

Beauchamp Middle School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 109692 |
| Local Authority | Bedford |
| Inspection number | 377967 |
| Inspection dates | 29–30 September 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Heather Weston |

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

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|--|------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Middle deemed secondary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 9–13 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 522 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Charles Williams |
| Headteacher | Ian Evason |
| Date of previous school inspection | 5 November 2008 |
| School address | Hawk Drive Bedford MK41 7JE |
| Telephone number | 01234 300900 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 29 lessons or parts of lessons and observed 29 teachers. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior and middle leaders, parents, and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at some of the school's policies and procedures, pupils' work and tracking data from the monitoring of pupils' progress. Questionnaires returned by 329 parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed 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.

- What action have leaders, including the governing body, taken in response to the inadequate judgements made during the monitoring inspection in 2009 and what impact has this had on addressing the recommendations made in the last inspection report?
 - Has action taken to increase rates of progress, raise standards and improve the quality of teaching been sufficiently rigorous?
 - Is assessment information being used effectively to establish how well students are doing and to identify those at risk of underachievement?
 - Is assessment information being used effectively to tailor lesson planning to meet the needs of all students, and promote at least satisfactory progress throughout the school?
- Are senior leaders effectively holding staff in their areas of responsibility to account for pupils' progress and standards?
- What action is being taken to address the decline in attendance and rise in persistent absence shown in the 2010 national data?

Information about the school

Beauchamp School is of similar size to most middle schools, taking pupils from lower schools across the town. An above-average number of pupils join or leave the school during the year. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is twice the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with most schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average, whilst the proportion of those with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below average.

The school holds the Sportsmark Gold award and is a specialist sports college, working in partnership with the University of Bedford and the North Bedfordshire Training Partnership to provide initial teacher training.

The previous headteacher resigned in May 2011 and left the school in July. An interim headteacher has been in post since the beginning of September.

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?**4****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****4**

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Since the last inspection all aspects of provision at Beauchamp Middle School have deteriorated, standards have remained static, and, with the exception of improved attendance, outcomes have fallen in almost all areas. Until the interim headteacher took up his post this term, the leadership structure and systems were ill-defined and leaders failed to take the necessary action to bring about the required changes. The governing body has given the school too little challenge and has failed to hold leaders to account for improvement or for increasing pupils' progress, and in turn, leaders have failed to hold staff to account. There has been no culture of shared responsibility and accountability and the process of monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning lacks rigour.

Teachers do not assess pupils' learning accurately enough because many do not have a secure understanding of the features of National Curriculum levels. There is an over-reliance on testing, but test results are also not consistently accurate. The school has a lot of data, but in addition to being not fully reliable, they are not analysed and so the school does not know how much progress different groups of pupils are making. Therefore, it cannot target its actions to support those who need greater challenge or who are in danger of falling behind. As a result, not all pupils are making the progress they should, and the quality of pupils' learning and their progress is inadequate. Most teachers use planning information designed for a particular year group and do not challenge pupils to attain the higher standards which a significant proportion are capable of reaching. Too many teachers are failing to tailor learning to match pupils' individual needs and expectations are too low. Too few teachers are using day-to-day assessment, such as building on pupils' prior learning, or effective marking, to promote pupils' progress, and few are enabling pupils to share responsibility for their own learning. Too many lessons are barely satisfactory, and this, together with the fact that assessment is not used effectively, means that the quality of teaching is inadequate. There is however, some good teaching, mainly in subjects other than English, mathematics or science, but this better practice is not being shared sufficiently with other teachers with the expectation that they should improve the quality of their teaching and help pupils

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make better progress.

Since taking up his post, the interim headteacher has identified these key weaknesses and has begun to restructure roles. He is aware that this process is not complete, and also that senior and middle leaders do not all have the required skills to carry out their revised leadership roles. He knows that self-evaluation procedures are very weak and have been wide of the mark in their conclusions. The school is over-reliant on him as the key leader and because of this, the weaknesses in leadership and management and the school's failure to improve since the last inspection, the school's capacity to improve is inadequate. One key exception to this is the specialist sports provision, which is outstanding. Outcomes are high and the school achieves great success in this area. Five hundred of the pupils attend at least one of the wide range of out-of-school sports activities, an exceptional level of uptake.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the leadership skills of senior and middle leaders
 - revising the leadership structure and systems to ensure that staff are accountable for pupils' progress
 - ensuring the governing body provides effective challenge to the school in order to address weaknesses and bring about improvement
 - ensuring that teachers' assessment of pupil attainment is accurate
 - improving the analysis and use of data to inform both strategic planning and teachers' lesson planning.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - regularly monitoring lessons and providing teachers with specific feedback for improvement
 - sharing more effectively the existing good practice
 - ensuring day-to-day assessment is used successfully to promote progress and to enable pupils to share responsibility for their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Data from the school regarding pupils' attainment and progress are variable and difficult to evaluate. Attainment at the end of Year 8 appears broadly in line with national expectations, but not enough pupils are making sufficient progress through the school. This is demonstrated by the results they achieved in the Key Stage 1 assessments at their lower schools, which were above average. Progress seen in lessons was mostly satisfactory and sometimes good, mainly in some foundation subjects. In most lessons seen teachers planned different activities for groups rather

