



# Beckmead School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 101853  
**Local Authority** Croydon  
**Inspection number** 298252  
**Inspection dates** 17–18 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Greg Sorrell

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	Monks Orchard Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Beckenham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–16		BR3 3BZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8777 9311
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	77	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8777 6550
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Pat Holland
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Debbie Bailey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 January 2004		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Beckmead School is a special school for pupils who have statements of special educational need related to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties as well as other health issues. The majority of pupils are white and most other pupils are from Black Afro-Caribbean or Black African backgrounds. Approximately one-third receive additional ethnic minority support, although none have English as an additional language. 14 children are 'looked after' and a Family Centre, staffed by therapists and social workers based at the school supports the pupils and their families. Some pupils also access provision at a number of other sites in the borough. In September 2002, the school was placed in special measures and was deemed to be no longer requiring this status in January 2004. The current headteacher was appointed to the school at the beginning of this term.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Beckmead School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and has responded well to more recent challenges including staffing difficulties and extensive building work. The staff work hard to provide a safe and stimulating environment where the pupils can achieve academically and develop more positive attitudes to learning.

Most pupils enjoy coming to school although some still do not attend regularly. A small minority attend infrequently despite the efforts made by the school and other agencies. In lessons and break-times, the pupils generally behave well and appreciate the support provided by school staff and those of the Family Centre. The impact of pupils' occasional unsatisfactory behaviour is minimised by effective staff management.

On entry to the school, the pupils' attainment is generally below that expected for their age as a result of their special educational needs. Most pupils engage effectively in learning so that they make satisfactory progress in literacy, numeracy and other subjects including personal, social, health education (PSHE) and citizenship. In Key Stage 4, some pupils achieve success in Entry Level examinations, GCSE English and mathematics and a small range of vocational qualifications. The curriculum and other support assists the pupils in making informed choices about health and staying safe.

Regular participation in physical activity, such as swimming enables them to stay fit as does their knowledge of healthy foods. The pupils express their views to trusted adults and some pupils are members of the school council and run mini-enterprise activities. They make supported, yet informed choices about life after school and seek to use their skills in literacy, numeracy and information, communication and technology (ICT) skills in colleges of further education.

Typically, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good features. Planning is effective, as is the particularly close support for individuals in small class groups. Teaching assistants play a positive role in meeting individuals' needs. Staff at the Family Centre make a very good contribution in supporting the pupils' learning and welfare needs. Close links with parents are sometimes hard to achieve but the school and centre together work hard to maximise the effectiveness of these.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall with some good features, such as the emphasis on basic skills, ICT, PSHE and access to external providers for older pupils. There are weaknesses in the provision for some Key Stage 4 pupils who are based off-site. The balance of time given to subjects on the timetable, including the good provision of 'pastoral' activities, also requires review to ensure best use is made of time available. The curriculum is enriched by after-school clubs and a residential trip. Imminent improvements in the school's facilities will improve the provision of specialist rooms and teaching areas.

The quality of leadership, management and governance is satisfactory. The recently appointed headteacher has made a good start and has a good understanding of how to move the school forward. Self-evaluation is satisfactory but is not yet systematically

involving all staff or governors. The use of assessment by teachers is satisfactory although better use should be made of whole school assessment information. Development planning is satisfactory and would be improved by greater emphasis on the governors' monitoring role.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide a full-time planned curriculum for all Key Stage 4 pupils;
- Improve the use of whole school assessment;
- Improve attendance;
- Extend the role of all managers and all governors in the school's systematic review of its effectiveness.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory overall. All pupils make progress in literacy, numeracy, science and ICT. Their achievement in ICT is particularly good where the pupils have access to the whole range of activities. In view of their prior educational experience, the pupils' standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science on entry to school are significantly below that of other schools. As a result of consistent teaching and improved attendance most pupils make satisfactory progress as seen in their rising levels of attainment in key stages 2 and 3. In Key Stage 4, pupils' academic achievement is measured by success in accredited courses, including GCSE. The progress of some groups of pupils is significantly affected because of poor attendance. Similarly, some Key Stage 4 pupils achieve less than they might due to part-time provision.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's view that the pupils' personal development and well-being is good is well founded. Most pupils enjoy school and this is reflected by 100% attendance in some instances. The outcomes for those pupils who fail to attend regularly are less successful.

Some pupils' behavioural difficulties occasionally interfere with their own learning and that of others. However, prompt and sensitive management by staff ensures that learning is resumed in the shortest time possible. There is evidence of developing maturity as a result of the pupils' response to their environment and the schools' approach to reducing exclusions.

Most pupils respond well and acquire a good knowledge of themselves. Significantly, this aids their personal development, particularly their economic well-being and informed choice on leaving school. They also respond well to physical education in addition to the PSHE emphasis on staying healthy and avoiding things that may be harmful.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show an increasing awareness of their own emotional needs, how to address them and how

their behaviour affects others. Their awareness of other cultures is good. Some pupils hold responsibilities on the school council and make positive contributions to school life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with evidence of some good teaching. Teachers make good use of small class sizes to provide close support based on good knowledge of the pupils. Lesson planning is variable. Opportunities for collaborative working enable the pupils to form constructive relationships, for example, paired reading in English. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are promoted well in all lessons and as a result, many older pupils speak with confidence about their learning and what they find difficult. Increasing use of the 'assessment for learning' strategy is effective and enables staff and pupils to know what has been learned. The use of interactive whiteboards is effective in most subjects. Teachers with good subject knowledge have high expectations of pupils' achievement.

