

Beaudesert Lower School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109466
Local Authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	356552
Inspection dates	24–25 January 2011
Reporting inspector	David Shepherd

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	5–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Verrier
Headteacher	Elaine Cox
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2007
School address	Appenine Way Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 3DX
Telephone number	01525 373019
Fax number	0871 2230233
Email address	beaudesert@deal.bedfordshire.gov.uk

Age group	5–9
Inspection dates	24–25 January 2011
Inspection number	356552

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 11 lessons led by 10 different teachers. Meetings were held with senior staff, all staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage, a group of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding documentation and the school's analysis of its data. Questionnaires from 83 parents and carers and 24 staff were received and analysed.

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

- To what degree is the teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 sufficiently challenging to enable all pupils to make good progress?
- Why do the more-able pupils reach lower standards in writing at Key Stage 1 than their peers in other schools?
- How effectively does the teaching focus upon the outcomes for pupils rather than just the content of lessons?
- What is the impact on progress and attainment of the monitoring carried out by senior and middle managers?

Information about the school

The school is average in size compared to primary schools nationally. Nearly all pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils joining the school during the year is below average, as is the proportion who come from minority ethnic groups and/or speak English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their main needs are speech, language and communication difficulties and moderate learning difficulties. An average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of two Reception classes. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award. The governing body runs a daily breakfast club.

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

Beaudesert Lower School provides a satisfactory education. Satisfactory teaching leads to satisfactory achievement. There are some good features of the school's work. In particular, good care, guidance and support means that pupils enjoy school, feel safe, behave well, get on well together, lead healthy lifestyles and play a significant part in enabling the school to run smoothly. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of a wide variety of cultures are good.

Children start in the Reception classes with skills and abilities in writing and calculation that are broadly at the level typical for their age. In 2010 pupils in Year 2 made satisfactory progress and reached higher levels of attainment in all subjects than in the previous year. However, although the girls make similar progress to boys overall by the end of Year 2, they are performing less well than their peers in other schools, especially in reading and mathematics. The school has focused successfully on improving the performance of boys during the past year by making lessons more boy-friendly, but has not yet done enough to engage and inspire the girls. The pace of learning in Year 2 is not fast enough. Girls catch up in Years 3 and 4 and outperform boys in reading and writing. They achieve similar levels to boys in mathematics. At the end of Year 4, attainment is above expected levels in reading and at expected levels in writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall.

A notable feature of lessons is the consistently good relationship between pupils and adults. As a result pupils try hard to please the staff. Teachers and teaching assistants check the work of pupils in their groups effectively, but do not consistently correct the misunderstandings of other pupils in their classes. Lessons generally meets pupils' needs but on occasion, activities are not matched appropriately to different levels of ability. Marking is satisfactory but does not always provide enough guidance for pupils, and where next steps are indicated, pupils are not always given enough time to respond to the suggestions made. Teaching is not always focused enough on improving pupils' learning, and so it is sometimes not challenging enough for some pupils and so they do not make the progress of which they are capable. The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of visitors to the school and visits to places of interest.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which is shared by the deputy headteacher and senior staff. The subject coordinators are making an increasing contribution, but have not yet had a full impact on learning because six of them have only recently been appointed to their roles. The governing body makes a satisfactory contribution to the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and effective, and this underpins the school's satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement.

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.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise girls' attainment by the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics to at least the levels reached by their peers, by:
 - ensuring activities stimulate the interests of girls
 - accelerating the pace of their learning.
- Raise the quality of teaching so that by December 2011 the majority of lessons are at least good, by:
 - setting activities that are matched closely to pupils' different abilities
 - consistently identifying criteria that indicate when pupils at different levels of ability achieve their learning aims
 - checking on the progress of all pupils during lessons
 - showing pupils clearly how to improve their work, and giving them time to implement such guidance.
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation by senior leaders and subject co-ordinators leads to accelerating progress and improved attainment by:
 - training these staff in the monitoring and evaluation of lessons, pupils' work and planning
 - establishing a programme of monitoring and evaluation in all subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils typically settle down quickly to their work, and make satisfactory progress in lessons to reach broadly average standards. For example, pupils in Year 4 were enthusiastic when discussing their ideas with their partners about a new character for the book they were reading. They enjoyed devising similes such as 'as sharp as barbed wire' and 'as thick as a tree trunk' when describing the new character's hair and arms. Pupils in Year 1 worked eagerly and industriously when learning about how the body changes as people grow older. They talked affectionately about some features of their grandparents. Overall, there are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.

Pupils know about healthy foods and the importance of exercise. They are provided with good play opportunities and enjoy physical activities in lessons as well as at playtimes and lunchtimes. Such strengths are reflected in the school being awarded the Activemark and Healthy School status. Pupils behaved well in the lessons seen, and sometimes their behaviour was exemplary. However, a few pupils mentioned in their questionnaires and to inspectors that behaviour is not always good. Pupils make a good contribution to the school as a community. For example, school councillors choose pupils who are behaving particularly well while eating their lunch to be rewarded by eating on the Finer Diners' table. Year 4 pupils help younger pupils during playtimes by taking on the role of being playtime friends. Pupils have raised significant amount of money for a range of charities at home and abroad. They learn about aspects of other cultures and different religious beliefs and this gives them a good understanding the world around them. Attendance is above average.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

Teachers plan and organise lessons well so that equipment and materials are to hand. This helps the lessons to flow smoothly. The high levels of respect between pupils and adults are significant features in all classes, and they help create a busy and positive learning environment. Teachers' high expectations of handwriting and neatness encourage pupils to respond by presenting their work neatly. Teachers and teaching assistants support individual pupils in their understanding of particular aspects of their work. This additional teaching helps them to make good progress, especially in reading and writing. However, when working independently, pupils are sometimes left for too long before their work is checked. This results in some pupils marking time and chatting because they need further guidance with their work. Teaching is more focused on developing pupils' learning in reading than in writing or mathematics, and on occasion the pace of teaching and learning for pupils is too slow because some pupils carry out activities at the same level of difficulty for too long. In marking pupils' work, teachers sometimes include a comment about what pupils could do to improve, although they are not always given enough time to practise what they need to do and this restricts progress.

