

Inspection of a good school: Belmont Park School

Leyton Green Road, Leyton, London E10 6DB

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 March 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff and pupils typically describe this school as a 'family'. Staff get to know pupils well and build effective working relationships with them. Pupils are positive about the school and appreciate that staff take time to understand them and their needs. They are well supported to get back on track when things get difficult. Their behaviour improves over time and classrooms are places where pupils can learn.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities to nurture and develop pupils' self-esteem, confidence, resilience and social skills. For example, staff offer a range of off-site activities, including ice-skating and residential trips. There is a strong sense that pupils are ready to provide help and support to one another. They are encouraged to play an active part in the school community. For instance, pupils cook collectively for one another and take part in sports competitions.

The school ensures that pupils are taught a range of academic and vocational subjects. Some of these are carefully planned, and overall pupils achieve well. In other subjects, curriculum thinking is not so clear. Where this is the case, pupils do not routinely build on what they have learned previously in order to secure their knowledge and understanding.

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

The school wants all pupils to study an ambitious curriculum that prepares them for adulthood. Pupils study a range of subjects which provide insight to the world of work, such as construction and music production. This helps pupils to make informed choices about their future steps in training or education. In some subjects, staff have thought about the order in which new skills and knowledge are taught. However, in other subjects

the curriculum is not as carefully thought out and subject content is not well sequenced. This leads to variability in how well pupils learn and remember subject content.

Overall, the school caters well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs. Staff use a range of strategies to support pupils' needs. For example, pupils benefit from counselling and targeted work to address their individual needs. However, for pupils with more complex learning needs, teaching is not routinely adjusted well enough to help these pupils to achieve highly.

When pupils join the school, staff establish pupils' reading fluency and comprehension skills. Staff provide additional lessons to support pupils who struggle with reading. However, the school does not clearly identify pupils who have gaps in their phonics knowledge. Additional support for these pupils does not routinely focus on developing pupils' phonics knowledge for decoding and building fluency and confidence.

Many pupils have missed significant amounts of schooling prior to joining the school. A key strength of this school is the way in which staff help pupils to re-engage in their learning and improve their attendance. Staff build strong working relationships with pupils, parents and carers. This helps staff to understand each pupil's personal challenges and circumstances and address these together as a team. For example, each pupil has their own personalised plan, which helps them to settle into school life and get to know their peers. Pupils benefit from a range of activities, including bushcraft and bicycle maintenance. This contributes to building pupils' confidence and self-esteem. These sorts of activities encourage pupils to attend well and build their trust in the staff.

Staff are quick to resolve any incidents of poor behaviour. Staff provide pupils with strategies to manage their own emotions, behaviour and well-being. All this helps pupils to focus on their learning. The school is generally calm and, typically, pupils' learning proceeds uninterrupted.

The school encourages pupils to learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Within the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, pupils are taught meaningful and age-appropriate topics, such as criminal gang culture and criminal exploitation. Pupils have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills. For example, pupils on the school council help to make decisions about changes or improvements that would benefit the whole school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the essential knowledge that pupils should learn over time is not coherently sequenced. As a result, pupils do not develop new knowledge and skills

equally well across all subjects. The school should ensure that pupils' learning is planned coherently in all subjects.

- A small number of pupils join the school with significant weaknesses in reading and gaps in their phonics knowledge. These pupils do not get specific support to help them read fluently and confidently. The school should ensure that staff have the training they need to help weaker readers to catch up quickly and develop fluency in reading.
- Teaching is not consistently well adapted to meet pupils' needs. Sometimes, pupils with complex needs have difficulty accessing the full curriculum and do not learn important knowledge and skills. The school should ensure that teaching is adapted successfully so that pupils with complex needs are well supported in their learning.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 in July 2014.

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 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	131697
Local authority	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10296717
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	10 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jonathan Reades
Headteacher	Bruce Roberts
Website	www.belmontparkschool.com
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Many of the pupils have experienced disruption to their education before joining the school.
- The school offers full-time places for up to 57 pupils who have an education, health and care plan or are in the process of obtaining one. The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Some pupils may have additional diagnoses and needs.
- The school offers short-term places for up to 30 pupils who are at risk of or have been permanently excluded.
- At the time of the inspection, the school was not making use of alternative provision and no students were on roll in the sixth form.

- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, English, mathematics and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record of pre-employment checks; 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 met with senior leaders, teachers and the wider school team.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the governing body and other governors.
- They also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Kieran Bird, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Barney Geen

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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