

# Inspection of Beechwood Church of England Primary School

Beechwood Road, Dudley, West Midlands DY2 7QA

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Inspection dates: 16 to 17 July 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The headteacher of this school is Sophie Blick. This school is part of DRB Ignite Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Robert Bowater, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Sheldon.

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

There is a real togetherness that runs through this school. The school's vision and values of trust, justice, friendship, forgiveness, endurance and compassion underpin much of the work that takes place. Staff have an unwavering commitment to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their background, succeed both socially and academically.

Pupils behave well and attend school regularly. There are clear routines and classroom expectations that pupils follow willingly. At social times, pupils play together happily. When incidents of bullying occur, leaders take swift and decisive action to ensure this does not continue. Pupils feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they have any worries.

There have been several noticeable improvements to the curriculum. The school ensures that pupils learn to read quickly and make good progress in their phonics. Alongside this, pupils also learn to write with confidence and develop secure mathematical skills. This is helping current pupils make better progress.

There are many ways that the school extends pupils' learning beyond the classroom. This year, for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have visited a local museum. For older pupils, there has been a residential trip to a Somerset farm. Pupils also enjoy attending after-school clubs, such as football, dance, tennis and cricket.

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

Outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are low but are improving. This, in part, is because a significant proportion of pupils do not start in Reception, and some arrive new to the school in Year 5. Many pupils also returned to school after the COVID-19 pandemic with significant gaps in their knowledge. School leaders, with the support of the trust, have had a sharp focus on improving pupils' reading, writing and mathematical knowledge across the school. Evidence gathered during this inspection shows that the actions leaders are taking are proving highly successful.

The school has established an ambitious curriculum that caters for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Topics are well sequenced so that, right from Reception, pupils build on what they know and understand. In many areas, pupils are remembering more of what they have been taught and are connecting their learning. However, in a few areas of the wider curriculum, there is still work to do to clearly define the key knowledge pupils need to remember and how teachers check that this is secure.

The school has put learning to read at the heart of its curriculum. Right from when children join the school, they begin learning their phonic sounds. Over time, pupils successfully begin to blend sounds and form words with ever-increasing fluency. The school regularly checks pupils' progress in reading. Where gaps in phonics are identified, pupils are given targeted support to ensure these are closed quickly. The

school ensures that appropriate books are given to pupils so that they accurately match where they are up to with their phonics. More widely, staff read to pupils daily so that they develop a love and enjoyment of stories.

Pupils with SEND receive high levels of support. The school accurately identifies pupils' needs and routinely reviews learning plans to ensure they reflect the current needs of individual pupils. In lessons, teachers use various strategies to adapt tasks so that pupils can access their learning. The school works effectively with external agencies and ensures that staff are provided with ongoing training to help pupils with SEND make the progress of which they are capable.

Attendance is exceptionally strong. Leaders are relentless in their approach to ensuring pupils attend school regularly and leave no stone unturned in helping pupils and families overcome barriers they may face. The school is quick to intervene when attendance starts to drop and makes every effort to find solutions to any issues that arise.

The school has put in place a well-developed personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum. Pupils cover a range of different themes and topics, including celebrating difference, dreams and goals, and healthy relationships. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, both out in the local community and online. There are a range of enrichment activities that happen throughout the year for all year groups. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed their trips to a chocolate factory, botanical gardens, a national space centre and many more. Pupils also learn about fundamental British values through different leadership responsibilities across the school and have a good understanding of what it means to be a good citizen.

Trustees provide strong support and challenge to the school. They discharge their duties effectively. Trust leaders understand the context of the school well and have worked closely with school leaders to help the school improve. Both recognise the need to provide further support to help staff develop their subject-teaching knowledge across all areas of the curriculum.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the leadership of the school. They unanimously agree that leaders take their workload and well-being into account when implementing new initiatives. All staff enjoy working at the school and are proud to be part of the 'Beechwood family'.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The key knowledge that pupils need to learn in some subjects is not as clearly defined as it could be. This means that some pupils are not secure in what they

know and understand and how their learning connects. The school should ensure that the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember in each subject is clear. It should also ensure that teachers check that pupils remember this knowledge to help pupils make stronger progress in their learning.

- The school is still in the process of developing teachers' subject-specific teaching knowledge. This means that, across some areas of the wider curriculum, staff have not had the opportunity to fully develop their teaching practice. The school should ensure that teachers develop their subject-specific pedagogical knowledge to enhance the teaching of the wider curriculum.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142047
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10344054
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	204
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Sheldon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sophie Blick
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.beechwood.drbignitemat.org">www.beechwood.drbignitemat.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	8 and 9 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is one of 11 schools that are part of the DRB Ignite Multi-Academy Trust.
- The headteacher has been in post since May 2020.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Church of England Diocese of Worcester. The school's last section 48 inspection was in February 2017. The school's next inspection will be within eight years of the previous section 48 inspection.

## Information about this inspection

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

- 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 chair and vice chair of the board of trustees. Meetings were also held with the chief executive officer, executive director of school improvement, director of curriculum and professional development, headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also looked at other subjects to check how they are planned and taught.
- 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 a range of school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.
- Inspectors observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View and free-text comments. They also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

## **Inspection team**

Mark Howes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Harjit Chahal

Ofsted Inspector

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