

Inspection of a good school: The Bridge Education Centre

2c Newtown Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO50 9DB

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 February 2024

Outcome

The Bridge Education Centre continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school gives pupils a fresh start in education. Pupils form positive and trusting relationships with staff who listen to them and understand their needs. Pupils constantly receive 'unconditional positive regard' from staff. They are made to feel safe and secure. This means that pupils have many opportunities to have a fresh start and strive for success in both their personal and academic goals.

There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of their own emotions and feelings. Pupils get personalised support through well-being lessons, mentoring or counselling. This helps them to develop strategies to take responsibility for their own behaviour. As a result, the school environment is calm, and pupils are able to concentrate on their learning. Examples of pupils' work are celebrated in high-quality displays around the building. Their achievements are valued and serve as inspiration to others.

Everyone shares the same relentless dedication to supporting pupils to get the most out of their time here. There is a rich selection of sporting and creative activities, and community visits which help pupils socially and with their confidence. Alongside this, the variety of academic subjects pupils can study means they have every opportunity to look forward to a positive future.

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

The carefully designed curriculum includes three pathways. Pupils study the well-sequenced academic curriculum, alongside their active and therapeutic provision. For all pupils the offer is exceptionally broad and rich. Importantly, pupils' social emotional and mental health needs are well provided for throughout their daily lessons. In addition to this, therapeutic interventions are put in place to provide for pupils' individual needs. Pupils study a range of subjects and they work towards achieving appropriate qualifications. This means that at the right time, they are well prepared to successfully reintegrate to a mainstream, or for some, a specialist school. For some pupils who join the school in key stage 4, they may stay for a longer period. They complete their GCSEs

or other qualifications here. This readies them for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

Pupils have often experienced significant disruption to their education in the past. When they join the school, staff work with each pupil's family and previous school to gain a clear and full understanding of individual needs. Detailed personalised plans, which include pupils' own views, are drawn up to meet pupil's needs. The school does this well. However, they also recognise that in order to meet the changing needs of the cohort of learners, there is some further sharpening of initial assessments needed, particularly around reading. This work is now beginning to ensure that any gaps in literacy knowledge, skills and confidence are precisely identified and addressed.

Supporting pupils to behave well is a major strength of the school. The knowledgeable staff work with sensitivity to help pupils manage their emotions. Potential incidents are often avoided because staff are so highly attuned to pupils' feelings and anxieties. Typically, pupils' learning proceeds without disruption. Daily briefing and debriefing meetings provide all staff with the opportunity to share vital information and to reflect on the support individual pupils receive.

The school's work to support pupils' personal development is remarkable. Pupils are eager to attend school. The social and emotional aspects of learning underpins their education. This helps them to become more confident in different social settings, starting as soon as they join the school. For example, pupils appreciate their visits to workplaces such as a local music studio or a hairdresser. This inspires pupils and prepares them well for the future.

The collaborative team ethos is appreciated by staff, who feel well supported to be creative and innovative in their work. Due to recent changes, the membership of the management committee is not currently at full capacity. The current members are experienced and committed to the school. Further actions need to be considered to ensure the committee has the capacity needed to continue to support the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has already identified the need to further refine their systems to identify any gaps in pupils' reading knowledge and skills. This means that not all pupils yet benefit from the most precisely targeted literacy interventions. The school should continue with their plans to fully embed this work so that all pupils are supported well.
- Due to recent changes, the management committee is not currently at full capacity. Although, there is strong work by existing experienced governors, this lack of capacity limits the extent to which they are able to effectively evaluate and support the school's

strategic priorities. Action must be taken to ensure the appropriate management committee members are recruited to provide the required support.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2015.

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	115838
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10296200
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	10
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Headteacher	Christopher Bayliss
Website	www.bec-hants.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school operates on two sites: The Bridge Centre, 2c Newtown Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 9DB and The Y-Zone, Blackberry Drive, Fair Oak, Southampton, SO50 8RB. Both sites cater for pupils in Years 7 to 11. Pupils are referred by the local authority or mainstream schools for short or longer-term placements.
- Many of the pupils have experienced disruption to their education before joining the school. Many have SEMH needs.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- 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.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspectors also spoke with members of the management committee and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English and reading, mathematics and personal, social and health education. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and looked at samples of pupils work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text comments. They also gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors reviewed and scrutinised a range of the school's documentation, including leaders' plans for improving the school, minutes of governor meetings and records of attendance and behaviour incidents.

Inspection team

Jo Petch, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alan Johnson

Ofsted Inspector

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