

Inspection of Beech Hill Primary School

Linhope Road, West Denton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE5 2LW

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 15 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a strong sense of community at Beech Hill Primary School. Pupils describe attending here as 'being part of a family'. This is helped by the school dog, Ted, who gives visitors a warm welcome. The school's ethos of 'Happy, Safe, Loved' contributes to pupils feeling valued and secure.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are motivated to do their best because teachers have high expectations of what they can do. Pupils are highly engaged in lessons. There is a strong culture of respect. Pupils know how important it is to include everybody. They talk passionately about differences being accepted. Roles such as being part of the 'Dream Team' and being on the school council help pupils to contribute to the school community. Pupils can even earn badges to look after the chickens!

Bullying rarely happens and if it does, leaders deal with it promptly. Pupils are very confident that staff will not tolerate unkind behaviour. All pupils have a named 'go to' person. This is a trusted adult who they know will help them if needed.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully supported. Knowledgeable leaders ensure that their needs are met and that they are fully included in the life of the school.

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

Subject leaders have identified the knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Teachers know the curriculum well. Subject leaders have begun to evaluate regularly how well pupils are learning new content. Teachers are reflective and adapt lessons and curriculum plans if they notice that pupils' knowledge is not secure. This is more advanced in some subjects than in others. In some subjects, pupils can recall previous learning. For example, in computer science, pupils can talk about how their programming skills develop from Year 1 to Year 3. In other lessons, such as history, the curriculum is engaging. Pupils demonstrate enthusiasm for the subject and can use historical language well, for example, when drawing on previous work to discuss connections between events with increasing knowledge.

In some workbooks, it is not sufficiently clear how pupils are being supported to develop their understanding. For example, in geography, pupils often label countries and continents. However, it is unclear how teachers intend to develop pupils' understanding of this further or link new understanding to other tasks. In science, workbooks highlight that pupils demonstrate scientific skills through investigation work. However, the conclusions that pupils draw from their investigations are not always explained scientifically.

In the early years curriculum, there has been close work with other subject leaders to ensure that knowledge of different subjects is developed right from Nursery.

Some children start the early years with limited language and communication skills. Leaders are quick to provide support. Children listen well to stories and join in with great enthusiasm, copying actions and repeating words. Phonics and mathematics are learned in early years. In Reception, children work with number frames. Teachers link this work to familiar songs to help children remember the concept of 'more' and 'less'. Adults have developed consistent routines, which children follow quickly.

An effective phonics programme is followed consistently by all staff. In this way, pupils who need support to catch up receive strong and effective support with their reading. It does not take long for pupils who require support to begin to read fluently. Leaders have appointed a 'Ready to Read' teacher who works closely with pupils to help them make more progress. Leaders have a sharp focus on ensuring that pupils in all year groups are supported to read.

Leaders ensure there are many opportunities to enhance pupils' personal development. There are many trips and residential visits. Every pupil visits a farm, a woodland area and the beach. This helps to develop a love of the outside environment. Carefully selected visits to historical sites and stately homes help to create a sense of awe and wonder for pupils. The personal, social and health education curriculum is very well planned to ensure that pupils develop resilience. Leaders ensure that pupils understand challenging issues within the local community and that they are supported to cope with difficulties outside of school. Leaders promote tolerance and respect exceptionally well. Pupils love the responsibility that they get from being on the school council. Many pupils, including pupils with SEND, participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Staff training and professional development are prioritised by leaders. Teachers develop their subject knowledge through support from subject leaders. Staff are happy and proud to work at the school. They appreciate how leaders are mindful of workload and prioritise the well-being of staff and pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure there is a comprehensive system for reporting safeguarding concerns. They follow up on any concerns with prompt actions. Staff are well trained in identifying and reporting any safeguarding concerns they may have. Training is up to date, and leaders make it relevant to the local context and beyond. Many pupils speak about how safe they feel in school. This reflects the work that all adults do to create a calm and protective environment.

Pupils are taught about local safeguarding risks and how to stay safe online. Leaders provide different ways for pupils to report worries or concerns, such as by using the 'worry box' or talking to their named trusted adult.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities in some subjects to build upon and develop their understanding of important concepts and themes. At times, pupils skim the surface of what they need to know without exploring ideas in more detail or how to apply new learning elsewhere. Leaders and staff should ensure that pupils develop cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills across the curriculum that contribute to pupils developing a strong and secure understanding of carefully selected concepts, ideas and themes.

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](#)' 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

Unique reference number	144524
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10229043
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	456
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lee Rochester
Headteacher	Jess Eatock
Website	www.beechhill.newcastle.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in June 2017. It is part of Valour multi-academy trust (the trust). This is a small trust with one other primary school.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- Alternative provision is used for one pupil.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and the chief executive officer of the trust. They also met with the special educational needs coordinators and the early years leader. The lead inspector met with two members of the local advisory board who are responsible for governance, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also met with two trustees. The lead inspector spoke with the school improvement partner on the telephone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, computing, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers about the lessons visited, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered pupils' workbooks in geography and science.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and at playtime and lunchtime. They spoke with pupils about their views on the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were scrutinised. This included checking the single central record, training for staff and safeguarding records. An inspector also met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- The views of parents and carers, staff and pupils were gathered through Ofsted's online surveys and face-to-face discussions.

Inspection team

Jessica McKay, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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