

Beal High School

Address: Woodford Bridge Road, Ilford, Essex, IG4 5LP

Unique reference number (URN): 140575

Inspection report: 14 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ●
Needs attention	●
Urgent improvement	

✓ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils achieve well across the breadth of subjects. By the end of Year 11, they achieve outcomes in public examinations that are well above national averages in many subjects. This strong picture is consistent over time. Pupils build secure and detailed knowledge across subjects, and especially in English, mathematics and science, where outcomes are particularly high. Reading improves because leaders check pupils' needs and, where necessary, put support in place quickly. This helps pupils access learning across the curriculum and achieve well. Pupils, regardless of their individual needs, gain the skills that they need to be successful.

Disadvantaged pupils achieve strongly. Their results are well above those of disadvantaged pupils nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points because staff understand their needs and help them take part fully in lessons. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps at the end of Year 11. Many continue into the school's own post-16 provision, where a wide range of pathways are available to them.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils attend school very regularly. Attendance over time is consistently above the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Persistent absence is very low. Leaders track attendance closely and act quickly when patterns change. Staff know pupils well and work with families to remove barriers, including, for example, providing support through the pastoral team and parent support advisers. This careful work helps pupils return to school quickly, when difficulties arise. Leaders also keep a close eye on pupils who attend alternative provision. They check attendance daily and visit regularly to make sure that pupils are safe and learning.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils are polite and respectful towards staff and each other. They understand the school's routines and follow them. Staff apply expectations consistently, including in the school's 'respite and reintegration' space, which helps pupils return to lessons successfully.

Pupils say that instances of bullying are rare, but staff deal with it quickly and fairly when it happens. Leaders respond well to concerns and check that issues do not continue. The school deals firmly with any discrimination, harassment or online abuse. Suspensions are rare and much lower than national figures, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

Expected standard

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that sets high expectations for all pupils. They review and refine it regularly so that it builds pupils' knowledge in a clear order. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and present new ideas clearly. This helps pupils to develop their understanding. Leaders have set out clear teaching principles for all staff to follow. Staff are also provided with evidence-based research and training to further improve and refine their practice.

Leaders provide effective support to help all pupils develop secure foundations in reading, mathematics and writing. For example, the school identifies pupils who are less confident readers and provides the timely and targeted support needed for these pupils to catch up quickly.

Teachers know which pupils need extra help. They have access to clear information about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Teaching generally uses this information well to adapt tasks so that all groups of pupils can access the curriculum successfully. Leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching. They know where practice is strongest and where it needs to improve. They are taking sensible steps to reduce any variation. For example, although pupils build knowledge securely and deeply, leaders are working on strengthening assessment approaches so that teaching consistently supports pupils to know how to improve their work and what they need to do next.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Pupils with a wide range of needs feel included in day-to-day school life. Staff identify pupils' needs early and use clear systems to share important information with each other, parents and carers and external specialists. For example, teachers have access to clear plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which set out helpful strategies for how to meet pupils' needs. Staff typically use these to plan lessons so that pupils can take part and make progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also receive well-targeted support.

The school's specially resourced provision, the Beacon Communication Department, meets the needs of pupils with autism and communication difficulties very well. For example, pupils receive personalised teaching in small groups, spending increasing time in mainstream lessons as they grow in confidence. They follow an adapted curriculum, where needed, and receive specialist support from well-trained staff. These pupils feel part of the wider school and achieve well from their starting points.

