

# Inspection of Bentley Heath Church of England Primary School

Widney Close, Bentley Heath, Solihull, West Midlands B93 9AS

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Inspection dates: 18 and 19 July 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

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

These are exciting times at Bentley Heath C of E Primary School (Bentley Heath). A warm and caring Christian ethos is central to the improvements that leaders have made at the school. 'Building happiness and success' is the school's vision, and this is happening for most pupils.

Children get off to a great start in the early years. This continues through the school for many pupils. Leaders and staff are ambitious for their pupils to achieve highly during their time at Bentley Heath.

Calm and purposeful relationships between pupils and staff are evident in all classes. Pupils know that staff are there for them. Behaviour in lessons is positive, and breaktimes and lunchtimes are filled with caring and playful interactions. Pupils know that bullying could happen, but they also have confidence that staff would 'fix it' if it did. When needed, leaders investigate all perceived bullying and act accordingly.

Pupils learn to be respectful and caring members of the community. Gymnastics, musical theatre, talent shows, music lessons and sports clubs enrich pupils' interests and hobbies. Assemblies from local church leaders and inputs from charities such as Dogs Trust broaden pupils' understanding of the world around them.

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

Since the last inspection, leaders have worked tirelessly to address the weaknesses identified at that time. Supported by the multi-academy trust and a caring local academy board, leaders have driven improvements. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school and how they are supported.

Leaders think carefully about the knowledge they want pupils to learn in all subjects. In some subjects, leaders and staff place an emphasis on developing key skills alongside crucial knowledge to enable pupils to be successful in the subject. For example, in mathematics, pupils learn not only about numbers but how to use that knowledge to solve problems. However, opportunities to learn subject-related skills, techniques or methods are not as well planned or taught in some other subjects.

In lessons, staff work hard to put the curriculum in place in a precise way so pupils can acquire that essential knowledge from all subjects. Staff carefully consider how they can get pupils to learn in different ways. For example, 'talk partners' are regularly used so pupils can discuss what they have just learned. For example, in design and technology, pupils were encouraged to talk to each other about what makes a balanced diet. This helped many pupils to embed this knowledge into their long-term memory.

Leaders have set a clear expectation that all staff should frequently check on what pupils have learned and remembered in lessons. In some cases, teachers routinely do this well through focusing their questions on those they feel might need more help. However, in other classes, teachers have not assured themselves that pupils have learned and can remember the essential knowledge from the lesson.

Reading is rightly a priority at the school. From the very first moments pupils start at school, pupils are taught to recognise and name sounds in the environment. Well-trained staff members move them swiftly on to learning phonics. From this, pupils experience and read various books and authors. Consequently, pupils very quickly develop a love of books and reading.

The provision for many pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a strength at the school. Leaders prioritise partnerships with parents to build a strong understanding of the needs of the pupils. They use the right services, such as educational psychologists, to deepen their understanding of what these pupils need to thrive alongside their peers. Consequently, many pupils do succeed. However, for some pupils with social, emotional or mental health needs, teachers do not always consider how to adapt lessons to keep them fully engaged in all lessons.

Early years is a strength. A well-organised and exciting environment engages children and helps them develop early learning skills. Highly skilled staff use every moment to help children develop as confident and enthusiastic learners. Caring and playful interactions happen in both inside and outside learning spaces.

Pupils have very positive attitudes toward learning. Attendance is high, and very few pupils are persistently absent. Where they are, leaders work closely with families to stress the importance of being in school daily. Consequently, the number of those not attending enough is reducing quickly.

Many different subjects help pupils develop their understanding of the world around them. Lessons in personal, social, health and economic education create a sense of what it means to be healthy or appreciative of different cultures and faiths. As pupils told inspectors, this is a place where 'no one is left out'. Parents, staff and pupils are united in their positive views on the developments at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have worked hard to ensure that all staff have a detailed and deep knowledge of the potential risks to pupils. Training is regular and always checked up on. When needed, staff act swiftly to raise concerns when they feel a pupil is at risk of harm. Leaders then investigate thoroughly and, when required, ensure the pupil and the family get the right support.

Lessons across the curriculum help pupils understand what to do to stay safe. Road and water safety are two ways pupils develop those essential protective behaviours.

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

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

- Leaders do not always identify the precise subject-specific skills, techniques or methods they want pupils to learn. This means that sometimes pupils are unclear about how to apply their knowledge in the practical exploration and enquiry linked to that subject. What they have learned related to the subject. Leaders should ensure that all subjects clearly identify what skills, techniques or methods will be taught so that pupils are better at applying their subject knowledge in these subjects.
- In some subjects, teachers do not always routinely check children's understanding and recall of key knowledge. Misconceptions are not always identified and addressed well so that all pupils understand where they have gone wrong and address their errors. Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently use the school's assessment strategies effectively in all subjects to support pupils to know and remember more.
- Teachers do not consistently make the necessary adaptations to the way in which the curriculum is implemented for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. This means that some pupils struggle to maintain attention and focus in lessons. Leaders need to ensure that all staff are skilled in implementing the curriculum for all pupils, including those with social, emotional and mental health needs so that all can benefit from the implemented 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](#)' 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140462
<b>Local authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268318
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	422
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sarah Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hannah Cook
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk">www.bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	24 and 25 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher took up post in January 2022.
- The school joined the Birmingham Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust in July 2021.
- The school does not use any form of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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

- 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, design and technology, science and music. In these subjects, they visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, and talked with pupils and staff about how these subjects were taught. Inspectors also looked at other subjects in less detail to check how they were planned and taught.

- Inspectors asked pupils, staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. They scrutinised the employment checks on school staff and looked at other school records. They also found out about health and safety procedures and routines.
- Inspectors observed informal times to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- During the inspection, the inspectors had formal meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, governors, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally with parents, carers, pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of the academy trust.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Pollitt, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Catherine Young	His Majesty's Inspector
Antony Bradshaw	His Majesty's Inspector

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