

Beckmead School

Monks Orchard Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 3BZ

Inspection dates

10–11 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Since the previous inspection, exceptional leadership, management and governance have sustained and improved the quality of teaching in the school.
- The school involves all the pupils successfully. It supports the well-being of the young people, who are often vulnerable. Staff and pupils therefore succeed in realising the school's motto, 'Believe it – we can do it.'
- Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. They make exceptional progress in their academic and personal development.
- Pupils make rapid progress in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and communication, and in science.
- The excellent staff training and development opportunities have resulted in a high-quality workforce. As a result, the teaching is highly effective and pupils learn outstandingly well.
- Therapists play a key role in supporting the school's work by enabling pupils to learn through raising their confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Through very good use of local community resources, pupils gain a clear understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Staff are highly skilled in managing pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils learn valuable self-control techniques so that they can deal with their emotions and they behave extremely well. They feel safe and make great strides in their personal development.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. Because of excellent attention to their care and well-being, most pupils make rapid improvement in their attendance when compared with that at their previous schools.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and help to ensure that pupils and staff remain safe.
- Governors know the school well and are committed to its success. They have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve. They have first-hand evidence gathered from visits.
- Currently, information on pupils' progress is not included in the new assessment system for some subjects. As a result, senior staff and governors do not always have the fullest information on which to base their decisions.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen opportunities for effective intervention to secure even better outcomes for pupils by ensuring that leaders:
 - rapidly incorporate information on pupils' progress in all subjects into the school's assessment system
 - provide clear analysis of this information to senior staff and governors to support their decision-making.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The executive headteacher, governors and staff at all levels have established an atmosphere of high expectations in which the school's motto, 'Believe it – we can do it', is realised and all pupils feel involved. Staff support the school's vision of nurturing some of the most vulnerable pupils in the borough and enabling them to succeed.
- Since the last inspection, the school has doubled in size and has grown from two sites to five. This has resulted in a revised staffing structure. Each site is led by a head of school and assistant headteacher, both of whom are responsible to the executive leadership team. Each site follows the school's key vision but has the flexibility to tailor the ethos successfully to the needs of the pupils attending the site.
- There are regular management meetings which are sharply focused on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. This approach has been successful in improving the quality of teaching, especially in English and mathematics. This work has resulted in highly effective teaching.
- Since the last inspection, the leadership of teaching has been strengthened. Performance management arrangements are well established and staff spoke positively about how they had been helped to become more effective in the classroom and to gain promotion.
- The recruitment and retention of staff have become more challenging since the previous inspection. In dealing with this issue, leaders and governors have adopted effective ways of attracting and retaining staff. For example, leaders have ensured that there is an excellent training and development programme for staff at all levels. The school has been particularly successful in supporting teaching assistants to become teachers. Since the last inspection, 13 teaching assistants have been accepted onto a variety of teacher-training programmes. As a result, staffing is now more stable than previously.
- The wise spending of additional government funding has ensured that disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress. The school has improved pupils' behaviour and self-confidence through one-to-one support, buying and using software to develop their basic skills, mentoring and raising attendance. The difference between the attainment of these pupils and other pupils nationally is getting smaller.
- The sports premium funding is used well to provide swimming lessons, resources for 'forest school' outdoor activities and the hire of sports venues to enable a greater number to take part in weekly physical activities. It has also been used to train staff to enable them to provide sports-related therapies. This approach has led to very positive relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves. Pupils commented enthusiastically about the range of sporting activities available at the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Festivals from different religions around the world are regularly celebrated, and pupils have many opportunities to reflect on their feelings and behaviour. Visits to places of interest in London and the local community enable pupils to understand how people

from different cultures and backgrounds contribute to life in modern Britain. The school makes very good use of local resources.

- Leaders' excellent partnership work and highly effective communication with off-site providers of training enable them to check pupils' attendance, behaviour and progress well.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, expressed very positive views about a range of issues. All those who responded to the questionnaire would recommend the school to another parent.
- All Year 11 pupils take part in interesting work experience placements, ranging from working in the local pet shop to working with an accountant. They have access to effective careers advice which ensures that they make well-informed choices about their opportunities for further education or employment with training in the future.
- The timetabled curriculum is carefully matched to the needs of the pupils. The rich extra-curricular programme has a very positive impact in developing their social skills and widening their horizons in preparation for their futures.
- The local authority holds the school in high esteem and so provides 'light-touch' support. Its officers have worked very closely with leaders and governors and have forged excellent partnerships with other schools in the borough and beyond. This is to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils are given every opportunity to succeed in all areas of their lives.
- In September 2015, leaders introduced a new assessment system, which was refined further in September 2016. Teachers are increasingly confident and effective in using the new system. For some subjects, however, information on pupils' progress has not yet been included in the new system. As a result, school leaders do not always have full information to decide about the best support for pupils in the subjects concerned. For the same reason, governors do not always have the best information when they are making decisions.