Disadvantaged pupils benefit from a long-term plan that focuses on academic support, wider opportunities and strong pastoral care. Leaders track the impact of this work closely. For example, staff from the parent support team work closely with families and leaders to review pupil progress and wellbeing. The school's approaches mean that disadvantaged pupils attend and achieve well. Looked-after pupils benefit from thorough plans of support, which

are also routinely reviewed to ensure pupils have what they need to succeed. The school uses alternative provision appropriately and only when it is in a pupil's best interests.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders understand the school's strengths and the areas that need further work. They have taken sensible and timely steps to improve the curriculum, strengthen teaching and raise expectations. This includes clearer assessment systems, more consistent approaches to classroom practice and sharper checks on the quality of education. Leaders use what they learn from these checks to support staff and to guide swift improvement. They are ambitious for all pupils, including those who face additional barriers to their learning. Safeguarding is a clear priority. Leaders respond quickly to concerns and work closely with external agencies. They also support families well, including, for instance, through the parent support and pastoral teams.

Staff benefit from effective professional learning that helps them to ensure that pupils succeed at school. Teachers at the start of their careers benefit from the guidance and training put in place for them by leaders. This helps them to further develop their expertise. The trust provides strategic oversight. Trustees and the local governing body are well informed, which enables them to hold leaders to account. They check that funding, including the pupil premium, is used appropriately.

Leaders are open about the challenges they face. They know that outcomes in the sixth form are not, at present, strong enough and have begun work to improve provision in this area. Leaders engage well with parents and carers and pupils. For example, they consult on key policies, listen to feedback and act on concerns. Leaders want the school to keep improving and have clear plans to do so.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils learn how to stay safe, healthy and be prepared for life beyond school. The personal development programme is planned across all year groups and covers important themes, such as online safety, mental health and equality. Pupils talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through assemblies, lessons and wider activities. They learn about different beliefs and viewpoints and discuss issues that matter to them. Many pupils enjoy the philosophy sessions in key stage 4, which help them to think about moral questions and current events. Pupils understand the importance of respect and fairness.

The school ensures that pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy and respectful relationships, including the importance of consent. While pupils recognise the importance of respecting the ways that people can be different and that these differences are protected by law, these aspects of the curriculum are less consistently developed. As a result, some pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be.

Pupils receive careers advice and guidance from Year 8 onwards, including, for example, through one-to-one meetings. They also learn about different pathways and take part in events with employers and training providers. This enables pupils to move on to suitable courses after Year 11. Pastoral support is highly effective. Pupils who face barriers receive a

range of extra support from the pastoral and safeguarding teams. Counselling and mental health services are also available, and pupils say these make a positive difference.

Pupils enjoy wider opportunities, such as clubs, leadership roles and visits, that enrich the curriculum. Older pupils take part in programmes, such as mentoring, volunteering and masterclasses. However, the wider offer is not as broad as it could be. The school does not track take up of activities as closely as it could to ensure that what is on offer can be refined and adapted to pupils' interests.

Needs attention

Post 16 provision

Needs attention 

Teaching in the sixth form is more variable than in the rest of the school. In some subjects, teaching explains ideas clearly and checks understanding well. In others, students do not receive the precise guidance that they need to help them improve their work. This inconsistency contributes to weaker outcomes in some A-level and applied subjects. Leaders know this and have begun work to strengthen teaching and assessment, but these changes are not fully embedded. Although students on the three-year pathway achieve well in GCSE English and mathematics re-sits, outcomes in A-level and applied general qualifications are below national averages. As a result, achievement in the post-16 provision is not as strong as in the rest of the school.

Students enjoy being part of the caring and inclusive environment of the sixth form. They feel safe and welcome. Students value the ethos and say staff support them well. Where strengths in teaching are more established, teachers use strong subject knowledge and clear routines that help students learn effectively. Students take part in a well-planned personal development programme. They learn about healthy relationships, online safety, financial literacy and preparing for adulthood. Students receive high- quality careers guidance. For example, they receive personalised advice and take part in work experience, employer events and support for university and apprenticeship applications. Students also benefit from other enrichment opportunities, such as masterclasses, leadership roles, volunteering and the 'giveback' programme. They talk confidently about their aspirations and next steps and feel supported to plan for their future.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils feel safe and well cared for in this very large and diverse school. They move around the site calmly and sensibly, helped by clear routines and staff who know them well. Pupils say that they trust adults to help them if they have a worry. They know who to speak to and feel confident that staff will act quickly. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils listen, take part and want to do well. When rare incidences of bullying or unkindness happen, pupils say that staff deal with it quickly and fairly. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together and show respect for each other.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They talk positively about their teachers and the support that they receive. Pupils work hard and achieve well, including in national examinations. Pupils with additional needs, including those in the specially resourced provision, feel included and supported. They take part in lessons with their peers and make strong progress from their starting points. Pupils attend regularly. They understand the importance of being in school and respond well to the support they receive if their attendance slips. Persistent absence is rare.

