

Belmont Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120401
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	380009
Inspection dates	18–19 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Joanne Harvey HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Haron
Headteacher	Maxine Purvis
Date of previous school inspection	20 October 2008
School address	Harrowby Lane Grantham NG31 9LR
Telephone number	01476 567939
Fax number	01476 404039
Email address	enquiries@belmont.lincs.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons were observed and seven teachers seen. Inspectors held meetings with representatives of the governing body, groups of pupils, leaders at all levels, teachers, the learning mentor and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at: the school development plan; assessment information; school and local authority (LA) monitoring information; lesson plans; and school policies. The team analysed 38 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with questionnaires from staff and a representative sample from pupils.

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

- Are the very large majority of pupils making good progress in lessons?
- Are teachers planning a curriculum which is well matched to the needs of all pupils?
- Are there effective plans in place to ensure sustained and significant improvement for all groups within school and to promote community harmony beyond the school?

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A very small number are from Eastern Europe but none are in the early stages of learning English. A greater proportion than is usually the case start and leave the school other than at the normal times. A similar proportion to that found in most schools is known to be eligible for free school meals. A higher proportion than in most schools have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need. The highest proportion of these are speech, language and communication needs. The school has Healthy Schools status, 'Sing Up' Silver and National Clean Air awards. The school operates its own breakfast club. There is a privately owned after-school club onsite which is reported on separately.

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

Belmont Community Primary School continues to provide a good quality of education and has secured improvements to the quality of teaching and the curriculum it offers, since the last inspection. The headteacher, supported by the senior leadership team, is the driving force behind improvements. Staff and the governing body share her vision that all pupils will succeed. Pupils make good progress in their learning because of the large proportion of teaching which is good or better. Pupils are inspired by a curriculum which mostly captures their interest and imagination. Adults are supportive and form trusting relationships with pupils within the positive and safe environment. These, together with pupils' good behaviour and attendance, underpin pupils' good achievement and enjoyment.

Standards are broadly average in Years 4 to 6, but a pattern of improvement is emerging. The school's most recent assessment information and evidence in pupils' work indicate that from low starting points, children are now leaving the Early Years Foundation Stage having largely caught up with the levels of knowledge and understanding expected for their age, and in Years 1 to 3 more pupils are exceeding them. An increasing number of pupils are achieving the higher grades of which they are capable. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well so that the vast majority of these pupils make good progress. A few instances remain where teaching is satisfactory. For example, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough or the feedback they give to pupils sometimes does not tell them clearly enough what they need to do to improve. Pupils' concentration, thinking skills and ability to work and solve problems independently are developing well in the younger year groups. A very few older pupils have not developed these skills sufficiently well to help them direct their own learning or to evaluate their own success and therefore to make the very best of all the opportunities they are offered.

The skills of senior and most middle leaders have been successfully developed so that their evaluations are accurate and lead to well focused plans for improvement. A few middle leaders are new. They have yet to play their full part in monitoring and evaluating the school's work and in producing action plans which identify targets for pupils' outcomes which can be easily checked for success. The recently reorganised governing body is highly committed and offers practical support. Governors have still to fully develop skills and systems that ensure they play their full part in checking the school's work and setting its strategic direction. However, the school demonstrates its good capacity to improve and value for money through its strong track record of

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improving provision and outcomes for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics so that it is consistently above average by:
 - ensuring all teachers share the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - ensuring all pupils receive regular feedback which makes it clear to them what they need to do to improve their work and develop the skills to evaluate their own success
 - developing pupils' ability to learn independently, solve problems for themselves and to direct their own learning.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of all middle leaders so that they can check on the impact of their work effectively
 - developing the skills of the governing body to bring more rigour to how they check on the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children's skills on entry to the school are low. Evidence presented in school and observed in lessons confirms that the very large majority make good progress over their time at the school. As a result, they attain broadly average standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave. The achievement of all groups is good because the school takes swift action to intervene if it identifies any differences in their performance, including for those who start at the school later than is usual. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities also do well. In most lessons, pupils concentrate well and work well with a partner or in groups and this helps them to develop and offer their ideas readily. For example, in a lesson in Year 5, pupils made good progress in their understanding of the properties of shapes and the identification of nets. They were given clear direction and time to investigate and discuss their ideas with their peers before being challenged to apply their knowledge and clearly explain their thinking to the class. In contrast, in another class, while pupils who worked on a more challenging task with adult direction did well, some pupils made only satisfactory progress in their ability to work out the area of a shape because the task given was not challenging enough and was overly structured. They completed it quickly and found it more difficult to maintain their interest while they waited for further instructions from the teacher.

Pupils develop many good personal skills. They are polite, respectful and know right from wrong. They are thoughtful of others and regularly raise money for local and national charities to help those who are less fortunate than themselves. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, though their understanding of life in a multi-cultural society is relatively less well developed. Pupils

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say that they feel safe and know whom to turn to if they are worried or upset. They have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. Pupils put forward ideas and views through the school council. Many pupils willingly take on a range of responsibilities that contribute to the smooth running of the school, for example, as road safety officers, house captains and playground monitors. Pupils’ enterprise skills are advanced through opportunities to produce and sell products at a profit, for example, through the school fair. They are prepared suitably for the next stage of their education and lives.

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	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good because the large majority of it enables pupils to make good progress. Some teaching is outstanding and a very small minority of satisfactory teaching remains. The planning format is well embedded and all teachers plan lessons with pupils’ prior achievement in mind. