

# Perry Beeches the Academy

Beeches Road, Birmingham, West Midlands B42 2PY

## Inspection dates

21–22 September 2016

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- This is a school in serious decline. The Perry Beeches Academy Trust (PBAT) has not held school leaders to account or challenged areas of weakness. As a consequence, previously outstanding standards and provision have not been maintained. The capacity for securing improvements is inadequate.
- PBAT has not ensured that all leaders have the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to carry out their roles effectively. As a result, leadership in many areas is poor.
- The local governing body has been dysfunctional and is currently ineffective. Governors have not had sufficient training and do not have the expertise to carry out their role effectively.
- The school's website does not meet with the requirements of the funding agreement. Many of the school's policies are not informed by, or compliant with, current guidelines.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement because not all pupils have a secure understanding of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty. Some younger pupils are not fully aware of how extremist messages are communicated through social media.
- A recent Education Funding Agency investigation has shown that PBAT has not managed the school's finances well and there have been serious failings in this respect.
- The identification of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is haphazard and disorganised. However, despite this their outcomes are good overall.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils are polite, courteous and thoughtful. The large majority of pupils take their learning seriously and are keen to do well.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, do well in a range of subjects.
- Many pupils achieve well in subjects across the curriculum as a result of the effective teaching they receive.
- Pupils show respect for people with different faiths, cultures, beliefs and values.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school has serious weaknesses because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

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

- Rapidly improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by making sure that:
  - the school complies with all statutory requirements, the requirements of the funding agreement and the expectations in the Academies Financial Handbook
  - the school fully complies with the January 2015 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
  - leaders and members of the local governing body have the necessary knowledge and expertise to carry out their roles and responsibilities
  - PBAT and the local governing body hold school leaders to account and routinely and thoroughly monitor the impact of leaders' actions to improve the school
  - the arrangements for the performance management of staff rigorously hold them to account for the performance of pupils in all their classes and identify appropriate support and training to help them improve their performance
  - school leaders introduce, and teachers use, an approach to assessment that accelerates pupils' progress in key stage 3 and key stage 4 to the previous outstanding standards at the school
  - pupils' progress in subjects across the curriculum is not negatively affected by taking their examinations early.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
  - making sure that all pupils have a secure understanding of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty
  - making sure that all pupils in Years 7 and 8 understand the possible dangers posed by people communicating extreme and radical messages through social media
  - ensuring that pupils in Years 8 and 9 have effective and independent careers information, advice and guidance
  - reducing the number of repeat fixed-term exclusions for pupils who are disadvantaged and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Restore the outstanding quality of learning, teaching and assessment by:
  - ensuring that all teachers use accurate and relevant information and advice about pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to plan learning activities that help this group of pupils excel
  - making sure that, in key stage 3, pupils' reading skills and spelling accuracy are developed more consistently in subjects other than English.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium, Year 7 catch-up funding and special educational needs and/or disabilities funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Leaders, governors and staff have been distracted from the core purpose of educating young people. As a result, this school is in serious decline. Many leaders are new to their role and they have not had the time to demonstrate their capacity to bring about the necessary improvements.
- Governance arrangements are inadequate and those responsible have not challenged school leaders well enough since the last inspection. The Perry Beeches Academy Trust has not made sure that the school's funds, including the pupil premium, the Year 7 catch-up premium and special educational needs and/or disabilities funding, are used appropriately and cost-effectively.
- In the last year, a number of key staff left the school. As a consequence, standards have declined from outstanding to good. The capacity of leaders and members of the local governing body to reverse this decline and to bring about improvements is poor.
- PBAT and school leaders have not routinely checked the effectiveness of leadership and management or the work of staff. Trustees have not challenged leaders' assertions about the quality of education provision and too readily accepted what they were told. For example, the performance management of staff lacks rigour, and previous trustees have agreed to some staff pay increases without questioning the reasons for them.
- Self-evaluation is weak and leaders have an overly optimistic view of the school's performance. Leaders have been slow to identify and rectify areas of weakness and the decline in standards in the quality of education and pupils' behaviour, personal development and welfare and outcomes. For example, leaders were unaware of the gaps in school policies and they have been slow to consider and implement assessment procedures that reflect the changes in national assessment procedures at key stages 3 and 4.
- The leadership of special educational needs and/or disabilities is in need of urgent review. The school policy for special educational needs and/or disabilities is not fully informed by current statutory advice and guidance. The identification of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is confused and disorganised. Too often, pupils who do not have barriers to their learning are included in the school's register of special educational needs and subsequent analysis of progress. As a result, leaders have been unable to track the achievement of these pupils precisely. The systems in place to communicate information about pupils' needs are not used consistently and some staff are completely unaware of these procedures. The quality of training for staff has been variable. However, the generic skills and expertise of most teachers mean that most of the pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well.
- Subject and pastoral leaders are committed and enthusiastic but the effectiveness of their leadership is variable. Many of these leaders lack the necessary knowledge and expertise to check the impact of the work in the area for which they are responsible. For example, not all leaders understand how to use information about pupils' learning and progress well in order to identify strengths and areas of weakness and to

