pupils to 'enjoy, learn and succeed' is at the heart of the school's curriculum. The curriculum is aspirational. It is designed around the needs of pupils. Pupils benefit from and thrive because of specialist medical and therapeutic support. They enjoy enrichment activities. These include swimming, cooking, learning first aid and educational visits associated with the curriculum.

Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely warm and positive. Pupils learn to communicate their needs and feelings. They have staff to turn to if they are worried or need help. Typically, parents and carers appreciate that staff 'go above and beyond' to support the whole family. Most recognise that this school is 'a very special place'.

Pupils learn to behave well. Staff teach them to recognise and understand how to manage their emotions, including through the use of 'colour monsters'. This support is very effective. Successful routines in and around the school help pupils to feel safe and to understand what is expected of them. Thoughtfully designed 'calming' spaces help to reduce pupils' anxiety. Staff use creative techniques such as sensory massage, to help pupils to be ready to learn.

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

The curriculum is very well sequenced. It is broad and ambitious. The content for each subject has been carefully chosen. Learning is well matched to each pupil's age and stage of development. The school plans with precision to meet each pupil's special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) effectively.

There is excellent focus on the development of pupils' communication and interaction skills. From the early years, children learn to use different forms of communication confidently. Staff are highly proficient in teaching pupils to use these approaches. Pupils learn to use signing, pictures and symbols to communicate effectively. Pupils with more profound needs learn to use digital tools to make choices. Some learn to read using eye-driven communication devices. All pupils succeed at this school.

Reading is prioritised. Phonics is taught from the early years phases. Topics of learning promote the joy of reading across the school very well. Staff seize every opportunity to develop pupils' vocabulary and understanding of language. Pupils, including those in the early years, enjoy exploring different sounds. They relish listening to music and singing songs and rhymes. They enjoy their daily story sessions and talk enthusiastically about their class texts.

Staff teach phonics very well. The books pupils read match the sounds they know. Where some pupils struggle to access the phonics programme due to their SEND,

staff are tenacious in their approach. They utilise a range of resources to provide skilled and timely support for pupils. There is a determined focus on helping pupils to use and apply their phonics skills to read, spell and write with increasing fluency.

Learning is linked extremely well to pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. Staff identify the most important knowledge and skills that pupils need to know. They match these accurately to pupils' individual EHC plan targets. Staff have an in-depth knowledge of pupils. They encourage them to do well. Those with more complex needs receive bespoke and high-quality learning and care. The quality of staff interactions with pupils, including those in the early years, is exceptional. Classrooms are fun places for pupils to learn. Staff are excellent role models for pupils. They promote polite and respectful relationships. They help pupils to develop their social and emotional awareness supremely well.

Pupils' personal development is at the core of everything the school does. There is a strong focus on preparing pupils for life beyond school. Pupils learn how to keep physically and mentally healthy. They take part in different sports. They visit art exhibitions, places of worship and take part in performances. They enjoy choosing their class reward trips. They learn about online safety and respect for protected characteristics such as religious beliefs and different types of relationships. Assemblies enhance topics of learning. They help pupils to understand fundamental British values and diversity.

The trust provides excellent support and challenge to the school. The members of the local school committee (LSC) know the school well. Together, the trust and the LSC ensure that the school provides the very best for pupils. Leaders are not complacent. They continually seek ways to improve.

Staff benefit from high-quality professional development. They appreciate the consideration they receive from leaders for their workload and welfare. They welcome the frequent opportunities to learn from each other. Leaders are proud to share the excellent practice in the school with colleagues working in other schools within the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	144891
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10255622
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Winkley
Headteacher	Sarah Lloyd
Website	www.phoenixschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 February 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a special school for pupils with autism, severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning and medical needs. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Beckfoot Trust.
- There are currently no two-year-olds on the school's roll.
- The school provides holiday club activities for pupils during the school holidays.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, the chief executive officer for the trust, the leader for behaviour, the chief operating officer for the trust, the director of research and transformation, the cluster business manager, the leader for early years and some curriculum leaders. Inspectors also met with some members of staff and some pupils.
- The lead inspector held an online meeting with the chair of the board of trustees, some trustees and members of the local school committee, including the chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into English, mathematics, physical education and art and design. Inspectors looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to some staff and spoke to some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work, some positive behaviour support plans, some health care plans and some EHC plans.
- The lead inspector spoke to leaders about the curriculum in science and music. The lead inspector also visited some personal, social and health education lessons.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders and staff about the school's approach to safeguarding pupils. Inspectors checked the single central register and reviewed records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Checks were made on staff training and safeguarding procedures. Inspectors examined the implementation of some policies, including those relating to whistleblowing, safeguarding, behaviour and complaints.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for parents, pupils and staff. Inspectors also spoke with some parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector His Majesty's Inspector

Christina Jones Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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