

Bewdley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135076
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	381799
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2012
Lead inspector	Peter Kerr

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	343
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Simon Rumley
Headteacher	Paul Roper
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Peter Kerr

Additional Inspector

Clare Saunders

Additional inspector

Brenda Jones

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors spent 11 hours in lessons and observed all 12 of the school's teachers teaching. They listened to pupils reading, looked at their writing and mathematics work across the curriculum and talked to them about their experiences. Meetings were held with teachers about their leadership responsibilities and with members of the governing body about their roles. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at teachers' planning, the tracking of pupils' progress and video and photographic evidence of pupils' practical work. They took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, and analysed the views of parents and carers expressed in 182 parental questionnaires.

Information about the school

Bewdley is larger than the average-sized primary school. A very large majority of the pupils are of White British heritage and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The school identifies a much lower than average proportion of pupils as having special educational needs, but the proportion receiving support from outside the school is broadly average. The great majority of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication needs or behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. The school meets the current floor standard set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. Since its last inspection the school has moved onto a new site. Its Activemark has been renewed and it was awarded the MCC Spirit of Cricket award in 2011.

The Rascals before- and after-school club, managed by the governing body, caters for children from Reception to Year 6, with a limit of sixteen pupils per day.

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Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school that has improved significantly since its last inspection.
- All pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Progress is consistent between classes but sometimes better for the older groups in each mixed-age class.
- Attainment is currently above average at the end of Year 6 and is rising quickly throughout the school.
- Teaching is good. Teachers pool their expertise effectively to plan lessons and use a wide range of methods to motivate and engage pupils. Astute questioning is used to assess pupils' understanding in the best lessons and constant adjustments made to ensure continuous challenge. Teachers use marking well to improve pupils' work. On occasions, activities do not fully extend more-able pupils.
- Behaviour is good and attendance is above average. Pupils relate very positively to each other and to staff and show pride in their work. A feature of lessons is pupils' ability to work independently without supervision. They know that the school will keep them safe and that any incidents of bullying will be dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils appreciate the importance of community within the school and locality but have a limited understanding of the cultural diversity they will find in the wider society.
- Leadership and management are good. Sustained improvements in progress and teaching have been achieved through good team-work and purposeful leadership from the headteacher. A challenging curriculum engages pupils of all ages and interests and is enriched by good quality experiences, including adventurous residential visits. The governing body is effective in fulfilling its role as a critical friend, holding the school to account for what it achieves.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress further by:
 - ensuring that the most-able pupils are challenged sufficiently throughout lessons
 - eliminating any residual differences in progress between the lower and upper age-groups in each class
 - extending opportunities for pupils to hone and improve their skills through

extended independent projects.

- Improve the pupils' appreciation of cultural diversity by embedding aspects of ethnic and cultural diversity in topics throughout the curriculum and in displays around the school.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is below age related expectations. The children settle quickly and develop good social and communication skills, often collaborating in their play. Children learn well in adult-led groups and through purposeful play, with appropriate emphasis on the development of early reading and writing skills, where progress is most marked. By the end of reception, a large majority of children have attained most of the early learning goals.

Attainment in mathematics and English are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Attainment in reading is also above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have a good understanding of the connections between letter patterns and the sounds they represent and a love of reading. They make rapid progress in language, communication and mathematics skills throughout the school. They read widely, talk about their ideas, and use their skills to good effect in group projects across the curriculum. For example, they have produced animated films of how to solve mathematical problems and a publicity video for a play. When working independently, whether alone or in groups, they sustain concentration and effort very well, support each other and ask for help confidently when needed. They produce high quality work when given the responsibility to undertake extended projects, and say they would enjoy more opportunities to do this.

Pupils with moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication needs meet the demanding targets set for them, making at least as least the same progress as their peers and more rapid progress than similar pupils nationally. Pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties make good progress. They receive sensitive support that enables them to integrate successfully with other pupils and participate fully in lessons. Some parents and carers commented that their children made slower progress in the first year in each class. The school's data confirms that this is sometimes the case, but that progress accelerates steadily, and is good over each two year band.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers are justifiably confident that teaching is good in the school, with almost all respondents to the questionnaire agreeing that their children are taught well. Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Key skills such as reading in a systematic way., handwriting and counting are taught well, giving a firm foundation for learning in Key Stages 1 and 2. Staff interact purposefully with

children as they play. They support and assess their learning effectively, and keep thorough records of progress, which inform planning for the next steps in learning.

The teaching seen in Years 1 to 6 was good and occasionally outstanding. English and mathematics are taught equally well and teachers' enthusiasm is a key factor in maintaining interest and effort from the pupils. Outstanding features of the best lessons are lively presentations, varied activities and frequent probing questions to sustain challenge. Teachers use imaginative methods and resources, including computer technology, to spark pupils' imagination. Talk partners and individual whiteboards are used consistently well to help pupils clarify and communicate their thinking and to enable teachers to assess individual pupils' progress. Teachers use marking consistently well to give pupils pointers for improvement. Pupils are expected to respond, which they do as a matter of course. This results in good progress in the development of key writing and communication skills.

