

# Beck Row Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124541
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	359695
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Terry Elston

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anna Batey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angela Hamilton (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	The Street Bury St Edmunds IP28 8AE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01638 713001
<b>Fax number</b>	01638 717681
<b>Email address</b>	ad.beckrow.p@talk21.com

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed all nine teachers and visited 15 lessons. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress, curricular planning documents, examples of the ways the school promotes community cohesion, evidence of lesson observations and information from questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and 47 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- To what extent teaching is consistently good enough to ensure that pupils of all ages make good progress.
- How effectively middle managers contribute to raising standards.
- How well the school uses assessment to track pupils' progress and identify those who are falling behind.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school where the majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Nearly 40% of the pupils are from American families stationed on the nearby military base. Around five per cent come from Gypsy/Roma backgrounds. The proportion of the pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of their special educational needs, is broadly average. The school has recently gained Healthy Schools status. A private organisation runs pre-school care on the school site. This will be inspected separately. The acting headteacher has been in post since April 2010 following unsuccessful attempts to appoint a permanent headteacher. The school is expecting to extend its age range to include pupils up to age 11 following local authority reorganisation.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?****3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

## Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education. Pupils make satisfactory progress so that attainment is broadly average by Year 2 and Year 4. There are no major differences in the achievements of pupils by gender, ethnic or social backgrounds. Pupils develop their personal skills well. They enjoy school, attend regularly and have a good awareness of how to live healthy lives, as has been recognised by the award of Healthy Schools status. They show a good understanding of the need for internet safety and the pupils' road safety team do much to teach others about the need to take care on the roads.

The school is successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They reflect deeply on issues such as poverty in developing countries, and learn much about people in the world who are less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for global and local charities. They take responsibility well for their school and community. Older pupils act maturely as 'buddies' for younger ones and school councillors have helped make some good improvements to the provision for play equipment in the playground.

While the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, there is not enough good teaching to achieve the school's objective of ensuring good progress in all classes. Teachers explain new concepts well and ask probing questions to make pupils think carefully. In a minority of lessons, however, learning is slower because the pace is not fast enough; pupils are unclear about the learning expected of them, or the more-able pupils lack the challenge necessary to make the best possible progress. Similarly, teachers do not always show pupils clearly and precisely how to improve their work.

A wide variety of popular clubs at lunchtime and after school enrich the curriculum and support the work done in sport and creative subjects. Music is a particular strength and pupils relish preparing songs for a concert or practising the clarinet. However, pupils are not given enough planned opportunities to consolidate their key literacy and numeracy skills in lessons or hone them across different subject areas.

Parents and carers are right to feel that adults care for their children well. One parent, typical of many, commented, 'It is a happy school where our children feel highly valued.' Pupils feel safe, know who to turn to if they have concerns, and feel that the rules to encourage good behaviour are applied fairly.

The acting headteacher has done well in a short time and has helped create a good team spirit. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and the challenging targets set by the leaders show that it is set to sustain this improvement. Its self-evaluation systems are mostly accurate and based clearly on pupils' performance compared with local and national figures. Senior leaders monitor and evaluate the quality

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of teaching and the learning of different groups of pupils, but middle managers are not yet sufficiently involved in this process to take a full part in school improvement.

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

- By July 2011, raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
  - ensuring that pupils get down to writing faster in lessons
  - having a stronger focus on developing their mental mathematical skills
  - providing more opportunities for them to write and use their number skills in all subjects.
- By July 2011, raise the quality of teaching and learning so that the large majority is good or better, by:
  - increasing the pace of lessons so that pupils move swiftly from one task to the next
  - ensuring that more-able pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills to the full
  - making the learning expected in lessons clear at the start
  - giving pupils clear guidance when marking their work on how it could be improved.
- Develop the role of middle managers by:
  - ensuring that they provide teachers with detailed analyses of the progress of all groups of pupils in their subject
  - giving them more opportunities to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning first hand.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

The progress in lessons was satisfactory in half of the lessons observed during the inspection and good in the other half. In Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy reading and most use their word-building skills effectively to work out unfamiliar words. Their writing is mostly presented well and they take care with spelling and punctuation. The majority of pupils by Year 2 count accurately, but few have a good enough knowledge of multiplication tables to solve problems quickly. At Key Stage 2, most pupils read fluently and use the internet competently to research topics such as earthquakes and volcanoes. They use interesting words in their stories and one class did particularly well when writing about the characters in the poem *The Highwayman*, using exciting language to describe how they must have felt. However, they write too little because while they are very good at talking about their writing, they are often slow to put pencil to paper.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress and many do well in their reading. They are supported well in class and have some good

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opportunities to work on their own and develop their independent learning skills. Pupils of Gypsy/Roma heritage make satisfactory progress. They enjoy school and work hard to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

Pupils behave well, although a small minority find it difficult to remember the rules and there were four temporary exclusions last year. They act responsibly and take good care of one another. They have a good awareness of different faiths and cultures and enjoy learning about the festivals celebrated by those from all backgrounds in school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

In most lessons, teachers make learning fun by using technology such as the interactive whiteboards to illustrate their lessons. They use questions well to encourage pupils to think deeply about topics and give them confidence by valuing all contributions. The pace of lessons and expectations of pupils vary from class to class. Where progress is rapid, the teachers move pupils quickly from one task to the next, provide work that is challenging yet achievable and ensure that pupils in all ability groups make good progress. At times, however, they sit the whole class on the carpet for too long and set tasks that demand too little of pupils and, as a result, the more-able pupils in particular are held back. In some cases the learning aims are not made clear and this makes it hard for both teachers and pupils to assess how well they have done by the end of the lesson.