Governance of the school

- Governance is outstanding. Governors are drawn from a wide range of experience and expertise, including education, finance, governance, health and safety, human resources, information and communication technology (ICT) and local government. They successfully support and hold senior leaders to account and increasingly challenge information provided by the school.
- Governors know the school exceptionally well and are committed to seeing it succeed. They visit often and gain valuable first-hand knowledge about the school and its different sites, including the off-site training. They understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Governors check carefully that additional funding, such as the pupil premium and sports funding, is used appropriately. They are diligent in ensuring that additional funding has a positive impact on pupils' achievement and development.
- Governors have a very good grasp of the school's finances. The accounts are regularly audited to ensure that monies are wisely spent. They also keep a close eye on the impact of additional pupils admitted to the school.

- Governors are particularly thorough in checking the school's safeguarding responsibilities. All governors have completed the relevant safeguarding training. Over many years, the governing body has ensured that a governor who is trained in safer recruitment is on the interview panel for all staff appointments. They have a rolling programme to check that the policies published on the school's website match the current practice in the school.
- Governors take a proactive role in overseeing the performance management arrangements. As the school has grown, governors have introduced more rigour to the process and the quality of teaching has improved. They are actively involved in ensuring that decisions concerning salary increases are always linked to staff performance and pupils' progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet requirements.
- Staff at all levels place a strong emphasis on keeping pupils safe. Pupils feel safe and secure and have an excellent understanding how to stay safe online and while travelling outside the school.
- A culture of safety and care for pupils' well-being exists throughout the school. Careful attention is given to all pupils, especially those with difficult histories or who are at risk of harm or exploitation.
- Staff and governors have completed all the expected training, including in the 'Prevent' duty. The school's safeguarding policy is firmly based on the Secretary of State's latest guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2016). Staff are familiar with the school's procedures and practice, particularly regarding physical intervention.
- Each site benefits from its own designated lead member of staff for safeguarding. Detailed records are maintained of all safeguarding incidents and the school works very effectively with external agencies and parents, as appropriate.
- Safety is paramount in the school's many off-site provisions. Detailed and rigorous risk assessments help to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Highly effective systems are in place to respond to any pupils who are regularly absent from school and to take swift action in any instances where those pupils may be at risk of harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding. Sustained improvements have been well established since the last inspection, for example in the quality of mathematics teaching.
- Across the curriculum, resources for learning are excellent, including those for mathematics. They motivate pupils to achieve extremely well.
- Pupils genuinely enjoy their learning and are delighted to show off their new skills to visitors. For example, younger pupils were eager to read to inspectors to demonstrate their newly acquired phonics skills and love of reading.

- Leaders, teachers and therapists make accurate checks and have detailed knowledge of what pupils can do. This information is very well used to plan exciting activities that challenge pupils to develop further, including the most able.
- Pupils make outstanding progress overall. They make excellent progress in reading because of the systematic approach to early reading skills. They are encouraged to develop a love and enjoyment of reading. Pupils, including the least and most able readers, read with expression and good understanding. Throughout lessons, teachers regularly refer to key words in their subjects to check pupils' understanding.
- Parents report that homework is well used to improve pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- Teachers' ongoing assessment of pupils' work is of high quality. Feedback to pupils is well considered and effective and complies with the school's assessment policy.
- Communication and social development feature highly across the curriculum with ICT being very well used to promote learning. Materials and activities are adapted well to pupils' individual needs.
- Teaching assistants provide timely and very helpful support under the expert direction of class teachers. This was very evident in a Year 2/3 literacy lesson where pupils were using pictures to tell a story. The classroom support was of high quality but did not distract pupils so they made excellent gains in their understanding of how to construct an interesting story.
- Across the school, staff have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils take great pride in their work and present it well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Staff work closely and effectively with external agencies and therapists on all sites to help keep pupils safe so that they, in turn, learn how to keep themselves safe. Therapists play a key role in the school's very effective work to develop pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The pupils who spoke to inspectors reported that they know how to stay safe online and when out and about in the local community.
- The pupils' emotional well-being is a high priority for the school. They learn how to develop the resilience to manage their emotions and behaviour in their daily lives. Pupils show confidence and maturity in their attitudes to bullying and those who spoke to inspectors were sure that it is always dealt with swiftly and fairly.
- Pupils are clear in their understanding of the importance of respect for people with traditions different from their own. They have many opportunities to learn about different lifestyles and partnerships that individuals choose in present-day society.
- Pupils reported that they feel very safe in school because of the extensive security measures across all sites that staff have provided.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils make excellent progress in managing their difficulties for themselves. Staff are highly skilled and use effective methods in managing behaviour. Progress records of behaviour are detailed and clear. They are well used by staff to understand the root causes of any behavioural issues.
- Highly effective training for staff, including in physical intervention, ensures that they apply the school's behaviour management strategies consistently. Pupils attending off-site provision are checked regularly for their attendance, punctuality, behaviour and safety.
- Most pupils attend very regularly and enjoy school. For some, attendance is reduced by necessary external appointments. Those pupils with previously high absence records improve their attendance the longer they remain at the school. Fixed-term exclusions are below national figures for all pupils, and for those who are disadvantaged, and have been reducing over time.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- The complex nature of pupils' needs means that many have experienced interrupted schooling and have difficult histories.
- The school measures its outcomes from an initial check when the pupils first arrive. Generally, attainment on entry is low.
- Group sizes are small and a large proportion of pupils join and leave the school at different times of the year. For this reason, it is difficult to make comparisons with national results or to analyse trends.
- The school's information for 2016 shows that across all five sites there is no evident difference in the rates of progress of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able of them, and the school's other most-able pupils and other groups. Excellent support, in part provided by additional government funding, in class and by withdrawal, is targeted and adjusted as necessary to meet pupils' individual needs. This helps pupils of all abilities to achieve very well.
- The evidence from lessons and books shows that current pupils in all year groups make excellent rates of progress in a range of subjects, particularly in literacy, numeracy, speaking and science.
- Pupils in the primary phase make rapid progress in their literacy and numeracy because of the individualised support they receive. They increasingly benefit from practising these skills in other subject areas.
- Reading skills for the youngest pupils are developing rapidly. School records show excellent progress in all year groups in key stage 1. Older pupils are given the opportunity to take appropriate GCSE and work-related courses to meet their needs and ambitions. They make exceptional progress from low starting points and achieve very well.

