

# Belfield Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105780
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	355835
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kevin Johnson

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	301
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Rachael El Weshahi
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Margaret Farrell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Samson Street Belfield, Rochdale Lancashire OL16 2XW
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who observed 18 lessons and saw 13 teachers. Meetings were held with staff as well as with groups of pupils, parents and carers and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including national assessment data and the school's assessments, governing body minutes, school policies, samples of pupils' work and documentation relating to safeguarding of pupils. Also taken into account were 53 questionnaires returned by parents and carers in addition to those completed by members of staff and pupils.

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

- Whether pupils, especially those who speak English as an additional language, make the progress they should.
- If the quality of teaching is consistently effective.
- Whether the school leaders have evaluated provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage accurately.
- Whether leaders have convincingly demonstrated capacity for good improvement.

## Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average sized primary school in which the large majority of pupils are from Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage. About two-thirds of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.

The school has achieved Enhanced Healthy School status and Activemark Gold. A breakfast club is provided on 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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school in which the strong impact of the headteacher's leadership over the past two years is seen in key areas of the school's work. An effective senior leadership team has been established who, with the headteacher, have positively changed the way in which teachers think about and evaluate their classroom practice. Attainment is rising and progress has gathered pace due to effective assessment systems being used well. Improved provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is showing positive impact in Key Stage 1. Leaders have formed an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and amply demonstrate good capacity for sustained improvement.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given a good start in their learning and development from generally low starting points. When they enter Nursery many are not able to speak English, and their personal, social and emotional development is at a very early stage. They make good progress and are prepared well for their next stages of learning by the time they leave Reception.

Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is broadly average. This represents good achievement from earlier starting points and does credit to the way in which the school helps pupils who speak English as an additional language. Nevertheless, despite some promising signs as a result of trialling fresh initiatives in teaching methods, staff recognise that there is still room for improvement in order to ensure that attainment levels in both subjects continue to rise, especially for more-able pupils. Progress throughout the school is good, and particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teaching has improved. It is good overall, with some being outstanding, but there are a few inconsistencies in the quality of marking and pace of lessons.

The engaging curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to enjoy their learning. These are extended through excellent partnerships with other schools, especially those who provide additional challenges in the visual arts, sports, and science and technology. Pupils' personal outcomes are mostly good. They enjoy school, get on well with one another and contribute well to the school's culturally harmonious community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Leaders at all levels are strongly committed to the school's success. They share high expectations and accountability for its continued improvement and increasingly win the support and confidence of parents and carers.

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

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics throughout the school by:

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- making sure that more-able pupils are always sufficiently challenged
- ensuring that mental and oral parts of mathematics lessons are consistently and sufficiently challenging for all abilities
- improving the quality of handwriting throughout the school.
- Make teaching consistently good or better by:
  - sharing the most successful practice effectively
  - eliminating the inconsistencies in marking quality across classes and different subjects.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes in lessons are important contributions to their good learning. They are keen to do well and work hard. Pupils have a good idea about how to improve because of their involvement in their own assessment. A striking example was when pupils were challenged to assess the level of a sentence they had created during a lesson and to say how it could be raised to a higher level before continuing with their writing. Pupils have good opportunities to work as groups and especially enjoy active lessons. Although mental strategies for mathematics in some lessons are taught well, this is not a consistent feature of all pupils' learning.

Progress has improved because teaching is better and there is more effective use of assessment. The needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language are met well through the skilled intervention in school. Early bilingual support gets pupils off to a good start. Continued support and monitoring throughout the school results in pupils' good achievement by the time they leave Year 6. Individual learning plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well tailored to their needs. Additional teaching support is well focused and very detailed records show that pupils make good and sometimes rapid progress. School assessments and pupils' work point to broadly average and rising attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in the core subjects is below average and is recognised by school leaders as a particular area for improvement.

Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They are mindful of one another in the playground, generally behave well around the school and say that they feel safe. Their understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle is good. There is good uptake of school meals and they are enthusiastic about after-school sports clubs. Active school council members make sure that pupils' views on school improvement are heard and the eco committee are watchful over the school's paper recycling scheme and uses of water and electricity. The school is respected in the wider community because, for example, of pupils' generous charitable fund-raising and their participation in work such as litter clearing and cutting back overgrown areas of shrubbery in order to improve the environment around the school. Pupils' average attendance and improving basic literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills contribute to their satisfactory development of the skills needed to secure economic well-being.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<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?

Teachers are reflective about their work in the classroom and show a strong commitment to improving their skills and trying fresh approaches. Consequently, most lessons are taught well and there is outstanding learning in some. Where this occurs there is excellent pace to learning because of well-focused planning and continuous challenge. An impressive example was in a mathematics lesson for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their understanding of number was vigorously tested by a series of short but intensive activities where they had to apply their knowledge to solve a different problem. Learning for these pupils was purposeful, empowering and fun.

