

BEP Academy

4 Repton Court, Repton Close, Basildon SS13 1LN
10 Bridge Close, Romford RM7 0AU

Inspection dates

7–9 November 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- BEP Academy succeeds in giving its pupils a second chance to regain their confidence and do well.
- The school is very well led and managed. It meets all of the relevant independent school standards. Leaders check the impact of their actions carefully.
- The trust board oversees the work of the school effectively.
- Teaching is good and purposeful. Pupils learn well. They are typically on track to gain useful qualifications and take up a college place or apprenticeship.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do as well as the others.
- Pupils are well supported by leaders and staff in choosing from a good, carefully considered and growing range of subjects and courses.
- Pupils behave well. This is a happy, supportive and usually calm learning environment.
- Staff show great commitment and work very well together to meet pupils' needs.
- The school operates consistently well on each of its two sites in Romford and Basildon.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure. They are very well cared for and safeguarded by staff.
- Parents, carers and pupils are understandably pleased with the school.
- Many pupils attend well. However, some are absent from school for too much time.
- On occasion, some lessons and activities are not challenging enough for all pupils, and a lack of exposure to more difficult work may deter some pupils from taking examination courses.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment further by expecting highly of pupils at all times, and consistently setting them challenging work.
- Improve pupils' attendance by reducing the rate of persistent absence.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The very experienced senior leaders have well-considered aims and high ambition for the school and its pupils. A purposeful and friendly atmosphere pervades the school. One parent commented simply and aptly, 'My child is doing so well at this academy and is well looked after.'
- All staff, at both sites, share the same clear expectations. They work very well as a team to meet each pupil's individual needs, sharing information and ideas readily. Leaders empower all staff to discuss and decide together different ways to promote pupils' learning and well-being. This helps to ensure that pupils' academic and personal requirements are well met.
- Leaders and staff have a strong focus on making sure that all pupils, whatever their background or needs, are well treated. They carefully meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- Leaders evaluate the school accurately and rigorously. Their clear strategic thinking and planning successfully promote continuing improvement. They expect high standards, and take constructive steps when weaker practice is identified. As yet, however, their actions have not eradicated some inconsistency in the degree of challenge presented to pupils, with some work being too easy.
- Leaders ensure that staff, who come from many different professions and backgrounds, are well trained and supported in their roles. They hold staff to account for their work through appropriate appraisal and line management.
- The curriculum is well planned. There is a carefully considered range of subjects and courses, with many being practical and vocational. All pupils take courses in English and mathematics. Together, pupils, parents and staff agree appropriate subject options that meet each pupil's needs and aspirations. Pupils find this very motivating.
- Staff arrange much valuable learning outside the classroom, including many stimulating visits out of school. Rightly, the school is looking to expand further the range of subjects which can lead to accredited qualifications.
- Leaders ensure that all pupils have good opportunities to develop spiritually, morally socially and culturally. Pupils are prepared effectively for life in modern Britain and to respect others from all backgrounds. There are good arrangements for them to learn key life skills, to avoid dangers and to stay safe.
- Provision for pupils with SEND is good. These pupils also make good progress.
- Leaders and staff ensure that there are positive working relationships with parents and families. Parents appreciate the ready availability of staff and the regular and detailed reports on each pupil's progress and well-being. They like the routine telephone contact from staff, saying, 'It's nice to get the good as well as the bad calls.'

Governance

- The trust board provides strong governance and oversight for the school. Board members each bring useful, complementary skills and experience. They hold leaders carefully to account in a supportive way. They understand and promote the work of the school, knowing how well it is doing and where it should improve. Trustees check that the school safeguards the pupils and meets the independent school standards. They ensure that the staffing structure is fit for purpose and efficient in delivering the school's aims.
- The chief executive of the trust, who is the executive headteacher, line-manages the principal with proper rigour and encouragement. This, too, ensures that senior leaders are properly accountable for their work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's policy is on its website and is readily available in school. It is thorough and up to date, conforms to relevant guidance and is clearly written and known well by staff.
- There is an effective and regular programme of staff training. Staff therefore have a clear understanding of their roles in child protection, safeguarding, restraint and preventing abuse. Members of staff record child protection incidents meticulously and this thoroughness helps to get resolutions to problems. Pupils feel very safe and well cared for.
- Both school sites are suitably secure. Checks on staff and other adults who may have contact with the pupils are carried out and recorded in a timely and efficient manner. Emergency drills and risk assessments are undertaken correctly, including for visits made off-site.
- The school checks carefully on pupils at the off-site provision. They are cared for well and achieve additional BTEC National Diploma qualifications.
- The school suitably protects pupils from risks associated with extremism and radicalisation. It also ensures that they are aware of the key risks they may face online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good. Lessons are well structured and purposeful. Teachers give clear explanations. Pupils respond well and feel they are given the time to think things through and practise skills. They are often keen to explain their learning proactively and ask questions to check that they understand what they are being taught. This is very helpful to their learning.
- Sometimes, pupils put up barriers or show their lack of confidence. For instance, they may be reluctant to carry out certain learning tasks or insist that they cannot do the set work. Staff are skilled at dealing with such situations by giving just the right encouragement or explanation with good humour.
- Staff assess pupils when they first join the school to inform their planning. This means that each pupil has a suitable individualised learning and support programme.