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than giving pupils clear guidance or setting appropriate expectations regarding learning. There was insufficient challenge for more-able pupils or at times for those of average ability and although pupils were attentive, they were not inspired. In one science lesson very few pupils learnt anything new, as they had already carried out the work the previous week. Pupils evaluated the outcomes of an investigation, but there was no reference to the key features of investigations and expectations were of a low level. In one mathematics lesson, pupils worked well, with clear enjoyment, but the activity was too easy for most. The teacher was unaware of this due to the poor use of assessment information. Where teachers are using National Curriculum levels with a good level of challenge, then pupils make good progress, as seen in a music lesson. In this lesson, the teacher challenged pupils throughout the lesson with continued reference to the criteria at both Level 5 and the higher Level 6. Pupils evaluated their own work and then that of others thus enabling them to consolidate and take responsibility for their own learning. However this lesson was an exception.

The lack of data analysis means that the school does not know how much progress is being made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those from different minority ethnic groups or those who speak English as an additional language. An analysis of data carried out by inspectors indicated that progress is inconsistent. Overall the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is inadequate.

Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, and say they feel safe. Most feel that bullying is dealt with well, but a few pupils say they know of incidents which have not been addressed. Pupils in almost all lessons observed behaved well, although in one instance inappropriate behaviour was observed which prevented the learning of others. Pupils say there is still some fighting at playtime and not all pupils behave well around school. The interim headteacher has revised behaviour management procedures and pupils say this, and his presence at break and lunch times, has improved behaviour. As a result, behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and most take advantage of the extensive range of out-of-school sporting activities provided by the school. Although pupils do not always use their literacy and numeracy skills well, above-average attendance and the provision of enterprise activities in the curriculum means that they have satisfactory workplace and other skills. The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills effectively but, although it has a rich diversity of culture, it fails to celebrate this and further promote pupils' cultural awareness.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|--|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 4 |
| Taking into account: | 3 |

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

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| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 4 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 4 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 3 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |

How effective is the provision?

The majority of lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory. A minority of lessons were good, and a few lessons were inadequate. Teachers often structure lessons effectively to promote learning generally, but this does not always result in effective learning as the pitch of activities is insufficiently tailored to pupils' needs. Too little account is taken of their prior learning and frequently expectations are too low. The quality and quantity of pupils' work is inconsistent with some, particularly written work, being of poor quality. Teachers' questioning is often focussed on too small a proportion of pupils. Teachers fail to engage those who remain passive and so cannot accurately gauge their understanding or individual weaknesses. In addition, teachers are unsure of how to enable pupils to improve their work and make the next steps in their learning.

The curriculum is delivered through discrete subjects with teachers incorporating skills and themes across the curriculum. All statutory requirements are in place including up to three hours of physical education a week. Most classes are mixed ability but this term setting has been introduced in Year 6 in mathematics and partially in English. There are detailed curriculum plans and teaching approaches and these are to be reviewed and modified to enable teachers to plan more relevant and challenging lessons. The curriculum is enriched by a range of activities such as productions, art and homework clubs that have a high uptake. A varied selection of visits and trips further enriches the pupils' experiences. The out-of-school club is very popular with some pupils and parents. The pupils enjoy the activities on offer with safe procedures in place for registering and getting home.

Satisfactory arrangements are in place for most aspects of care, guidance and support, although the leadership of provision for pupils with special educational

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

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needs and/or disabilities and for those who speak English as an additional language are inadequate. This is because too little is being done to evaluate the impact of provision in these areas to ensure that it is meeting the needs of pupils. Good links are in place with lower schools to promote pupils' welfare. Links with wider agencies are effective. 'The Quest' is an effective provision which has helped reduce the level of fixed-period exclusion and to improve the overall level of behaviour.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 4 |
| Taking into account: | |
| The use of assessment to support learning | 4 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 3 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 3 |

How effective are leadership and management?