Teachers' subject knowledge is good and lesson objectives are always shared clearly with pupils so they know what is expected of them. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning. They work effectively alongside teachers by supporting individuals and groups of pupils. They know pupils well and deal sensitively with their particular needs. Teachers use assessment information well to check progress and revise targets. Their marking of literacy work is usually evaluative and gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve, but the same rigour is not evident across all classes or in all subjects. The most effective classroom practice is not established fully. In a small number of lessons the pace does not pick up sufficiently to motivate pupils well so their learning remains satisfactory at best. In all classes too little attention is given to improving the quality of pupils' handwriting.

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There is good balance to the curriculum with emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Speaking and listening are given high priority and drama and role play feature well in lessons. Pupils' learning is enriched by a good selection of topic-linked visits and visitors to school as well as many opportunities to nurture skills and interests through after-school clubs. Popular residential visits shared with pupils from a nearby school contribute well to the development of personal and social skills. A notable initiative is the joint mathematics activity with a local school which involves pupils in rewarding practical sessions covering many aspects of mathematical problem solving.

Parents and carers endorse their children's view that they are well cared for in school. Care and support for pupils who may be considered potentially vulnerable are both well managed and sensitive. There are productive links with outside agencies to secure the best possible provision for them and to help them to achieve well alongside their peers. Parents and carers appreciate the good supportive systems in place for pupils joining the school and transferring to the next. Effective lines of communication keep them well informed about their children's progress and their attendance. The clear guidance provided for pupils ensures their good personal outcomes.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's determined focus on raising attainment and accelerating progress, with support from the governing body, has guided the school through a successful period of change and development. Training opportunities for all staff have raised their skill levels and expectations. Leaders recognise that to improve teaching further they need to share and learn from the examples of outstanding practice that exist. A clear vision for the school's future has evolved and all know how they are accountable in the drive for improvement. The governing body maintains a good overview of the school's work. It both challenges and supports the school effectively and takes an important role in strategic planning and the monitoring and evaluation of its development. Good safeguarding procedures are overseen efficiently. Policies are clearly communicated to all staff members and visitors and pupils. Risk assessments are thorough and swift action is taken when improvements to systems are needed. The site is well maintained and a safe environment for pupils. All forms of discrimination are strongly challenged. The academic progress and personal development of groups within the school are carefully checked. Leaders are fully aware of those who need additional support in order to ensure their equality of opportunity. Community cohesion is promoted well. Links within the local community are very strong and those with some local schools are highly effective in promoting pupils' learning and opportunities for staff development. The school is very clear about its context

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in relation to different ethnic cultures and groups who use the school and has effective plans overall for development, although communications with groups beyond the school's locality are not as firmly established.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Good provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage means that they make good progress. Staff are quick to identify children's individual starting points and plan the right support for them, especially for those who speak English as an additional language. Very well-planned provision for children's personal, social and emotional development means that they learn to make choices, show independence in their learning and develop helpful and positive attitudes in their play. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those which children choose for themselves. Good use is made of outdoor areas, in all weathers, so that children can extend their indoor activities through exploration and play. Provision for children's welfare is good, although some easily rectifiable administrative checks were not in place during the inspection. Self-care is emphasised with children, and staff ensure that the physical environment is safe and welcoming. Relationships with parents and carers are good. There is good leadership and management. There is common sense of purpose among staff members and their enthusiastic teamwork is a good strength. Staff regularly evaluate their work and discuss improvements but these valuable discussions do not contribute to a formal plan of action for continuous development.



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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>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

A very small minority of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. Their responses were very positive about most aspects of the school. A small number raised concerns about the school's management of behaviour. Inspectors looked closely at the systems in place and discussed this aspect of their development with some pupils. Inspectors found that agreed systems were used consistently, that pupils felt that they were fair and that, overall, behaviour was good. Some parents and carers indicated that they are particularly happy with the additional learning support provided for their children. A small number of individual concerns were discussed with school leaders. The anonymity of all parents and carers was fully protected.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Belfield Community 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 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 301 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	70	15	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	68	16	30	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	49	26	49	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	53	25	47	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	53	23	43	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	42	31	58	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	55	23	43	1	2	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)	24	45	28	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	43	28	53	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	42	27	51	3	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	32	34	64	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	53	24	45	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	68	17	32	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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"><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.**



16 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Belfield Community School, Rochdale, OL16 2XW**

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you about your school and learned a great deal about some exciting things that you seem to enjoy. I was particularly interested in the discussion I had with some of you about Romeo and Juliet and I hope that your forthcoming performance with other schools is a success. We found that you are polite, well-mannered and behave well, and that you work hard to make your school enjoyable for everyone. All of those things are very important, so do keep them up.

Belfield is a good school. You make good progress and achieve well but the standards you reach in English and mathematics need to be higher. Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and enjoyable and the grown-ups in school take good care of you and keep you safe.

You are proud of your school and so are your teachers and members of the governing body. They would all like to see it become even better and we know that you would like that too. To help that to happen we have asked your teachers and headteacher to help you reach higher standards in English. First, by making sure that all of you, but especially those of you who are most able, are always well challenged by your work, and also by improving your handwriting. As well as that we have asked if oral and mental work in mathematics lessons can also be more challenging to help you to raise standards in that subject. The final thing is for teachers to mark all of your work as well as they do in your literacy books so that you will always know how to improve and that all lessons will be as effective as the very best.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Johnson  
Lead inspector

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