implement actions to improve pupils' outcomes. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' behaviour, while good, have declined since the previous inspection.

- Pupils study a broad range of subjects and have experiences that support the needs and aspirations of the large majority of pupils. For example, a large number of pupils told inspectors that they enjoy the variety of sporting activities on offer, including a ski trip. However, not all pupils have a clear understanding of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty. Some pupils in Years 7 and 8 are less clear about how individuals might use social media to promote radicalisation and extremism. In addition, pupils in Years 8 and 9 do not have sufficient careers information, advice and guidance.
- The leadership of teaching is a relative and isolated strength. Despite the recent turmoil and a decline from outstanding, the quality of teaching over time is good with some examples of inspirational and highly effective teaching. Leaders' monitoring of the quality of learning helps share effective practice across the school. Teachers with relative areas of weakness, for example in assessing pupils' work, receive successful support from colleagues. As a result of this effective teaching, the large majority of pupils do well, including the most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils. The leader of teaching, learning and assessment correctly identifies that the learning of a few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, while still good overall, needs to improve.
- Newly qualified teachers at the school told inspectors that the support, help and guidance they receive enable them to develop and improve their practice. As a result, it is recommended that the school can still appoint newly qualified teachers.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance is inadequate.
- As a direct result of weak governance, standards at the school have deteriorated. Staff who spoke with inspectors said that the uncertainty surrounding the school's future was very unsettling and had resulted in a large number of staff leaving. Staff also said that they had lost confidence in governors and leaders.
- Governors have not ensured that the school complies with all statutory requirements. For example, many of the school's policies do not comply with these requirements.
- The checks on the appropriate use and cost-effectiveness of the pupil premium, Year 7 catch-up premium and the special educational needs and/or disabilities funding are inadequate. PBAT keeps this funding centrally. As a result, it is difficult to measure the impact of the funding on pupils' outcomes at this school. PBAT's own evaluation of how these funds are spent is poor. Recently, new trustees have been appointed. They have correctly identified the school's weaknesses and begun to put in place appropriate actions to improve performance and tackle the deep-rooted weaknesses. However, it is too early to measure the impact of these actions.
- Many of the members of the local governing body are new to post. They do not have the collective knowledge or expertise to carry out their roles effectively. They have not had sufficient training or support to develop and improve their understanding and skills. The current trustees have identified these weaknesses and have suspended the scheme of delegation so that PBAT is wholly responsible for the school's performance.

