Inspection of The Belvedere Academy

17 Belvidere Road, Princes Park, Liverpool, Merseyside L8 3TF

Inspection dates:	4 and 5 March 2025
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Outstanding**
Personal development	**Outstanding**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Sixth-form provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The principal of this school is Julie Taylor. The school is part of the Girls' Day School Academy Trust (GDST), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Cheryl Giovannoni, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ann Ewing.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since January 2015. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, at this school promote and uphold their school values. They proudly aspire to 'Be brave. Be bold. Be Belvedere.' They are happy and confident that their school is a place where they are safe and can be themselves.

Pupils experience an ambitious curriculum that meets their needs and interests. They rise to meet the high academic expectations that teachers set for them. They achieve well.

Pupils, and their families, appreciate the exceptional support that the school provides to reduce any barriers to their learning. Pupils benefit from the positive relationships that they share with the adults who work with them. They behave with kindness and respect. They actively contribute to a lively and purposeful atmosphere in lessons and around the school site. For example, older students mentor and support their younger peers.

Pupils thrive personally and socially because they benefit from a wide range of opportunities and experiences that extend beyond the school curriculum. For example, they visit international countries, take part in music and drama performances and join national leadership programmes. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their celebration of the diverse range of cultures in their school. As a result, pupils are curious, confident and highly aspirational for their own future when they leave school.

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

The school, supported by the trust, has a clear and ambitious vision for the quality of education that pupils receive. The size of the school has grown over time and the needs of pupils have changed. The school has successfully reviewed and improved its overarching curriculum provision so that it better meets pupils' needs and interests.

In most subjects, the school has ensured that teachers are clear about the important information that pupils should learn. This is ordered and taught effectively by teachers with strong subject expertise. At key stage 3, newly introduced systems of assessment ensure that teachers more effectively identify and address misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge than they did in the past. This helps pupils to retain important knowledge and build more securely on their prior learning. However, in a small number of subjects, the school is still refining the exact knowledge that pupils should know and the order in which they should learn it. In the recent past, teaching has been less effective for some pupils in these subjects than it is currently. This has hampered the learning of some pupils over time.

The school has appropriate systems in place to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff have detailed and helpful information about the needs of pupils. The school provides ongoing training to ensure that staff use this information to make appropriate adaptations to their teaching. As a result, pupils with SEND are able to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers and achieve well.

The school prioritises and promotes reading. For example, pupils have dedicated reading lessons, and all staff are trained to use effective strategies to support pupils' vocabulary development and understanding in lessons. Furthermore, the school identifies and supports those pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge. However, for a small number of pupils, this support is not as effective as it could be. This hinders how swiftly these pupils develop fluency in their reading.

Staff and pupils share a strong understanding of the values that underpin the school's behaviour policy and practices. Common and consistent approaches are used intelligently to provide additional behaviour support for the pupils who need this. This has created an inclusive culture where teachers can deliver lessons without disruption and pupils engage with their learning positively.

All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, access an extensive range of experiences that the school has designed to enrich their wider development. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, for example, they learn about online safety and receive age-appropriate sex and relationships advice in all key stages. Pupils also take part in projects with external agencies to raise their awareness of specific risks in the local community. They value the opportunities that they have to discuss and debate complex issues. This helps pupils to develop their character and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

Pupils are ambitious for their futures. A tailored programme of careers information, education, advice and guidance is highly bespoke to pupils' needs. All pupils complete work experience in key stage 4 and key stage 5. They are fully prepared for their next steps in work, education or training when they leave school.

Local governors and trustees provide effective support and challenge that help the school to continually review and improve the quality of education that pupils receive. Staff feel well supported with appropriate training and policies that promote a healthy work-life balance. This allows staff to focus on their specific roles and ensures that teachers develop themselves professionally and deliver the curriculum well to benefit pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the school is still in the process of refining the curriculum. It has not ensured that teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn and in what order. Over time, this hinders some pupils from building their knowledge as securely as they should. The school should complete its curriculum

thinking so that teaching in these subjects enables pupils to build their subject-specific knowledge securely and achieve as highly as they can.

- Some pupils have gaps in their reading knowledge. This hampers the way in which these pupils access the wider curriculum. The school should ensure that it further strengthens the support that it provides to improve pupils' reading knowledge. This is so that help is more accurately targeted to pupils' specific gaps and they develop fluency in their reading as swiftly as possible.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the definition of children in need of help and protection; pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's pupil premium funding (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	135174
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10348251
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,124
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	266
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ann Ewing
CEO of the trust	Cheryl Giovannoni
Principal	Julie Taylor
Website	www.belvedereacademy.net
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 January 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST).
- The school uses six registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- 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.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements

(quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, science, history, health and social care and drama. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with the principal, other leaders and staff.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of the trust, including the chair of trustees and the CEO.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- An inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school life. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and for pupils.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation documents and records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

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