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Mr Paul McGill
Headteacher
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Dear Mr McGill

Short inspection of Beacroft Foundation School

Following my visit to the school on 13 June 2018 with Ofsted Inspector Julie Nash, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be outstanding in January 2013.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You are an inspiring leader who is steadfast in your dedication and passion to Beacroft Foundation School. You are incredibly well supported by your senior leaders and staff team who share your total commitment, energy and determination to provide each and every pupil with the very best quality of care and education.

Under your inspirational leadership, the high-quality provision and outcomes for pupils have been sustained as requested at the time of the previous inspection. Inspectors saw a wealth of evidence to demonstrate how you remain forward looking, continuously in search of innovative ways to further improve provision. There is no complacency in this school. You and your staff know and understand pupils' individual needs exceptionally well. Staff very quickly form strong and trusting relationships with pupils. Indeed, one parent commented how 'from the receptionist to the teaching staff and dinner ladies, every single one of the staff go out of their way to be helpful'. Consequently, pupils thrive in this school and make excellent progress from often very low starting points, in their academic, personal and social development. Pupils communicated to inspectors how they are extremely happy and enjoy their learning. This was demonstrable during the inspection. From the very start, pupils were happy and smiling, excited about their learning.

The dedication of your team was summed up articulately in the following statement

by a parent: 'Beaucroft school is amazing, we cannot rate it highly enough. We would recommend this school to anyone and everyone, they truly are worth their weight in gold.'

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry to be considered during the day. These included: how the school ensures that pupils are safe and behave well; the effectiveness of leaders in ensuring that pupils receive a high standard of education; how teaching supports good learning; the effectiveness of the curriculum in supporting pupils' academic, social and emotional development; and, how well the school prepares pupils for transition and their future destinations. These key lines of enquiry are considered below under 'Safeguarding' and 'Inspection findings'.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your staff and governors take your safeguarding responsibilities seriously. The nature of your school means that all of the pupils are vulnerable. There is a strong culture of safety and security which pervades the school. There is a shared understanding of the need to protect pupils from all potential risks. As one member of staff commented, 'We all have a responsibility to keep our children safe both within the school and beyond.'

Staff receive high-quality training and timely updates on keeping pupils safe. For example, staff have undertaken training on child sexual exploitation and the influence of radicalisation or extreme views. This means staff are confident in the action to take if they have any concerns about the safety of a pupil. Furthermore, there is overwhelming evidence that there is no hesitation by leaders to escalate concerns and work closely with external agencies when required to minimise risk to pupils and keep them safe.

You and your governors are aware of the importance of safer recruitment. You ensure that robust checks are carried out prior to staff starting employment in the school.

Risk assessments are in place for activities undertaken and for individual pupils where required. These are checked regularly by leaders to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

As a result of the diligence of you and your staff, all parents and carers who responded via Parent View, are confident their children are happy, feel safe and are well behaved. Typical comments made by parents include: 'I know that my child feels safe and cared for at school. The peace of mind Beaucroft gives us as parents is immeasurable' and 'pastoral care is nothing short of miraculous'.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- Leaders, including governors, remain highly ambitious for the school. You are resolute in your determination to ensure that the school continues to provide pupils with an outstanding educational experience. As leader you have exceptionally high expectations of yourself and the team. You are outward looking and are relentless in your drive to make further improvements. For example, leaders spoke about the tweaks they are making to assessment procedures to ensure that it provides teachers with the precise information they need. This allows teachers to plan and deliver bespoke learning opportunities to meet the needs of pupils and to sustain the outstanding progress they make.
- You ensure that your staff have the skills and expertise to teach and support pupils. You provide staff with well-considered and effective professional development. Leaders carefully monitor the quality of provision through a range of activities which include observing teaching and learning, viewing pupils' work and carefully tracking pupil progress.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently high. Staff know each pupil exceptionally well. This means staff can plan activities which precisely meet the needs of pupils and which enable them to learn well and thrive. Activities planned excite, motivate and inspire pupils. For example, pupils in key stage 3 were animated in a woodwork lesson. They were eager to share with inspectors their woodwork skills including measuring and sawing. Furthermore, they demonstrated how they are able to work together as a team to problem solve, for example successfully using a vice to hold wood.
- Pupils' progress is carefully tracked lesson by lesson and day by day. As a result, every aspect of each pupil's development enables teachers to adapt and modify tasks to ensure that pupils' needs are met extremely well.
- The curriculum covers a wide range of subjects which excite and motivate pupils to learn well. There is a focus on communication, reading, writing and mathematics. For example, children in the early years class were proud of their mark making and emerging writing. Inspectors viewed work undertaken by a child describing a visit to a fast food restaurant. This work demonstrating the child's skill in using the internet to locate information and accurately sequencing the trip through the use of pictures and writing. An older pupil read to an inspector with confidence, eager to describe the characters in the story. Subjects including history, geography and science are studied through a topic-based approach. For example, pupils in key stage 2 learn about invaders and settlers and seas and the oceans.
- The school adapts the curriculum effectively for each pupil to reflect the requirements of their education, health and care plans. There are five key areas of learning which include: cognition and learning; communication and interaction; self-help and independence; sensory and physical; and social and emotional well-being. These areas are carefully threaded through pupils' learning. As a result, pupils make consistently strong progress. Sign language and eye-gaze technology are successfully used to support pupils who are non-verbal.

- Pupils have access to a range of therapies which includes speech and language, play and music therapy. As a direct result of these, pupils achieve positive outcomes such as increasing their vocabulary from single words to complex sentences, being able to problem solve and independently being able to eat and drink.
- Pupils are able to participate in a wide range of additional activities, including participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, film making, musical production and horse riding. Inclusion in such activities raises pupils' confidence and self-esteem which in turn has a positive impact on the progress they make. At the time of the inspection, the staff were busy preparing for an impending festival for the pupils to include camping, music and food.
- Targets to address transition beyond Beaucroft are aspirational; not only does the school prepare pupils for the most appropriate post-16 opportunities both in and out of the school, but also fosters lifelong learning. Bespoke packages and plans for all pupils from Year 9 onwards, tailored to individual needs, ensure that next steps beyond the post-16 provision are relevant for them. These range from employment opportunities to college courses.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they maintain the exemplary quality of education the school provides.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Dorset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jen Southall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection we held meetings with you and your senior leadership team, subject leaders and governors. A telephone conversation was held with a local authority education adviser. We made visits to lessons, accompanied by yourself or a member of the senior leadership team, to observe pupils' attitudes to learning and to view their work. We spoke informally to pupils throughout the day, including during their lunchtime. We considered documentary evidence, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, and information relating to pupils' current achievement and progress. We also checked the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. We took into account 23 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and 23 free-text messages written by parents.