

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Beechwood Primary School

Grasmere Drive, Beechwood, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2TT

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 January 2025

Outcome

Beechwood Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are nurtured at this school. They are looked after by staff and are safe in the school's care. They are well behaved, happy and considerate of others. The school deals with rare instances of bullying appropriately. It helps pupils to repair friendships quickly, when fall outs occur.

The school is ambitious for what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), should learn. Many pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils benefit from undertaking a wide range of roles and responsibilities. Older pupils are particularly proud to serve as 'buddies' for younger pupils. These opportunities help pupils to build their confidence and sense of responsibility.

The school arranges a wide variety of engaging extra-curricular clubs that are refreshed throughout the academic year, for example the coding and cooking clubs. Pupils also have access to lots of sporting clubs and competitions. The school prides itself on the rich breadth of musical opportunities that it provides for pupils. For example, pupils learn to play several different instruments and perform in various musical events. Pupils appreciate these opportunities and make good use of them.

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

The school has taken effective action since the last inspection to develop its curriculum. The expectations for what pupils will learn are clear. Subject curriculums now identify yearly end points that pupils are expected to reach, along with the important knowledge that pupils need to learn in each topic.

Pupils develop a firm understanding of recent curriculum content. However, pupils' ability to recall knowledge over the long-term is more variable. This is sometimes because the opportunities the school provides to help pupils retrieve and retain their prior knowledge are not as effective as they could be. Although the school has begun to address this, related actions are still in their infancy and the impact remains to be seen. This means that some pupils' achievement across some parts of the curriculum is weaker than in others.

The school carries out regular checks on pupils' learning. However, it does not use such checks consistently well to spot when pupils need further support to address errors and misconceptions. At times, this means that pupils repeat some basic errors, such as in their spelling and in handwriting. It also sometimes means that they do not address some gaps in their learning as swiftly as they could.

The school prioritises early reading. It delivers its phonics programme well. Pupils who struggle to keep up with the expectations of the phonics programme are provided with highly personalised support to address the gaps in their knowledge. Many pupils quickly become confident, fluent readers.

The school identifies pupils with SEND early. It adapts learning and resources well to cater for pupils' various additional needs. This includes those pupils in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. These pupils typically achieve positive outcomes.

The school provides well for pupils' personal development. It uses its woodland area well to take curriculum learning outdoors and to enrich pupils' learning. Pupils understand how to look after their physical and mental well-being. They learn how to keep themselves safe and develop healthy relationships with others. Pupils develop an understanding of fundamental British values. They also have a respectful attitude to those who are different to them, regardless of beliefs and backgrounds.

The school has appropriate procedures in place to keep a close eye on any absences. It does all that it reasonably can to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. Many pupils attend regularly, and few are persistently absent. Pupils behave positively in class and conduct themselves well during the day.

Governors understand their duties. They are effective in their roles. They provide leaders with appropriate challenge and support. Leaders are considerate of staff's welfare. Staff report that leaders are receptive to their ideas on how to improve workload. For example, leaders have recently refined some school policies to reduce unnecessary tasks.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, the school's checks on pupils' learning are not effective at spotting, and correcting, pupils' errors and misconceptions. This sometimes means that pupils repeat some errors and have some gaps in their learning that are not addressed swiftly. The school should improve its assessment strategies, so that pupils are routinely supported to address the aspects of their learning that they find difficult.
- The school's approaches to helping pupils recall and retain knowledge are not consistently effective. This means that pupils do not remember some of their prior learning in some subjects. The school should ensure that pupils are supported to retain their long-term knowledge effectively.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in December 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	111175
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10366730
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Emma Davies
Headteacher	Gemma Snell
Website	www.beechwoodschoolruncorn.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school operates a specially resourced provision that is equipped to support up to eight pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. There are currently five pupils that attend this provision.
- A new headteacher was appointed at the beginning of the 2024-2025 academic year.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 consideration in their evaluation of the school.
- 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 met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the SEND coordinator, some subject leaders and other staff during the inspection.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also considered documents and spoke to some staff about the curriculum, SEND, attendance, safeguarding, personal development and behaviour.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online staff survey and the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspector also spoke to pupils about their experiences of school. There were no responses to the online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

David Spruce, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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