

# Inspection of Set Beccles School

Castle Hill, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 7BQ

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Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

The headteacher of this school is Neil Ketteringham. This school is currently part of the Seckford Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer, Jonathan Taylor, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Rout.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

There has been a lot of change at the school over the past two years. This is something that can unsettle pupils. However, pupils and staff say that they can see positive improvements.

Pupils at SET Beccles trust that school staff will support them if they are worried about something. They know how to report their concerns and feel safe.

Most pupils behave well, are respectful and know the expectations of the school's behaviour system. Some pupils do not yet meet the high expectations modelled by adults. They sometimes make the wrong choices. However, pupils state that behaviour is improving. Unkind language between pupils does not happen often. Being different is something that pupils celebrate. Pupils feel included.

The expectations of pupils' achievement are rapidly increasing. However, they do not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils enjoy a range of extra-curricular and planned enrichment activities. These include robotics, gaming and roller skating. More widely, pupils do not always participate in the opportunities provided to them. They are not able to see or describe the importance of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.

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

In most subjects, the curriculum is planned and taught to provide pupils with the knowledge they need to take the next steps in their learning. Much of the curriculum is new. As it is not yet well established, it has yet to address some of the gaps pupils have in their learning. Assessment is not used consistently to identify what pupils know and can do. As a result, some pupils do not achieve what they are capable of because the curriculum is not tailored to their needs.

The school is in the early stages of ensuring that all pupils who struggle with reading have the support they need to catch up and keep up with their peers. Weaker readers are now identified early so that the school can meet their needs swiftly.

The school's specialist provision, 'The Forge', provides a calm and purposeful environment for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Here, these pupils can make progress in their learning. Pupils with the highest level of SEND benefit from access to mainstream lessons. In lessons, support for other pupils with SEND is typically effective. Most staff understand the needs of the pupils and provide effective support.

Not all pupils attend school regularly. Some have long periods of absence from school. There are appropriate and effective systems in place to ensure these pupils are safe. However, these pupils miss important learning. They do not always get

opportunities to catch up when they return. The school has refined its systems for addressing low attendance, but these are not yet making the difference leaders intend.

There are increasingly high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Classrooms and corridors are generally calm. Most pupils are attentive in lessons. However, the school's high expectations are not applied consistently by all adults. As a result, there are too many instances of negative behaviour. Adults' responses to these are not always consistent. The school does not always take effective action to support pupils who do not meet expectations. Consequently, the number of suspensions is high.

The school's PSHE curriculum is comprehensive. It provides pupils with the opportunity to understand their own mental and physical health, how to keep themselves safe, and what a healthy relationship looks like. The limited level of engagement by some pupils means that they do not always gain a substantial benefit from the programme.

The school's careers programme is developing rapidly, but it is not yet fully implemented. It allows pupils to engage with a variety of further education providers and employers. This means most pupils can make informed choices about their future.

Over the past 12 months, the new trust leadership has secured the support the school needs to address weaknesses effectively. However, some strategies are very new. Staff now have opportunities to work in subject networks and develop their teaching. The school and trust now have a shared ambition for what they want to achieve. This has not always been the case, so the quality of provision has declined.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Too many pupils do not attend school regularly. Some have long periods of absence from school. These pupils miss out on important learning and do not achieve as well as they should. The school must ensure that its approach to reducing pupil absence is applied robustly and consistently in order to secure rapid improvements in pupil attendance.
- Currently, the school does not always identify precisely what pupils know and can do. As a result, pupils sometimes have gaps in their understanding. The school should ensure that teachers have appropriate skills to identify these gaps. This will enable pupils to catch up and keep up with their work.

- Some pupils are not always respectful of one another or of adults in the school, a small number of pupils repeatedly so. This is because the school does not yet implement its behaviour policy effectively. As a result, the number of pupils being suspended is high. This includes a number of vulnerable pupils. The school must ensure that the behaviour policy is implemented consistently.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138274
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10295049
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	288
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Peter Rout
<b>Headteacher</b>	Neil Ketteringham
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.beccleschool.org.uk">www.beccleschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- SET Beccles school is currently part of Seckford Education Trust. It is receiving formal support, in agreement with the Department for Education, from Sapientia Education Trust.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school currently provides specially resourced provision for 22 pupils with education, health and care plans.
- The school currently makes use of 11 unregistered alternative providers.

## 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 first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the school's senior leaders and trustees, including the chair of trustees and the chief executive officer.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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 inspection team considered the views of parents through responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey. Inspectors gathered the views of pupils and staff through Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys, as well as interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

## Inspection team

Jonathan Rockey, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sue Child

Ofsted Inspector

Sebastian Gasse

Ofsted Inspector

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