

# Inspection of a good school: Beechwood Primary Academy

31 Rockfield Avenue, Southway, Plymouth, Devon PL6 6DX

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Inspection dates:

17–18 September 2019

## **Outcome**

Beechwood Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils like this school. They say that teachers and support staff want them to be safe and to do well. Pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. They told me that they like the new rules for behaviour. Pupils work hard in lessons and do not disturb the learning of others.

Pupils enjoy the many opportunities that the school provides beyond their usual lessons. A good example is the link that the school has formed with a local company. Female engineers have visited the school to tell pupils about possible careers in engineering. This has given both girls and boys some new ideas about the future careers they might follow. Pupils also enjoy the many visits to local places of interest and residential trips where many enjoy staying away from home for the first time.

Pupils feel safe in school and know how to stay safe when they use the internet because they are taught well in school. They told me that bullying is rare but does happen from time to time. They said that staff deal with any behaviour issues quickly and fairly.

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

School leaders recently reviewed how well the school's curriculum suited the pupils. As a result, they decided to make changes. They planned a new curriculum, and this was begun at the start of the current term. They now aim to teach exciting lessons which link subjects together.

Teachers make sure that pupils understand right and wrong. Pupils develop a sense of wonder about the world as they learn about other cultures and faiths.

School leaders and teachers know their pupils well. They are aware that most of the

children that enter the Nursery and Reception Years have few skills in reading. Teachers help children to learn phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) as soon as they start at the school. They quickly notice when any children fall behind, and they help them to catch up quickly. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have reading lessons every day. Almost all pupils can read the expected phonic sounds before they leave Year 2.

Older pupils continue to improve their reading and their teachers think of exciting ways to keep pupils motivated. A recent example involved 20 pupils who were not keen on reading. They worked with parents to design and make individual, decorated bookshelves. The school then provided books to fill their shelves. This encouraged pupils to read more often at home.

Mathematics is taught well throughout the school. Teachers use inventive ways to interest the pupils in this subject. Children have a good grasp of numbers and shapes by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils in other classes continue to learn skills and knowledge in mathematics.

Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress in mathematics because the curriculum is adapted well to meet their needs. Older pupils do not have a good enough instant recall of mathematical facts, such as tables. This slows them down when they are working on challenging calculations.

Leaders make sure that teachers help pupils to learn well and the head of school has a very accurate understanding of the quality of education across the school. Leaders are aware that the changes to the curriculum are in their early days. There is still a need for teachers to decide which knowledge from each subject pupil should learn and remember for a long time.

A dedicated team look after pupils with SEND extremely well. I took a close look at how well pupils with SEND were making progress in different subjects. The careful support from teachers and teaching assistants is helping these pupils to know and do more.

Leaders aim to help all children to learn well and behave well. The most recent survey of parents received over 200 responses and these showed that the overwhelming numbers of parents fully supported the school. However, few parents responded to the survey used for this inspection and a significant number of parents who responded were not happy with the communication between school and home. Leaders have accepted this. They will need to do more to communicate more effectively so that all parents are happy.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff members have been well trained to see when pupils are struggling. They follow the agreed policy for listening to children's concerns and finding the right help when needed.

Leaders act quickly to deal with any concerns and school records show that they find help from experts outside the school where needed. Leaders also make all of the needed checks to ensure that all adults are safe to work with children.

The designated leader for safeguarding works closely with a number of organisations to help families, including those that are in crisis. Members of the school board regularly check safeguarding when they visit the school.

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

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

- The mathematics curriculum ensures that pupils follow a structured series of lessons that build upon pupils' previous learning. However, pupils in key stage 2 are not able to quickly recall basic mathematical facts, such as times tables. Teachers need to ensure that pupils learn the required mathematical facts systematically so that pupils can use this knowledge when they move on to tackle more complex calculations.
- The newly introduced curriculum is successfully ensuring that pupils combine skills and knowledge from different subjects. At this stage, teachers have not yet clearly identified the specific knowledge that pupils should be able to remember for a long time. Leaders need to ensure that teachers adapt their work to better help pupils to remember key information in each subject.
- While parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, as shown in more than 200 responses to the school's recent parent survey, many would like clearer communication between the school and home. Leaders need to ensure that they communicate with parents more effectively, particularly in sharing the many positive aspects of school life.

## **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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Beechwood Primary School, to be good in February 2013.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143311
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111573
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	425
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair</b>	Julia Guy
<b>Head of School</b>	Lisa Evans
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.beechwood-primary.co.uk">https://www.beechwood-primary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school became an academy in October 2016.
- The predecessor school, Beechwood Primary School, was judged to be good in February 2013.

## Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector met with the head of school, chief executive officer, members of the board of trustees, members of the local advisory board, school curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. He also talked with the chair of trustees by telephone.
- The head of school joined the lead inspector for most of the inspection activities. Activities included: lesson observations in most classes; discussions with staff, pupils and parents; scrutiny of pupils' workbooks; scrutiny of key self-evaluation documents, curriculum plans, behaviour records and details of provision for pupils with SEND.
- Reading, mathematics and science were selected for close scrutiny. This included discussions with school leaders about their intentions for these subjects, discussions with subject leaders and lesson observations to check how well the subjects were being taught and discussions with pupils who talked about the progress they were making in

their workbooks.

- The lead inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents to check that all safeguarding arrangements were effective.

### **Inspection team**

Paul Hodson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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