Pupils' learning is most effective when sufficiently challenged for the duration of the lesson. Occasionally, tasks are finished early and with no extension activities available pupils become distracted. Opportunities for them to 'teach' others are occasionally provided and enable pupils to feel justifiably proud.

Staff teamwork and relationships with pupils are very strong and have a positive effect upon learning and behaviour management. The role of teaching assistants is well developed and two members of staff use their specialist knowledge well in ICT and food technology. When supporting physical activities, the failure of all teaching assistants to wear appropriate clothing reduces their effectiveness.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It has some notable strengths in all key stages, although some Key Stage 4 pupils have too little taught time.

All subjects in the national curriculum are available with the exception of music and a modern foreign language in Key Stage 3. There is a strong focus on literacy, numeracy and PSHE and citizenship. From Year 9, pupils have access to accredited courses, although science at this level is not currently available. Many Key Stage 4 pupils also have the opportunities to attend a local college of further education and also undertake vocational studies in construction work and motor mechanics at other sites. Good use is also made of mini-enterprises to develop economic awareness.

The key weakness is the inadequate amount of taught time, especially for Key Stage 4 pupils, who are based at another site in the borough. The accommodation here lacks sufficient space and resources to be effective. As a result these pupils do not achieve

as well as they could. In the main school, approximately one quarter of the taught week is given to encourage pupils' reflection on performance, for example, tutor time and reviews. Whilst these sessions are relevant to pupils' needs, they are not always as effectively planned or assessed as subject lessons. The issue of time required for core subjects has already been identified by some senior managers.

Visits to the local community and attendance at the local college of further education enhance pupils' citizenship education. Access to physical and creative activities, including art, physical education and competitive sports aid the pupils' health, fitness and social development. The provision of residential experiences and after school clubs have a good impact on the pupils' achievement and personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care, advice and guidance to safeguard pupils is good. Child protection procedures are well known and followed by all staff. Appropriate training has enabled the staff to understand the emotional and behavioural needs of the pupils.

All staff are actively involved in the well-being of pupils. For example, the morning briefing to receive updates on pupils' welfare. The breakfast club enables staff to judge pupils' readiness for learning. At the end of each day senior managers meet colleagues to discuss specific pupils and how they have responded to all activities. The reward system is consistently used by staff to increase the pupils' self-awareness of their attitudes to work and others.

The well managed Family Centre is a significant factor in supporting the pupils in accessing learning. The liaison with school staff to monitor all pupils, including 'looked-after' children is very good. They are highly visible to pupils and accessible to staff. Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school and the centre's role is very effective in this respect.

Appropriate guidance is given to pupils in relation to academic and behavioural progress in annual reviews, although some subject reports focus too much on attitude and behaviour at the expense of academic achievement. Options on leaving school are discussed with Connexions advisors and all other related agencies. Formal analysis of assessment information to monitor the progress of different groups is at an early stage.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The school was taken out of special measures nearly three years ago and has made adequate progress since that time. The very recently appointed headteacher has a very good understanding of the school's current strengths and areas for development. In view of her short time in post, the school's capacity for further improvement can only be judged as satisfactory.

Systems for self-evaluation are adequate overall although the school acknowledges that it does not yet make best use of the available information related to pupils' progress and overall effectiveness.

Considerable attention is given to meeting the pupils' academic needs alongside their behavioural and emotional difficulties. Senior managers of key stages strive to meet the needs of all pupils and have identified areas for development. Performance management is well-established and the headteacher has moved quickly to ensure that the processes remain rigorous and focus on pupils' achievement and well-being. Systems for teaching assistants are less formal.

The management of relationships with other agencies is a strength and the school makes very good use of the Family Centre to engage positively with parents in sometimes difficult situations. Parents strongly support the school's work. One wrote, 'the school have always given us 100% support.'

The headteacher, together with the extremely able chair of governors, has undertaken an appropriate review of priorities in the school development plan. The school's nearly completed building programme is well managed and will provide significantly improved classrooms and facilities for practical subjects. To date, the governors have given adequate support overall although they recognise the need to monitor the curriculum and pupils' achievement more closely. The current governors possess considerable skills to support the school's continued improvement.



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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making me so welcome and helping me to find my way around your school. The school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education and the progress you make is also satisfactory.

I was impressed by the sensible attitude shown by all you even though you have lots of building work going on. I have seen the new rooms, including the sports hall and I think you will be very pleased when it all opens before Christmas. I saw that most of you behave well most of the time and you try hard in lessons. It was especially good to see that even when one or two pupils had problems, the rest of you carried on with your work. Many of you attend school regularly and this helps you achieve success.

You get good support and guidance at school. It is clear that you trust the staff to help you and it's good to see that you have an elected council to help the teachers to know what you think about school. The staff at the Family Centre give you and your families good support.

I enjoyed seeing you assess your own work in ICT and your artwork. I was pleased to see the effort you showed in studying English and mathematics for GCSE. I could see the excitement on the faces of younger pupils as they prepared for their football match, I know you didn't win, but you have lots of chances to improve your skills: better luck next time!

I know Miss Bailey has only been there a short time, but she has made a very good start in helping the school. I'm asking Miss Bailey to do a few things to help the school further. These are, ensure that all the pupils in Years 10 and 11, who are based off-site, have a full timetable; improve the use of what the teachers know about your progress in lessons; encourage more of you to attend more regularly and involve even more teachers and governors in keeping a check on how the school is doing. These things should enable your school to become even better in the future.

Yours sincerely

Greg Sorrell

Lead inspector