

Beresford Memorial CofE (A) First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124340
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	359640
Inspection dates	11–12 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Mary Davis

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Roger Woods
Headteacher	Susan Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	17 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons and all 6 teachers, and held meetings with groups of pupils, groups of parents, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at policies and development planning; the analysis of data related to the tracking of pupil's progress; senior leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning; safeguarding documents; the governing body minutes, pupils' work and 36 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with those from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How effective is the school's analysis of 2010 assessment information and the current learning and progress of groups of pupils, particularly that of girls?
- How successful has the leadership been in ensuring a consistent quality of teaching?
- How well is community cohesion promoted and what is the impact of this on pupil's understanding of life in a multicultural society?

Information about the school

Beresford School is a smaller than average school of its type serving an area north of Leek. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who speak English as a second language is also small. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is twice the national average.

The school has the silver Primary Science Award and the International Schools Award.

There is a children's centre run by the local authority on the same site.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The motto of Beresford Memorial Church of England First School is 'loving and learning together' and this accurately describes the ethos of this outstanding school. Adults work as a committed and cohesive team to ensure the care and well-being of their pupils. They lead by example and warm relationships are evident throughout the school resulting in extremely positive attitudes to learning and pupils showing care and consideration for each other. They are confident to talk to visitors and are welcoming to those new to the school, being keen to find out about the cultural background of those who join the school from different countries.

Pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress from their starting points as a result of the consistently high quality of teaching they receive throughout the school. Levels of attainment rose gradually up to 2009 to just above average and 2010 assessments suggest further improvement in writing and mathematics. Attainment in reading fell slightly in 2010 and this is currently being addressed by the school.

Pupils are confident that the school will keep them safe and behaviour in lessons is usually exemplary. A few pupils did express concern about occasional boisterous behaviour but said that adults deal with this fairly and effectively. Attendance is above average and improving as a result of the concerted efforts of the school. Although pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community, and they have a good understanding and respect for the beliefs and cultures of others, first-hand links with schools in different circumstances are less developed.

Pupils are encouraged to be independent learners and to take responsibility for their own progress by deciding when their work is ready to be assessed and what resources they need to undertake a task. There is a strong focus in lessons on how they can extend their learning at home. They understand their individual targets and are confident to assess their own progress towards these. All the tasks they are set have a relevant purpose and as a result they show real excitement about their work and particularly when they achieve something difficult. Involvement in special events such as 'Viking day', where pupils dress up and take on roles as members of a Viking army with shields and spears, results in them enthusiastically writing reports about what they have learned and contribute towards the exceptional progress in writing being seen across the school. The recently introduced Key Stage 1 curriculum is flexible and exciting and is very closely matched to the pupils' needs and is now being extended into Key Stage 2. The school has recognised that its impact on raising attainment in writing needs to be replicated by an increased focus on reading. Parents and carers are closely involved in all aspects of the school's work and are frequently invited to join in special curriculum activities such as science day. The school provides an excellent level of support for pupils as they enter the school, as they move

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from class to class and as they transfer to the middle school. Individually tailored additional support is provided at this time for those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and all pupils undertake a transition project that they complete at their new school. Pupils are known as individuals and cared for according to their needs. This care extends to families who are well supported and well involved in ensuring pupils' well-being. The school coordinates a wide variety of external agencies to ensure that all are included and enabled to achieve.

The inspirational head teacher is supported by a strong team who share her passion for taking the school forward and ensure that the care of pupils is at the heart of all they do. Middle leaders, teachers and teaching assistants are fully involved in development planning and self-evaluation and as a result, all feel valued members of a team. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have identified priorities for improvement. This includes further development of community cohesion to ensure that the outstanding work within the local community and the development of international links also focuses sufficiently on developing pupils' understanding of their place in the national community. The school's highly focused pursuit of excellence has resulted in significant improvements in many key areas since the last inspection and is therefore judged to have an outstanding capacity to sustain these improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in reading across the school by:
 - using the good practice already embedded in writing to engage and extend pupils' enthusiasm for reading.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

When they start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's skills and experiences are generally well below those typical of children of their age. They make good progress during Nursery and this accelerates during their year in Reception. By the end of Year 4, they have reached standards of attainment that are just above those obtained by other schools in the county at this age. This represents outstanding progress with an increasing proportion of pupils reaching higher levels. The school is rigorous in its analysis of the performance of different groups of pupils and is able to demonstrate that all groups of pupils make similar rates of progress including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the very small number of pupils who enter the school at an early stage of learning English. This was borne out by lesson observations during the inspection, where pupils were seen to be excited by their learning and keen to do their best. They concentrate well, even during extended activities and particularly enjoy working independently or in small groups, for example using the computer to compile a newsletter. Here they could choose how to present their work, as well as the content, making decisions as a team.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and are enthusiastic about the wide variety of opportunities for physical activity, including swimming, multi-sports and dance. All have the opportunity to take on responsible roles and the school council is proud that their suggestions have led to extra playground equipment such as basketball nets. They also enjoy the opportunity to be involved in the local community including, for

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example, the opportunity to learn from local pensioners who join the sewing and knitting club. Their independence and confidence, their satisfactory level of basic skill in literacy, numeracy and in information and communication technology (ICT), together with their experiences of business and enterprise, gained through the support of a local building society, contribute well to ensuring their future economic well-being. Pupils develop a good spiritual understanding through opportunities to think and reflect during lessons and in worship assemblies. They express their enjoyment of learning about other cultures, for example by taking part in the 'One World' musical event, experiencing aboriginal art with the local high school and learning about African cookery from a parent.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

All the lessons observed during the inspection were good or outstanding and the leadership's extensive monitoring of this indicates that this is consistently the case. Well-established classroom routines enable learning to progress at a fast pace with no time wasted. Lessons are well planned and structured to enable teachers and pupils to evaluate understanding as they go through the lesson. All teachers use assessment information well to plan tasks that will meet the needs of different groups in their class. This is particularly evident in the two combined Year 2/3 classes that have been grouped to enable a balance of boys and girls within each class. Teaching assistants are well deployed, taking a vital role in the classroom, and are skilled in questioning techniques to provide appropriate

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challenge and support. Marking of written work not only gives helpful advice and a target for future work, but also provides opportunities for pupils to respond.