- Historically, PBAT and the local governing body have not held leaders to account. Checks on the impact of leaders' work have not been effective. Governors have too readily accepted what leaders tell them. Teacher governors have been responsible for monitoring their own work. For example, the school's designated safeguarding lead was also the designated governor for safeguarding. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs and/or disabilities has not held the special educational needs coordinator to account. In addition, the governing body has not made sure that the necessary information about the school's arrangements for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was published on the school's website. This has recently been resolved but the information does not meet statutory requirements.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are committed to making sure that all pupils are safe. Staff at all levels complete regular relevant training. As a result, staff are vigilant, understand their safeguarding duties and are able to identify potentially vulnerable pupils quickly and put in place suitable procedures to support them. Members of the pastoral team check these actions to make sure that pupils receive appropriate support. Staff use the results of these analyses to develop and improve the school's policies and practice.
- Leaders make required checks on staff's suitability to work with children.
- The school site is secure and the buildings and facilities are well maintained and safe.
- The school has an effective screening software program on all computers used by the pupils. Computers are 'locked' if pupils attempt to access inappropriate material.
- Staff supervise pupils well at all times and pupils told inspectors that they feel safe while at the school. Risk assessments are complete for individual subjects, activities and trips.
- Pupils' understanding of potential risks and hazards is well developed. For example, pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe when using social media and the risks posed by people looking to 'groom' them. However, while pupils understand the broad risks of using the internet, a few pupils in Years 7 and 8 are not fully aware of the dangers posed by individuals who use social media to promote extremist views.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teaching over time is good, with some that is inspirational and highly effective. The vast majority of teachers have excellent subject knowledge and use this to plan engaging, interesting and stimulating lessons. As a result, most pupils, including pupils who are disadvantaged, do well in a range of subjects across the curriculum.
- The teaching of mathematics is strong. Teachers communicate their enthusiasm for the subject to pupils. Teachers provide a variety of challenging tasks that motivate pupils to explore and investigate the reasons for their answers. Pupils are able to apply their knowledge and understanding accurately and quickly as they have numerous opportunities to solve problems of increasing difficulty and to reason mathematically. The most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils do well as a result of the thought-provoking tasks that they are set and the effective feedback they receive from their teachers.

- Pupils' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills are well developed during key stage 3. As a result, the large majority of pupils do well in English by the end of key stage 4. However, the development of pupils' reading skills and spelling accuracy in subjects other than English is not consistent in key stage 3.
- The verbal and written feedback that teachers offer frequently helps pupils to improve their learning. Teachers effectively check pupils' understanding during lessons and quickly adapt or modify the learning activities if pupils encounter difficulties. As a result, pupils do well and make good progress over time. However, occasionally a few teachers do not pick up that low-attaining pupils or pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not understand the work and cannot complete the tasks.
- Teachers set regular homework that supports pupils' learning and progress in a wide range of subjects. The large majority of pupils who spoke with inspectors said that the homework they are given is relevant and helps them to improve their knowledge and understanding or to prepare for their next lesson.
- Teachers are not always able to plan effectively to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities excel. This is primarily due to the vague and inaccurate information they receive from the special educational needs coordinator about this group of pupils. The information does not identify the specific barriers to learning or the possible strategies teachers could employ to help further develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Despite this, teachers use their ongoing assessment of pupils' work to make sure that most of the pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make the progress expected of them over time.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The 'Perry Beeches family values' of 'respect; no excuses; no limits to success; excellence is a habit; dream, buy-in, choice and commitment' help to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A range of assemblies, visits and activities ensure this. For example, pupils demonstrate respect for, and acceptance and tolerance of, other people's faith, culture, beliefs and values. The vast majority of pupils are polite, thoughtful and considerate and know how to lead healthy lifestyles. However, not all pupils who spoke with inspectors could demonstrate a secure understanding of the British values of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty or of British institutions.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and secure while in the school. Pupils know who to go to if they have academic or social difficulties. They are confident that staff will successfully help them with any problems they encounter.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of how to stay safe in a range of situations, including while using social media. For example, pupils understand the dangers of the unsafe sharing of passwords or personal information. However, a few pupils in Years 7 and 8 do not have a fully developed understanding of the potential risks posed to them by individuals who might use social media to promote extremist views.

- Bullying is rare and pupils understand the range of forms that bullying can take, including prejudice-based bullying and cyber bullying. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that staff deal with any incidents of bullying quickly and effectively.
- Almost all of the pupils that left the school at the end of Year 11 in 2016 secured a place in further education or training and employment. However, the focus of independent careers information, advice and guidance is on pupils in Years 10 and 11. As a result, pupils in Years 8 and 9 do not have a coherent programme of visits, speakers and other advice to help them make informed choices about their future education, employment or training.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils move around the school calmly and quietly. The atmosphere in the school is orderly and pupils are punctual to lessons. Pupils' attendance is high and above national figures. Poor attendance does not disadvantage any groups of pupils. The levels of persistent absence are low. Pupils of all backgrounds and ages mix together during social times. The school site is free from litter and graffiti. The vast majority of pupils wear their uniform in line with school expectations.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. They take their learning seriously and the work in their books is neat, presented well, accurate and mostly completed. Most of the pupils accept and act upon the advice they get from their teachers and teaching assistants.
- School leaders have a zero tolerance of poor and unacceptable behaviour. Leaders use a range of sanctions for inappropriate behaviour, but the number of fixed-term exclusions is high. While the number of repeat offenders is decreasing, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils and/or pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receiving more than one fixed-term exclusion remains higher than that for other pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are broadly average. By the end of Year 11, pupils' progress in a range of subjects across the curriculum is strong. Preparation for pupils' next stage of their education, employment or training is secure.
- Pupils currently in the school are doing particularly well, particularly in mathematics, English, geography, computing, media, physical education and art. School leaders correctly identify that pupils' progress in design and technology (graphics, textiles and food technology), history, French and science, while good, is less strong than in other subjects.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged make strong progress in a range of subjects, which is in line with, and often better than, other pupils nationally. However, the spending of the pupil premium is not necessarily supporting this progress. Leaders have not properly evaluated the impact of the spending.
- The most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils do well in most subjects as a result of the focused, stimulating and challenging teaching they receive.