A strength of the curriculum is the good opportunities provided for pupils to consolidate their writing skills in topic work. This is especially the case in Years 3 and 4. Provision to promote pupils' personal development is included effectively throughout the curriculum.

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

Enrichment activities are varied and include a wide variety of visits and visitors to the school. The breakfast club makes a satisfactory contribution to the well-being of those who attend, ensuring that they start their lessons ready to learn.

Good arrangements for pupils joining the school ensure that they settle quickly. As one parent wrote, 'My child has a fantastic experience at Beaudesert Lower School. He looks forward to going to school.' Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriately targeted support and their achievement is satisfactory. Procedures for promoting good attendance are effective. Transition arrangements are good from Reception to Year 1, and from Year 4 to the middle school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and subject coordinators have made a sound start in identifying the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. As yet, this does not always include analysing pupils' work, observing teaching and monitoring planning. Data are analysed satisfactorily and lessons learned from the analysis are included in school planning for improvement. Currently there are too many priorities identified in the school's action plans and these make them cumbersome. The plans do not include the impact of the actions on outcomes for pupils, this limits their effectiveness. Morale is high, as indicated by the very positive responses of staff to their questionnaire.

The school has good links with the local authority, medical services, the School Sports Partnership and local schools. These help to promote effectively the personal development and well-being of pupils. A large majority of parents are positive about all aspects of the school. On the other hand, a small minority of parents are critical of the school. The governing body is very supportive and shows high levels of commitment to the school. However, it does not provide enough challenge to enable it to make significant contributions to improvements. Safeguarding procedures are good. The site is notably safe and secure, and all staff are rigorously vetted.

The school tackles any racist behaviour and discrimination well. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of their local community but wider national and international links are less well developed.

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children receive a satisfactory start to their schooling, and make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In 2010, they left Reception with broadly average attainment in all the areas of learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage co-ordinator was appointed just over a year ago and the improvements made are appropriate but have not yet had a marked impact on learning outcomes. Children are looked after well, although on a few occasions they are left for too long during child-initiated activities and lose concentration. Overall, they are given good opportunities to chat to adults about what they are doing, practise the sounds letters make, read, write, count, sing nursery rhymes and play with toys and other equipment. They develop their keyboard skills well on computers. Behaviour is good and children get on well with each other and adults. The learning environment is well organised indoors and outdoors. It provides children with an enjoyable range of activities. The Early Years Foundation Stage co-ordinator is working well with her team and ensuring that all staff are developing their skills. Staff plan together appropriately to provide a suitable balance between the different areas of learning, but do not always target higher levels of attainment. Links with parents and carers are satisfactory. Induction procedures are good and children quickly settle into school routines.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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 large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive about most aspects of the school. Thirty four parental questionnaires included written comments. Eleven of these were positive and one said, 'The teaching has been excellent at the school and this is reflected in my child's progress.' However, others included criticisms of the school, which focused on the leadership and management, in particular about the management of behaviour, the progress their children are making and not taking into account parental concerns or suggestions. Inspectors judged the leadership and management of the school to be satisfactory because with many new additions, the leadership team is making improvements. During the inspection, behaviour was found to be good, and in some lessons exemplary. However, comments from pupils indicate that this is not always the case. Inspectors visited lessons, scrutinised the pupils' work and analysed information about the pupils' progress to reach the conclusion that the progress pupils are making is satisfactory overall, but girls do not always do as well as their peers in other schools. The school is aware of parental concerns and suggestions but does not always communicate effectively enough to parents and carers about why they are acted upon or not acted upon.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beaudesert Lower 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 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 215 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	53	37	45	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	49	37	45	4	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	27	39	47	14	17	3	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	36	44	53	5	6	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	31	37	46	55	4	5	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	34	47	57	7	8	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	35	43	52	3	4	2	2
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)	20	24	43	52	5	6	5	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	28	50	60	4	5	3	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	19	42	51	8	10	7	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	23	44	53	12	14	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	21	25	39	47	12	14	11	13
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	36	43	52	3	4	4	5

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



26 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Beaudesert Lower School, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 3DX

Thank you for making inspectors so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you about how you feel the school is preparing you for the future. Thank you to those of you who completed the questionnaire for inspectors. Your responses were very helpful. You will be pleased to hear that the school has had a satisfactory outcome from its recent inspection. Here are some of the good things we found:

You enjoy school and get on well with each other.

You work hard and write neatly in your books.

You like your teachers and teaching assistants and try your best to please them.

You know what foods to eat and to take exercise to keep healthy.

You are well behaved.

Your teachers and teaching assistants look after you well.

We have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governing body to do three things to make your school better. These are to:

- help the girls in Year 2 do even better in reading and mathematics by setting them more challenging work and encouraging them to work quicker
- make more lessons good, by setting you targets so that you know when you have achieved your learning goals, and letting you know what you need to do next to improve
- help all the leaders in the school check on the progress you are making in all lessons.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

David Shepherd

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.