The theme-based curriculum has many outstanding features, although it has yet to be fully implemented across the school. It is well-balanced to ensure that basic skills are developed, including opportunities for problem solving and is flexible to enable pupils to work for concentrated periods on a task, for example vehicle building. All Year 2 pupils learn the violin. Physical education, ICT and science provision is enhanced by partnerships with the high school and external providers. The outstanding care, guidance and support include a closely individualised programme for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A nurture group supports the emotional literacy of a small group of identified pupils and lunchtime support is provided for pupils who find playtime outside too physically challenging. Parents and carers are supported through parenting courses and adult and family learning and this is enhanced by a close partnership with the children's centre.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Middle leaders greatly value the support and guidance of the headteacher who empowers them to take responsibility and to use their initiative in driving improvement. Her mentoring and coaching has encouraged their professional development and contributed strongly to the sense of teamwork and high morale of the staff as a whole. Subject leaders are able to monitor progress in their areas and provide training and support for planning. They have a clear understanding of assessment information and make good use of this to identify areas of weakness and to channel intervention appropriately. As a result there is a high level of consistency across the school in the quality of teaching, the use of assessment and in lesson planning. The governing body is active in challenging and supporting the leadership. Governors are suitably trained and use their expertise to provide support for the school's future development. They discharge their statutory responsibilities well. The school works hard to involve parents and carers in reading with their children and reporting back on their progress or any concerns. This is one of a wide variety of opportunities that are provided to involve them in the work of the school, including a parents' council, curricular and extra-curricular activities, such as a visit to an outward bound centre. The school responds to suggestions made by parents, for example, improving communications by using text messages to promote good attendance. In addition to the partnership between external agencies and the children's centre to support pupils' well-being, strong links with neighbouring schools enhance the provision. Not only is the achievement of different groups of pupils closely monitored and underachievement

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quickly identified and addressed, but also each pupil is cared for as an individual and the school ensures that all individual needs are met to enable equality of opportunity and ensure that all are included. Safeguarding practice is exemplary and staff are appropriately trained, including in first-aid. Child protection procedures are robust so that the safety of children is at the heart of all the school's work and all are suitably informed about procedures to follow. Although all relevant policies are in place and reviewed regularly by the governing body, some lack sufficient clarity.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

From a low starting point, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, meeting and sometimes exceeding most Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. They are very happy to come to school and have good relationships with each other and with adults. They are encouraged to be independent and contribute well to routines, for example going to wash their hands before eating fruit. They clearly feel safe and comfortable to learn in this positive environment and their behaviour is excellent, with good listening skills already well-established early on in Nursery. The outstanding teaching is supported by an excellent learning environment which is stimulating and welcoming and is safe, clean and challenging, both inside and out. There is a good balance of adult and child-led activities, well supported by a wide variety of resources to engage their imagination. Clear and well-considered steps have been taken to ensure children's welfare and safeguarding, including secure procedures at the start and end of each session when children are collected or transferred to the children's centre. Observations and assessments are used effectively to support and extend the children, with individual needs clearly identified and used to inform lesson and curriculum planning. Adults work as a cohesive team and all are well trained. The dynamic leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage is an outstanding practitioner who uses her excellent knowledge of the key stage to

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drive improvement, through thorough monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the provision on children's progress. Staff work hard to ensure that all parents feel welcome and to forge positive relationships and as a result parents said that that they felt an important part of the school and expressed their satisfaction that their children are so happy.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming response of the small minority of parents and carers who completed questionnaires was positive, with 100% saying that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps their children safe. One parent felt that they were not sufficiently involved in their child's learning, but inspectors found the reverse to be true with exceptional opportunities to be involved.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beresford Memorial CofE (A) First 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 146 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	75	9	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	75	9	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	17	47	19	53	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	53	17	47	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	58	15	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	44	18	50	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	58	15	42	0	0	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)	20	56	14	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	64	13	36	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	53	16	44	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	36	18	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	53	14	39	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	64	13	36	0	0	0	0

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	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). 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"> ■ 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.



13 October 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Beresford Memorial CofE (A) First School, Leek, ST13 6NR

Many thanks for the welcome you gave to me and my colleague when we visited the school for its recent inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing all that you do. We particularly liked seeing how much you enjoyed the activities on Viking Day.

Our inspection has judged that the school gives you an outstanding quality of education. You make excellent progress and the standards that you reach in writing and mathematics are steadily rising, although standards in reading are not currently as good as those in writing. This is a priority for improvement. We were impressed by your good behaviour and the care you show for each other. You concentrate well and enjoy your lessons and all the activities that are provided for you, including all the sporting activities and dance club. We were impressed by how well you learn independently and that you try to extend your learning at home. Your teachers provide lessons that are exciting and care for you very well, so that you feel safe. You make a good contribution to your school and local community and show a good deal of understanding and respect for the beliefs and cultures of others. You are learning about schools and communities in other countries, but we think that you know less about other areas of this country.

The leaders of the school are working hard to make sure you learn well and develop well as young people. We have asked them to make sure that your reading progresses as well as your writing and to help you develop your understanding of other schools and communities in Britain. You can help them by continuing to work hard. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Davis

Lead inspector

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