- Most of the pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do well as a result of the effective teaching and feedback they receive, particularly in English. However, during this inspection, inspectors found that, over time, a few pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not excel in some subjects, including mathematics, history, geography, French and design and technology. In addition, a few pupils with reading and spelling difficulties in key stage 3 do not get the help they need to help them improve.
- A small minority of pupils do not do as well as they could in English and mathematics at the end of Year 11 due to their first examination grade being lower than that expected.
- The school's assessment information for pupils in Years 7 and 8 is meaningless, as teachers have not entered progress information into the school's management information system accurately. As a result, leaders do not have a precise and true picture of how pupils in these year groups are doing. However, information from pupils' work seen during this inspection shows that, over time, pupils in these year groups are doing well in subjects across the curriculum.

## School details

Unique reference number	138141
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10020448

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	913
Appropriate authority	Perry Beeches Academy Trust
Chair of Perry Beeches Academy Trust	Pam Garrington
Acting headteacher	Ese Adeoye
Executive headteacher	Jackie Powell
Telephone number	0121 360 4242
Website	<a href="http://www.pb-theacademy.co.uk">www.pb-theacademy.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@pb-theacademy.co.uk">enquiries@pb-theacademy.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	5–6 March 2013

## Information about this school

- Perry Beeches the Academy is an average-sized secondary school.
- Perry Beeches became an academy in May 2012.
- There have been significant changes to the governing body and the leadership team since the last inspection.
- This academy is part of the Perry Beeches Academy Trust. In the last academic year, the trust removed all delegated responsibilities from the local governing body. The first meeting of the newly formed local governing body took place on the first day of this inspection. The chair of PBAT was appointed shortly before this inspection. The chair of the local governing body position was vacant at the time of this inspection.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium is above the national average.

- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. A proportion come from Caribbean and Indian backgrounds. Over 50% of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. However, the school's identification of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is unreliable.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A large number of staff left the school in 2016. The school recruited to the majority of these positions successfully. Most of the staff in the school are subject specialists.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of specified information about its arrangements for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities on its website.
- The school does not comply with the Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the governance scheme of delegation.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out as a No Formal Designation inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 as a result of concerns received by Ofsted in relation to the leadership and management of the school. This section 8 No Formal Designation inspection then converted on the first day to a full inspection under section 5 of the same Act.
- A Department for Education visit took place at the same time as this inspection.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in all year groups in subjects across the curriculum. Joint observations with members of the school's leadership team were undertaken. An evaluation of pupils' work over time was completed.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher, executive headteacher, other school leaders, staff and pupils. Further discussions were held with members of the Perry Beeches Academy Trust, including the chair of the trust and the local governing body.
- Inspectors listened to pupils, including the most able pupils, read.
- The 17 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) were considered.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school's safeguarding and child protection policy documents and the checks made on staff's suitability to work with children. The gathering of additional evidence from the school's information on pupils' current progress, behaviour, learning needs and attendance was undertaken. An examination of school improvement plans, the minutes of the meetings of governors and trustees and the school's records of the checks made on the quality of learning, teaching and assessment was also completed.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school site during breaktimes and lunchtimes and during the transition between lessons.

## Inspection team

Peter Humphries, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alun Williams	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mel Ford	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gwendoline Onyon	Ofsted Inspector

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