

Inspection of a good school: Beresford Memorial C of E First School

Novi Lane, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 6NR

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 November 2023

Outcome

Beresford Memorial C of E First School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Caroline Quinn. This school is part of The Talentum Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Ian Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Patricia Fisher.

What is it like to attend this school?

Beresford is a school that wants the best for its pupils. There is a culture of high ambition for all, and most pupils are achieving well by the time they move on to middle school. Pupils speak passionately about what it is like to be a 'Beresford learner'. They believe that it is important to do things such as work hard, concentrate, imagine and push yourself. As one pupil commented about the staff, 'They help us to learn more and get smarter.'

Pupils are very happy at this inclusive school. Relationships are positive and strong. Pupils know that there is always an adult they can turn to if they have a problem. The school's values of hope, creativity, kindness, honesty, respect and courage are lived and breathed by the whole community. Parents are very positive about the experience that their children have. This starts right from the early years where staff ensure that they get to know the children really well.

The school works hard to ensure that pupils gain a wide range of experiences. There is a carefully planned timetable of trips, visitors and clubs. These experiences enable pupils to understand the world around them, the curriculum and be aspirational for their future.

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

The school has a broad and ambitious curriculum. Leaders have carefully considered important 'drivers' that underpin the learning in each subject, such as 'global awareness' or 'possibilities'. The knowledge and vocabulary that pupils learn are organised in a logical manner. Teachers model the correct use of subject-specific terminology and support pupils to do the same. Teachers know the important learning that pupils need to remember.

They focus on these building blocks and give pupils opportunities to practise their new skills and knowledge in lessons. Teachers check for misunderstandings and use this information carefully to support the next lesson.

Leaders have recently updated the curriculum in a few subjects, aiming to ensure that they match the ambition and structure of the rest of the curriculum. Pupils cannot remember as much of their previous learning in these subjects. This is because previously, these subjects have not been as well planned and delivered as they could have been. In addition, the school has not fully considered all that children in the early years need to learn in these subjects. The school is working on ways to make sure that pupils remember the important knowledge and vocabulary they have learned over time.

Learning to read and developing new vocabulary have the highest priority at Beresford. This starts in the early years, through carefully chosen books and activities. This focus on vocabulary continues in key stages 1 and 2 when staff read carefully selected texts to pupils in a range of subjects. Most pupils are fluent, confident readers by the end of key stage 1. Right from the very start of early years, pupils learn new sounds and how they link to make words. Adults regularly check the sounds pupils can remember. If pupils fall behind, they are given support to catch up quickly, and they do.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. The SEND coordinator has provided effective training so that staff know what pupils need to help them succeed. This has helped staff to be able to make sure pupils with SEND learn well in lessons.

Pupils behave well. They want to learn and listen carefully to adults' instructions. They also work productively and cooperatively with partners and in groups when asked to do so.

The school prioritises pupils' wider development. This is a strength of the school. Pupils learn about and understand diversity. They are encouraged to be spiritual. This goes beyond the religious nature of the school. Pupils find spirituality around them, for example, in the school garden and forest school and through attending whole-school events. Pupils' mental health is well considered through whole-class 'bouncebackability' sessions. Specific support is provided for pupils who need support with their emotions.

The multi-academy trust and governors work effectively together to challenge and support the school. They work well alongside leaders to develop strategic plans and check that these are working as intended. Staff welcome the care that leaders provide for their well-being. They also know that leaders consider their workload and do not add to it unnecessarily. Staff feel empowered and are proud to make a real difference to the lives of all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum has been recently revised and is at an early stage of implementation. This means that sometimes pupils' learning does not build on what they already know, as they have not learned as well as they could previously. The school should make sure that it is clear about what pupils have and have not learned well previously, and ensure that it builds the new curriculum accordingly, structuring teaching to fill any gaps as needed.
- In some subjects, what children should learn in the early years has not been fully considered. As a result, there is a lack of clarity about how pupils build on their previous learning. The school should ensure that all subject curriculum thinking fully considers what children should learn in the early years.

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 predecessor school, Beresford Memorial C of E (A) First School, to be good in April 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (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	146589
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10290657
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	151
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Patricia Fisher
CEO of the trust	Ian Wilson
Headteacher	Caroline Quinn
Website	bmf.ttlit.org.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Beresford Memorial First School converted to become an academy school in June 2019. When its predecessor school, Beresford Memorial C of E (A) First School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of The Talentum Learning Trust, a multi-academy trust.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provider.
- The school operates a breakfast club and after-school club.
- The school is in the Diocese of Lichfield. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2023.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher. He also met five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and the chair of the trust. The inspector held a meeting with the CEO and deputy CEO of the trust. He also held a meeting with a representative of the diocese.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, science and history. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and viewed examples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to pupils about mathematics and art.
- The inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read to a trusted adult.
- The inspector spoke with members of staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspector considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. He also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys. The inspector spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school improvement priorities, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, behaviour records, attendance records and minutes of meetings held by the governing body and trust.

Inspection team

Barry Yardsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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