Lessons often link subjects together, so that pupils learn to apply skills in real contexts. For example, lessons in mathematics focused on the interpretation temperature data for mountain areas. This activity was closely related to a geography topic, in which pupils also used literacy skills to compose statements that would entice tourists to the region. In this way, pupils in most classes spend a good proportion of time fully engaged at their own level, developing their skills and deepening their understanding, making them well prepared for learning in the secondary stage of their education. Teachers use regular guided reading throughout the school to support pupils' progress in reading and to foster their love of books. For most of the time, teachers match activities to the full range of pupils' learning needs. This improved consistency is why standards are rising throughout the school. Very occasionally, however, the pace of learning slows when whole class teaching goes on a little too long with subject matter that is too easy for some and too hard for others. Less time is then available for adults to assess and support pupils on a more individual basis as they work independently.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is good and pupils are enthusiastic about school. A notable feature of the pupils' behaviour is their helpful disposition and willingness to settle disputes amicably. This was evident in Reception, when a group of boys talked about what they should do when one of them refused to share the toy dinosaurs, rather than falling out about it. Some respondents to the pupil and parent questionnaires expressed dissatisfaction with the way the school responded to bullying. However, in discussion, parents, carers and pupils cited no examples of persistent bullying, and said that the school dealt quickly and effectively with any bullying incidents that were reported.

Pupils are well of the risks posed to their safety, for example, by the misuse of alcohol or tobacco and have positive attitudes to their personal health and safety. All feel confident that they can go to a known adult for help if they feel unsafe in school. Pupils with behaviour, emotional and social needs behave as well as other pupils for the vast majority of their time in lessons and around the school because they receive good support from the school to manage their difficulties. The engaging curriculum and increasingly challenging and enjoyable, lessons have contributed to pupils'

attendance improving to an above average level.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides purposeful leadership and the whole staff share a strong sense of common purpose. All staff with leadership roles have improved their contribution through good quality professional development. Good subject leadership has been a significant factor in improving pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills and in embedding the effective application of relevant skills across the curriculum. Improved monitoring and evaluation have led to more consistent teaching and rising outcomes since the last inspection. Senior staff set high expectations and hold teachers to account for consistency in their pupils' progress. The significant gains in provision and outcomes already secured and a strong upward trend in attainment indicate that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

Leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Increasingly effective use of data establishes a picture of progress for whole cohorts, which complements the thorough tracking of individual children's achievements and forms a secure basis for planned improvements in provision. Good leadership of provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that pupils in these groups progress at a similar rate to all other pupils.

The governing body has strengthened the role it plays in school improvement by independently monitoring the work of the school and identifying areas where it can contribute. For example, in-school provision for pupils without Internet access at home was made to plug gaps the governing body had identified in the use of the Internet to support homework. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are fully met. The Rascals before- and after-school club provides well for pupils' welfare and progress and enhances their enjoyment of school.

Innovations to the curriculum, led by the headteacher, have enhanced the pupils' academic progress and personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, and social development. A rich and varied programme of activities within and beyond the timetable, including residential visits in challenging locations, provides opportunities for pupils with a wide range of needs and interests to flourish. These visits enhance the pupils' self-confidence, social skills and sense of community, as well as increasing their awareness of the world beyond their immediate locality. School assemblies foster a strong sense of community and of the value of each individual and are greatly enhanced by music and singing. The promotion of pupils' cultural development is somewhat less effective. Ethnic and cultural diversity is not adequately represented in displays or in the pupils' work and the curriculum as a whole does not do enough to develop the pupils' knowledge and appreciation of cultural diversity throughout the United Kingdom.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bewdley Primary School, Bewdley, DY12 1BL

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us to your school and for all your help during the inspection. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and your views on the school. Yours is a good school. Your lessons are interesting and your teachers make sure that you all do well. You have good reading and writing skills and you are confident at expressing your views. You have improved your reading, writing and mathematics recently and now reach above average attainment in all these subjects. Occasionally not all of you make equally good progress. Some of you could sometimes do harder work, while others need more help to do what is set. We have asked your teachers to make sure you all have work that is just at the right level for you as often as possible. You can help by always trying your hardest and saying when you find work too difficult or too easy. You say you really enjoy practising and reinforcing skills through the independent projects you do, so we have asked your teachers to let you do more of these.

You behave well in lessons and around the school and you are kind and helpful to each other and to adults. Well done. We liked hearing you sing and play musical instruments and were impressed with your film-making projects. You learn a lot about the world through your lessons in history and geography and through your residential trips. You know about different religions, but you do not know very much about people from different cultural backgrounds that have settled in your country. We have asked your teachers to help you learn more about that.

Your headteacher is a good leader for the school and all your teachers and staff work very well together as a team – as you do. This makes your school a lovely place to visit.

Yours sincerely

Peter Kerr
Lead inspector

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