

# Beech Hill Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131089
<b>Local Authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	360207
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 July 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Watts

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	682
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Annabelle Barton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Debbie Boshier
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Dunstable Road Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 8BW
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<b>Email address</b>	Beechhill.primary.head@luton.gov.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, who observed teaching and learning in 29 lessons or part lessons taught by 24 different teachers. The inspection team examined the school's policies, assessment information, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. They held discussions with the headteacher, the staff, members of the governing body and pupils. The inspectors analysed 176 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and others by pupils and staff.

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

- The effectiveness of the strategies to develop children's language skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The extent to which teachers use a wide range of methods to promote high-quality learning for all pupils.
- How well information and communication technology (ICT) is used to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- The robustness of the school's procedures to raise pupils' attendance.
- The key factors contributing to the improvements made to provision and to pupils' achievement.

## Information about the school

Beech Hill Community is much larger than the average primary school. Most of the pupils are from Bangladeshi or Pakistani heritage and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high. Pupils often join the school with low levels of English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also above average. The headteacher was appointed in September 2008.

A Children's Centre with pre-school provision shares the school site. This is managed by the governing body, but was inspected separately.

The school was monitored in March 2010 by two inspectors. It was found that the school was making good progress towards the improvement issues from the previous inspection, which included raising standards, strengthening teaching and developing 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

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Beech Hill Community Primary is a good school. It has some outstanding elements. Highly effective leadership and strong teamwork among the staff have brought about remarkable improvements since the previous inspection. At the heart of the school's improvements and success are the inspiration and vision generated by the headteacher, who provides exceptional leadership and has successfully empowered other leaders and staff in driving improvement. Pupils are achieving well because of good teaching and a well-planned and imaginative curriculum. Good care, guidance and support contribute well to pupils' good personal development. Outstanding partnerships with other agencies and organisations contribute to pupils' learning and well-being. Parents and carers are very pleased with the care and education provided for their children.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make a satisfactory start. Their progress is good in language and personal development, but satisfactory in the other areas of learning and variable between classes. Activities are not always suitably challenging for all children, especially the most able, and they have limited opportunities to practise and consolidate their early writing and numeracy skills.

The school's effective focus on improving teaching and learning means that pupils now make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. A range of strategies have been effectively implemented to raise pupils' achievement. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is average. Teachers are successfully using a much wider range of teaching approaches than at the time of the previous inspection. Across the school, there are examples of outstanding practice. The development of pupils' language skills and vocabulary is a strength of the teaching. Assessment is used well to plan teaching and to match tasks to pupils' abilities. Pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve because teachers set specific individual learning targets for reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their courtesy, friendliness and consideration for others. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who relate well to adults and to their peers. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel extremely safe and well cared for at school because of the good attention given to safeguarding. They show a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Community cohesion is promoted well and pupils make a valuable contribution to the school and to the wider community. Most pupils attend regularly but attendance levels are low for a small minority whose families take extended time abroad.

The highly regarded headteacher has built a strong team of leaders and staff. She and the staff are firmly focused on improving teaching and learning and doing the best for all pupils. Through systematic evaluation, the school knows what it does well and has taken effective action to improve provision and raise pupils' achievement. Since the previous

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inspection, Year 6 attainment has improved from low levels to average. Pupils' progress, teaching, the curriculum and care, guidance and support have all improved from satisfactory to good. The school demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Improve planning and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children make good progress in all areas of learning and in all classes by:
  - ensuring that all activities are suitably challenging for all children
  - increasing opportunities for children to acquire and develop early numeracy and writing skills.
- Work more closely with the few families whose children's attendance is low to
  - raise their attendance and the school's overall attendance.