- Older pupils are successful in gaining units in the personal development programme of the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). As a result, they are well prepared for when they enter the next stage of their education.
- Pupils have numerous real opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in the many work-related courses offered. Those who attend off-site training make rapid and sustained progress in these courses, often moving on to apprenticeships.
- In 2016, almost all Year 11 pupils went on to further education, apprenticeships or employment.

School details

Unique reference number	101853
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10023563

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Alcaraz
Executive headteacher	Dr Jonty Clark OBE
Telephone number	020 8777 9311
Website	www.beckmeadfamilyofschools.org
Email address	office@beckmead.croydon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The Beckmead family of schools caters for 184 boys and girls aged between five and 16 who have a range of complex needs including, social, emotional and mental health difficulties and communication difficulties. It makes provision for pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and challenging behaviour. Almost all pupils are boys.
- Since the last inspection, the school has expanded the age range of pupils on roll from seven to 16 to five to 16.
- The provision operates on five sites:
 - Monks Orchard is the main school site and caters for pupils aged between seven and 16, and includes key stage 3 autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) provision.

- The Community Learning Team (CLT) is based in Alverston Gardens and caters for key stage 4 pupils.
- Chaffinch Brook and Autism Outreach is based in Morland Road and hosts the key stages 1 and 2 ASD provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and challenging behaviour.
- The School Inclusion Gateway (SIG), based at Bramley Bank, caters for key stage 2 pupils who need short-stay placements. The outreach service is also based at this site.
- The Rainbow class, based at Aerodrome Primary School, caters for key stage 1 pupils who need short-stay placements.
- Almost all pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan, related to autistic spectrum disorder and communication needs or their social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- Beckmead provides a range of local authority and outreach services.
- Just over three quarters of pupils are supported by the pupil premium funding, which is almost three times the national average.
- Just over half of all pupils are from minority ethnic groups. This is well above the national average, with the largest groups being from Black Caribbean and White and Black Caribbean backgrounds.
- Off-site training is made available for pupils to extend their learning experience. The school offers the following activities:
 - horse riding at The Diamond Centre, Carshalton and the Kingsmead Equestrian Centre, Warlingham
 - bicycle maintenance at Croydon Auto Bike Scheme (CABS) in New Addington
 - construction at the Skills and Integrated Learning Centre in Mitcham
 - physical education and sport at Sporting Chances, based at the David Weir Leisure Centre
 - swimming at West Wickham Leisure Centre, South Norwood Leisure Centre, Waddon Leisure Centre and St Mary's Primary School, Croydon
 - gardening at Dorset Road Allotments, Beckenham
 - music technology at Scream Studios, Croydon
 - ICT and mechanics at Lewisham Southwark College
 - 'forest school' at Frylands Wood Outdoor Centre, Croydon.
- Just over a half of the pupils across the school are involved with the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) because of their social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Pupils are not entered early for examinations.
- In September 2017, Beckmead College is due to open in partnership with Alverston Gardens, and will offer up to 100 places for pupils aged between 14 and 19. The provision will offer work-related courses in: bricklaying, carpentry, catering, motor

mechanics, multi skills, painting and decorating, and will be housed in a state-of-the art building.

- The Beckmead family of schools has applied to the Department for Education to become the Lockley Trust on 1 September 2017.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning across all five sites, with all visits to classrooms being jointly observed with senior leaders. They held informal discussions with pupils and listened to them read.
- There were 36 responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View). In addition, inspectors took account of the 110 responses to a questionnaire for members of staff.
- Inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders and two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed key documents and policies, including those related to safeguarding, and scrutinised pupils' workbooks and learning files and the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

David Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

James Waite

Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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