Pupils feel that they belong here. They value the wide outdoor spaces and the calm atmosphere at social times. Many pupils value the clubs and wider opportunities available, including sport, music and pupil-led activities. However, some pupils and parents would welcome a wider range of trips and extra-curricular opportunities. Leaders are not yet evaluating participation and impact systematically enough to ensure the offer meets the interests and aspirations of all pupils.

Pupils in Years 7 to 11 achieve well, behave well and feel safe. They are proud of their school and benefit from positive relationships with staff and a calm, orderly environment. Students in the sixth form value the study spaces and guidance they receive about their next steps. However, their achievement and experience of teaching and assessment are more variable than in the rest of the school.

Pupils learn how to stay safe, including online. For example, they understand risks linked to social media and know how to protect themselves. They also learn about healthy relationships, equality and staying physically and mentally healthy.

Next steps

- Leaders should fully implement their strategies to improve the quality of teaching and achievement in the post-16 provision. Leaders at all levels must maintain their robust oversight of this work to ensure that planned improvements are enacted swiftly.
 - Leaders should ensure all aspects of the planned personal development curriculum are implemented consistently so that pupils develop a greater understanding of the world around them. Leaders should also review the wider enrichment offer so that pupils benefit from a broader range of opportunities and experiences.
 - The school should ensure that assessment is used consistently so that pupils are fully supported to understand how to make progress in different subjects.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Beacon Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Kathryn Burns, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Leach. Some Beal High School sixth-form students are taught at The Forest Academy site, which is also part of Beacon Multi-Academy Trust

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, staff and pupils during the inspection. They also held discussions with representatives from the local governing body and board of trustees.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of 2 registered alternative provisions.

Executive Principal: Kathryn Burns

Lead inspector:

Robert Grice, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Paul Metcalf, Ofsted Inspector

Stephen Adcock, Ofsted Inspector

Joseph Sparks, Ofsted Inspector

Gareth Cross, Ofsted Inspector

Paula Ledger, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 14 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

2,610

Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

2,840

Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

19.98%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.07%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

6.48%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	58.7%	45.4%	Above
2023/24 (final)	68.0%	45.9%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	65.4%	45.3%	Above

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	52.0	46.0	Above
2023/24 (final)	55.4	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	53.9	46.3	Above

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.62	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.48	-0.03	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	41.4%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	50.8%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	41.7%	25.2%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	45.7	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	47.2	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	43.8	35.0	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.38	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.03	-0.57	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	41.4%	53.1%	-11.7 pp
2023/24 (final)	50.8%	53.1%	-2.3 pp
2022/23 (final)	41.7%	52.4%	-10.8 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	45.7	50.4	-4.7
2023/24 (final)	47.2	50.0	-2.8
2022/23 (final)	43.8	50.3	-6.5

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	0.38	0.16	0.22
2022/23 (final)	0.03	0.17	-0.14

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	96%	91%	Above
2022 leavers (revised)	98%	93%	Above
2021 leavers (revised)	97%	94%	Above

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	29.39	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	32.39	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	29.63	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	-0.1	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	0.0	0.0	Close to average

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	5.0%	8.1%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.8%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.0%	9.0%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	10.5%	21.9%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	12.5%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	10.5%	26.5%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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