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

**2**

Across the school, pupils show much enthusiasm for learning and enjoy the wide range of activities provided. As they informed the inspectors, 'We do drama and a lot of other activities,' 'Lessons are fun and we learn at the same time,' and, 'There are lots of clubs here.' Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age, and make satisfactory overall progress across the areas of learning. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2, including the more able, those at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. By Year 6, it is evident from assessments, the lessons seen and pupils' work that attainment is average in reading, writing and mathematics. Taking attainment, progress and pupils' enjoyment into account, their overall achievement is good.

Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening through well-planned opportunities to discuss their learning in pairs and small groups. For example, pupils in the Year 6 classes worked well in small teams to plan a persuasive presentation using catchy slogans, exaggeration and powerful adjectives to market a product. A structured approach to the teaching of reading, with a clear emphasis on the sounds letters make, contributes to pupils' good progress in this area. Pupils write for a range of purposes and in different styles. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are not always accurate and work is not always well presented, but these aspects are improving and by Year 6, pupils apply study and ICT skills well to support their learning in a range of subjects. For example, they used a range of sources to find out information about culture, places and traditions in European countries.

Pupils make good progress in mathematics because of good teaching and because tasks are well matched to their needs. They are developing a good mathematical vocabulary and use this well to explain their reasoning. In Year 5, pupils made exceptional progress in solving 12-hour and 24-hour clock problems.

Pupils demonstrate good qualities such as cooperation, kindness, respect for others and responsibility, and are confident that there are always trusted grown-ups they can turn to for help. Pupils willingly take on a range of additional activities such as serving on the school council or being a house captain. Year 6 pupils performed a well-rehearsed and well-staged production of Jack and the Beanstalk to the school during the inspection.

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Pupils raise funds for a wide range of appeals and charities to help those who are less fortunate than themselves. Attendance levels are broadly average for the vast majority of pupils. Most pupils are making good progress in literacy and numeracy and their personal skills are well developed. They are therefore well prepared for the future and the next stage of their education.

*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>1</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>2</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?**

Pupils told the inspectors, 'Teachers help us and we learn more.' Most of the teaching seen in the school was good. There were examples of outstanding lessons in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6, where the teacher's enthusiasm and strong subject knowledge, high expectations and challenging activities led to exceptional gains in pupils' learning. Lessons have a clear purpose and so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Interactive whiteboards are used very well to illustrate key learning points. Most teachers take every opportunity to develop pupils' speaking skills and to extend their vocabulary. Questioning is used effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and to check their understanding. Pupils' interest is sustained because activities are tailored closely to their abilities and needs. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and make good contributions to pupils' learning, particularly for those who need additional help with language. In just a few cases the flow and pace of the lesson were not sufficiently brisk. The marking of pupils' work is helpful and constructive and guides pupils' future learning well.

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Leaders and staff have worked well together in developing and improving the curriculum. It is now broad, balanced, exiting and well matched to pupils' needs. The curriculum promotes good academic progress for pupils and contributes well to their personal development. Interesting links between subjects add meaning and relevance to learning. ICT is increasingly being used to support pupils' learning. Health education and the wide range of physical activities provided contribute to pupils' healthy lifestyles. Popular clubs include, aerobics, art, basketball, cricket, football, gardening, homework, netball and sewing. Visits further enhance the curriculum and pupils' learning.

The school's very positive school ethos and good care, guidance and support are central to its effectiveness. Some elements of care, guidance and support are outstanding. For example, in partnership with other agencies, the school is highly successful in supporting pupils and their families who require additional help, such as those whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable. The environment is well organised, safe and secure. Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with the effective support they need. The school works hard to monitor and promote attendance and this has led to clear improvements. It strives to find ways of reaching parents who take extended time aboard.

*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 experienced and dedicated headteacher has created a very positive climate for pupils to learn and develop. She has successfully generated a culture of continuous improvement among the staff. Under her leadership, senior leaders and middle leaders have been developed and empowered. Roles and responsibilities are effectively distributed. All leaders and staff share a strong commitment to promoting high-quality provision and positive outcomes for pupils. The monitoring and development of teaching have been effective and this has led to much improvement in classroom practice. Some members of the senior leadership team are advanced skills teachers or leading practitioners, and this has further enhanced the development of teaching.