- Staff know pupils well and assess their work and learning accurately. This leads to lessons which are typically challenging and well matched to the pupils' needs. Staff give pupils precise verbal feedback which they use to make their work better.
- On occasion, teachers set work which is easy for some or all pupils. In these cases, pupils do not learn as quickly or in as much depth as they should. In a few cases, a lack of confidence with more demanding work means that pupils may delay taking – or be reluctant to aim for – qualifications that are within their capability.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- On admission, each pupil's personal and academic needs are very carefully identified by staff. This is done in conjunction with the referring school, other agencies, the pupil and the family, as appropriate. This means that staff know each pupil's needs closely. The strong pastoral systems, linked to good teaching, ensure that these needs are well met.
- Staff truly listen to the pupils. Adults are adept at helping pupils build up their self-confidence. As a result, pupils are often able to overcome learning and personal difficulties. This sometimes pleasantly surprises them. For instance, some older boys have unexpectedly rediscovered enjoyment and value in reading books.
- Pupils typically develop an increasingly positive view of themselves and their options, and thus set fitting aspirations for their futures. They highly appreciate the care, well-earned praise and helpful guidance they receive from staff.
- The school's provision for pupils who are or become especially vulnerable – or who need protection – is exemplary. Staff involve external agencies, including the police and social services, very well and quickly. Staff are not fazed by issues that arise, however serious, and helpfully demonstrate calmness to pupils. They help pupils and families find ways to work through problems.
- Pupils are offered appropriate advice about careers and future college placements, although many feel reluctant to leave BEP Academy.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is a safe, orderly and welcoming place for teenagers to reintegrate successfully into education. Pupils often contribute by being encouraging and good friends to each other.
- Pupils like the school very much, and understand the point of the demands staff make on them. They believe most strongly that adults are fair, trustworthy and 'on their side'. They see the reasons for the school's rules. They try to conform to these rules and, following the example of staff, are typically caring and supportive towards others.
- Pupils show pride in their work, usually present it neatly and work hard at their tasks.

- Pupils behave safely around the school sites, in their basically furnished common rooms and as they arrive and leave. They do not require excessive supervision. Lessons proceed smoothly and are very rarely disrupted. Bullying is virtually unheard of.
- There have been no exclusions of pupils.
- Pupils and parents are clear that, if any problems occur – such as rough or potentially dangerous behaviour or serious rudeness – staff are 'quickly on it' and resolve them.
- The attendance of pupils has improved since the school opened. Even so, too many pupils are persistently absent. Some are late for the start of the day and are then correctly marked absent. Staff follow up any absences carefully and know many of the causes, which are varied and complex.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils typically achieve well and make good progress. Each pupil is working towards achieving accredited qualifications, including GCSEs, BTECs and functional skills, often beyond their initial expectations.
- Pupils become increasingly confident and effective learners as they achieve success, sometimes in small but significant steps.
- Pupils benefit notably from useful work experience placements, which the trust expertly arranges. They learn how to conform to workplace requirements and act professionally. They are prepared well to move on to college and to enter the workplace.
- Many pupils bring with them strong basic skills in literacy and numeracy, learned principally in their primary schools. Staff enable them to apply these skills usefully in many ways – such as reading aloud – to give them confidence and self-reliance in their present learning.
- There are no significant differences in the learning and progress between different groups of pupils, including girls and boys, and for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils with SEND make good progress, in line with their peers.

School details

Unique reference number	145192
DfE registration number	311/6002
Inspection number	10054305

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	88
Chair	Steve Wilks
Executive Headteacher	Kelly Sims
Principal	Jo Green
Annual fees (day pupils)	Free to pupils
Telephone number	01708 436 440
Website	http://bepgroup.net/website/about-our-school/
Email address	info@bepgroup.net
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- BEP Academy offers full-time alternative provision for pupils who have not been successful or happy in mainstream schools. Many pupils have been excluded from mainstream schools or involved in illegal activity. BEP Academy is intended to help pupils 'turn their lives around' and achieve success.
- The school has two sites: one in the centre of Romford, in the London Borough of Havering, and the other in Basildon, Essex. About three fifths of pupils are at the Romford site.
- There are 88 pupils, in Years 9 to 11. There are slightly fewer girls than boys, and more pupils in Year 11 than in other year groups.

- Pupils are referred to the school throughout the year and from different age groups. There is no particular 'starting point'.
- About half of pupils are disadvantaged and entitled to pupil premium funding in their mainstream schools. A smaller number are assessed as having SEND, although a high proportion of these have education, health and care plans.
- BEP Academy was registered as an independent school in 2017. It is overseen as a charitable trust. This is its first full inspection. The trust operated similar provision for many years before registering the school. There is significant continuity of staffing, leadership and systems from the previous provision.
- The school uses one off-site alternative provider, at Circles Farm. This is registered as an alternative educational provider by Essex County Council.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector toured the two sites with senior leaders, checking the provision and premises. He observed learning in a range of subjects, held conversations with many pupils and looked at samples of their work, at both Romford and Basildon. He observed pupils' conduct at breaktimes and as pupils left at the end of the school day.
- He held discussions with pupils' parents and family members, senior leaders, the chair of trustees and members of staff.
- He reviewed documents, including school planning and evaluations, assessments of pupils, safeguarding documentation and records of premises maintenance, attendance, admissions and behaviour, as well as minutes and notes of meetings.
- He noted two responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, which included written responses. He met with staff based at both sites and considered the opinions of 15 staff members who completed the questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robin Hammerton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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