Up to the beginning of this term, the headteacher and school leaders had not done enough to drive improvement. They have not ensured that all teaching is at least satisfactory, with an acceptable level of good or better teaching. Instead of improving, the effectiveness of the school has diminished. The lack of accountability means there is no culture of shared responsibility in relation to pupils' progress. Those systems that were in place were too individualised, for example there have been three different data management systems, which are not compatible. This is now being rationalised. Staff work well together and relationships are positive, but there has been no understanding of the need to rigorously monitor and evaluate the impact of provision.

In the very short time he has been at the school, the interim headteacher has started to drive improvement with a sense of urgency but has too few staff with the required skills to support him. Although the governing body has known the school's weaknesses and engaged with support from the local authority, it has not ensured that the school made best use of this support to bring about the necessary improvements.

The school's partnerships make a strong contribution to sports and health and are effective in promoting well-being, but they have less impact within the curriculum or in promoting achievement. The promotion of equality of opportunity is inadequate because the school cannot identify the progress of different groups of pupils. There is, however, good inclusion in school visits, trips and the out-of-school club with support given where needed. Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. The school has a good understanding and knowledge of the pupils and their family backgrounds and is well aware of the local community in the area. However, its success in promoting community cohesion further afield is limited.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 4 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 3 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 4 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 4 |

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires returned by parents and carers was very high, with the majority sending in a response. Most parents and carers are happy with their child's experience at school, and feel that the school keeps their children safe, helps them to have a healthy lifestyle and prepares them well for the future. A large majority of parents and carers think that teaching is good, feel well informed about their children's progress, and are satisfied that their children make enough progress.

Inspection findings are that the quality of teaching is inadequate and that not all pupils are making the progress they should. As data are not used effectively, evidence supports the view of some parents and carers that they are not informed well enough about their children's progress. Some parents and carers feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour and does not always take account of their suggestions or concerns. Inspection findings are that there have in the past been concerns about the management of behaviour, but that behaviour management has now improved and the school is dealing more effectively with behaviour. There is some evidence that not all reported incidents of bullying have been followed up rigorously and this issue has been brought to the attention of the interim headteacher.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beauchamp Middle 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 329 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 522 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 109 | 33 | 201 | 61 | 13 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 97 | 29 | 211 | 64 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 58 | 18 | 209 | 64 | 39 | 12 | 4 | 1 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 62 | 19 | 197 | 60 | 13 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 52 | 16 | 220 | 67 | 33 | 10 | 2 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 46 | 14 | 205 | 62 | 24 | 7 | 4 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 56 | 17 | 220 | 67 | 32 | 10 | 2 | 1 |
| 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) | 64 | 19 | 205 | 62 | 24 | 7 | 4 | 1 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 52 | 16 | 207 | 63 | 36 | 11 | 6 | 2 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 61 | 19 | 165 | 50 | 57 | 17 | 18 | 5 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 32 | 10 | 200 | 61 | 42 | 13 | 9 | 3 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 48 | 15 | 209 | 64 | 29 | 9 | 2 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 73 | 22 | 205 | 62 | 28 | 9 | 6 | 2 |

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 | 43 | 47 | 10 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 46 | 42 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 36 | 41 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 30 | 48 | 19 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 50 | 31 | 5 |
| All schools | 10 | 44 | 39 | 6 |

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 08 April 2011 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 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"> ■ 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.



3 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Beauchamp Middle School, Bedford, MK41 7JE

Thank you for giving us such a warm welcome on our recent visit, and for sharing your views about the school in discussions and through questionnaires. These have been very helpful. You told us that you enjoy the wide range of after-school clubs, particularly sports clubs, and that mostly you enjoy lessons. This is demonstrated by your above -average attendance. We thought that most of you behave well in lessons. Some of you said that not all pupils always behave well in lessons or around the school, but that things have improved this term in this respect.

We found out that your school has not made the improvements it was asked to make at the time of the last inspection. As a result, we feel that your school needs special measures as it is not giving you a good enough standard of education. This means that other inspectors will visit every term until the school has improved to a satisfactory standard. Your new headteacher is aware of the school's weaknesses and has started to make significant improvements. However he needs support in this process.

These are the main things which those in charge of your school need to do to improve:

- make sure that all leaders have the skills they need to carry out their revised roles
- ensure all staff are aware of how much progress you are expected to make each year, and that you make this expected progress
- governors must check that the school is improving
- data must be used effectively to help be certain that you are all making enough progress
- improve the quality of teaching
- enable you to share responsibility for your learning.

You can all help by continuing to attend punctually and regularly. You can also help by making sure that you behave well in lessons and around the school, always produce work of the best quality and help take responsibility for your learning. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Heather Weston
Lead inspector

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