Members of the governing body show a clear understanding of the school's performance. They are supportive and provide constructive challenge in order to hold the school to account. Good emphasis is placed on safeguarding. A clear commitment from staff and robust procedures help to ensure that pupils are protected and safe. Well-developed quality assurance and risk assessment systems are effectively monitored and evaluated

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and have resulted in clear improvements. All staff are well trained in this area and safe practices are promoted well through teaching and the curriculum.

Equality of opportunity is promoted well and discrimination is tackled effectively. All staff strive to ensure that all groups of pupils do as well as they can. Through careful auditing and evaluation, the school has a clear understanding of the community it serves. Different cultures and faiths are promoted well through the curriculum. Productive partnerships with other primary schools successfully increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diversity of different communities within the United Kingdom.

Parents and carers are delighted with the school. They appreciate the guidance and range of workshops that are designed to help them support their children's learning. Parents and carers find the senior leaders very approachable and value their visible presence at the start and end of the day.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</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>2</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**

Leadership and planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory and as a result, children are making satisfactory progress in most areas of learning. Children enjoy their learning and the activities provided. Adults establish good relationships with the children and give good attention to their care and welfare. As a result, children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They relate positively to others, sharing resources and taking turns. Behaviour is usually good. They also make good progress in developing their language skills because adults give good attention to speaking and listening, and children learn in a 'language rich' environment. However, opportunities for children to acquire and practise early writing, number and problem solving skills are not given enough prominence to ensure good progress in these areas. Record keeping is satisfactory but assessment information is not



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always used effectively to plan and modify learning activities to meet the needs of different children, especially the more able. Furthermore, records of children's learning and experiences are not sufficiently annotated and dated. The setting has high quality learning resources both inside and outside the classroom, but these are not always fully utilised.

*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

All the parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are happy with their children's experience at the school. They are particularly pleased with the sense of enjoyment, safety in the school, information about their children's progress, the teaching and the leadership and management of the school. The inspection findings support these very positive views. The results of this survey indicate that parents and carers' concerns about the school are very few. A very small minority did not feel that the school takes full account of their suggestions and concerns. The inspection team found that the school strives to meet their needs and to take account of their suggestions and concerns. However, the school is not complacent and senior leaders are keen to further extend the partnership with parents and carers.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beech Hill Community 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 176 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 682 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	123	70	52	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	125	71	50	29	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	122	69	52	30	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	97	55	70	40	4	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	118	67	53	30	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	114	65	57	32	2	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	115	65	57	32	1	1	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)	107	61	59	34	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	88	50	79	45	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	98	56	75	43	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	100	57	65	37	7	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	115	65	57	32	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	123	70	51	29	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.**



13 July 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Beech Hill Community Primary School, Luton, LU4 8BW**

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school, giving us your views and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit. Beech Hill is a good school with some outstanding features, and has improved a great deal since the last inspection.

These are the school's main strengths.

You really enjoy school and the activities provided.

You are making good progress because of the good teaching.

A good range of learning activities is offered, including clubs and visits.

You get on well with each other and your behaviour is good.

You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and fit.

You feel extremely safe at school because teachers and other adults take good care of you and provide good guidance and support.

You make good contributions to the school and to the wider community.

The school has developed very strong partnerships with other organisations and people who support learning in the school.

The school is led and managed extremely well by the headteacher, who receives very good support from other senior staff.

Even good schools can improve, so we have asked the headteacher and teachers to do the following things to make it even better.

Improve planning and the range of activities in Reception, so children can make good progress in all classes and in all areas of learning.

A few pupils have poor attendance and are missing out on the good learning opportunities provided. We have asked the school to work more closely with these families to help improve attendance where it is low.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts

Lead inspector

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