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The teachers make satisfactory assessments of pupils' progress and most use this information well to plan future lessons. They mark pupils' books diligently, but not all provide sufficient guidance on the next steps in their learning.

The curriculum provides some interesting challenges and the planning around the recent theme of Queen Victoria gave pupils a real insight into some of the hardships faced by people at that time. The school has done much recently to include opportunities for pupils to enhance their literacy and numeracy skills in their topics, but expectations of this work are still not high enough to build on the skills developed in English and mathematics lessons. The well-planned personal, social and health education provision gives pupils a good awareness of health and safety issues and develops their awareness of what it takes to be a good citizen.

Parents and carers appreciate the way all adults know their children so well and are always there if any individual needs help. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit from sensitive care, both from the school and from outside professionals, and they do well. The school provides good support for the many pupils who are admitted partway through the school year, often from air force bases or Gypsy/Roma communities, and they settle quickly into school life.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Despite the lack of a substantive headteacher for much of this year, the leaders have maintained a clear focus on raising attainment, driving school improvement and providing equal opportunities for all pupils in school. Priorities for improvement are clear and centred around ambitious targets. Subject leaders are beginning to take responsibility for the levels of attainment in their areas of responsibility and have benefited from useful training in their role. However, not all monitor the performance of pupils or teachers well enough to lift progress from satisfactory to good.

The school has good partnerships with others in the area that help provide cost-effective opportunities for training and the sharing of expertise. Strong links with parents and carers ensure that they feel well informed about the school's work and their children's progress.

The governing body provides good support and challenge to the school. Its members have a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are not afraid to hold the leaders to account. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met well. Systems are robust and reviewed regularly, including relevant staff training.

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The school promotes community cohesion well. The leaders make effective use of the diversity of faiths and cultures in school, including those represented by American and Gypsy/Roma families, to teach pupils much about the lives of others in the world. Links with schools in India and North America enhance this awareness and give pupils a real understanding of different lifestyles.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision is satisfactory. The attainment of children on entry to the school is generally below the levels expected nationally and particularly so in areas of language and number. They make satisfactory progress towards all of the early learning goals expected for their ages. The teaching and learning are satisfactory. Adults work well as a team and provide work that children find interesting. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good, but occasionally children are taught as a whole group for too long and this holds back the more-able ones. The outdoor area is stimulating, but there is no easy access for the children and this restricts the staff's ability to provide a free flow of activities in order to fully develop their independent skills. The 'learning journeys' provide a satisfactory record of children's progress, but lack consistency between classes and this affects their usefulness in evaluating the effectiveness of the provision.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is good because adults give them responsibility for taking care of themselves and ensure they know how to stay safe and live healthily. Children work in a secure environment and are supported well by adults who know their individual needs well. Children learn the rules quickly and behave well. The provision is led and managed adequately with a clear focus on how to make improvements in, for example, the consistency of the use of assessment in the different classes.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The views of parents and carers are mostly positive. They appreciate the 'family atmosphere' in a small school where their children are looked after well. Most feel that the teaching is good and their children do well at school. A minority, however, rightly say that the teaching, learning and behaviour are better in some classes than others. A few parents and carers are concerned about the lack of a substantive headteacher, but inspectors found that the school is managing the situation well.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beck Row Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 158 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	47	22	47	2	4	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	18	38	18	38	6	13	3	6
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	38	16	34	7	15	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	43	19	40	6	13	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	21	45	19	40	5	11	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	38	22	47	6	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	40	22	47	3	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	32	17	36	4	9	3	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	34	25	53	4	9	2	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	19	26	55	7	15	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	30	21	45	7	15	3	6
The school is led and managed effectively	17	36	18	38	8	17	4	9
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	49	19	40	3	6	2	4

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



22 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Beck Row Primary School, Bury St Edmunds, IP28 8AE**

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work hard in lessons and hearing you sing and play musical instruments so beautifully. The many of you who were kind enough to speak to us showed how much you like school. Your school is satisfactory, which means that some things are good and some could be better.

You behave well, listen carefully to your teachers and make satisfactory progress. You have a good knowledge of how to keep safe and live healthy lives. You think a lot about people in different countries who are poor and you try to help them. You take responsibility well and are good at looking after the younger children. You have an interesting range of activities provided for you, and you enjoy the many clubs at lunchtime and after school. Your teachers make learning fun and are good at helping you when you find things difficult. All staff at the school take good care of you and keep you safe.

Your leaders are always looking for ways to improve your school. These are the improvements we want your school to make.

Help you to make faster progress in literacy and numeracy. You can do your part by getting down to writing more quickly and practising your number skills at home.

Make sure all your lessons are as good as the best ones, where you learn quickly and know exactly what to do next to improve your work.

Ask the teachers in charge of subjects to check more carefully on how well you are learning, and help you make even faster progress.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston

Lead inspector

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