

Inspection of a good school: Belmont Academy

Belmont Road, Erith, Kent DA8 1LE

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 July 2023

Outcome

Belmont Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to this kind and welcoming school. Pupils are happy and safe here. Staff have high expectations of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to these expectations. They work hard in class and achieve well. They benefit from a curriculum that prepares them well for the next stages of their education.

This is a calm and orderly school, but also one where pupils can learn and have fun. Pupils love Betsy, the school dog. They are polite and respectful to adults and are caring towards each other. In early years, children follow a clear and consistent set of routines.

Pupils are safe at this school. Staff know pupils well and deal with any concerns quickly. Pupils explained that bullying happens rarely. If it does, adults deal with it quickly. Pupils with SEND receive excellent support.

Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. For example, pupils can take part in outdoor activities, music tuition, sports competitions and residential outings. They can attend many clubs such as French, ballet, football or performing arts. Many pupils enrol in the school's 'Children's University'.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. They have identified the knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Children in the early years build a strong foundation for future learning. They leave Reception fully prepared for future learning in Year 1.

Overall, the curriculum is well planned and organised. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They check pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively. Pupils learn without disruption in lessons. In many subjects, pupils learn and achieve well. However, in a small number of subjects, the school's curricular thinking is not as well developed. As a

result, pupils do not develop a broad and deep knowledge in these subjects over time. Children in early years develop the strong foundations they need for future content. This includes in their mathematical understanding and language and communication skills.

Leaders are determined that pupils learn to read well. From the start of Reception Year, pupils learn to read using phonics. They quickly develop their ability to read words and sentences with accuracy. By the end of Year 1, a high proportion of pupils read with fluency. Teachers identify pupils who need extra support quickly. Adults who provide this support are well trained. Leaders work hard to develop a love of reading in the school. Teachers read pupils a wide range of texts and poetry. Pupils receive a gold star when they have read the 'Top Ten Texts' in their year group.

Pupils with SEND are identified swiftly and supported effectively. Staff ensure that planning and resources are adapted well to enable all pupils to access the same curriculum. They ensure that pupils with SEND get the extra help that they need. Pupils with SEND are fully included in the wider life of the school.

Leaders show a commitment to pupils' wider development. They have established a set of values that are central to school life. For instance, pupils are encouraged to develop resilience and take responsibility for themselves and for others. Pupils enjoy learning about the richness and diversity of the world in different subjects. They celebrate events such as Black History Month and learn about different cultures and religions.

Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities. This includes joining the 'Belmont Parliament' and a range of roles such as junior traffic ambassadors, playmakers and house captains. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their talents and interests, particularly in sport.

Those responsible for governance provide effective challenge and support to leaders. The trustees and local academy council understand the school's priorities for improvement. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. They have lots of positive things to say about the quality of leadership, care and education on offer.

Staff feel that leaders managed their workload well. Leaders actively support staff well-being. Staff appreciate the high-quality training they receive to improve their leadership and practice. Staff enjoy working here. They say it is like being part of one big family.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular training and safeguarding updates. These maintain their alertness to the signs of any risk for pupils. Staff report any concerns swiftly and appropriately. They support pupils with their emotional well-being.

Leaders have developed effective relationships with external agencies. They are strong advocates for pupils. They do all that they can to secure the help pupils need. Pupils are

taught how to keep themselves safe, including online. Leaders work closely with parents to raise their awareness of any potential risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, curricular thinking is not fully developed and implemented effectively. As a result, pupils do not develop a broad and deep knowledge in these subjects over time. The school should review the scope and sequencing of their curriculum, and teachers' expertise, to ensure that it allows pupils to develop a broad body of knowledge in these subjects.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Belmont Primary School, to be good in March 2018.

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	146870
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10268879
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	443
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Beverley Eaglesfield
Headteacher	Lucy Childs
Website	www.belmont.bexley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school provides an additional resourced provision for up to 12 children with physical and medical needs including visual impairment.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- Belmont Academy converted to become an academy school in April 2019. When its predecessor school, Belmont Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, members of the leadership team, other school staff, members of the executive leadership team, and representatives from the trust board and local academy council.
- The inspector conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector met with the subject leader,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding, and looked at safeguarding documentation and record keeping, including the record of pre-employment checks for staff. The inspector also spoke with staff and pupils to gather their views about safeguarding.
- The inspector spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils, staff and parents.

Inspection team

Christian Hicks, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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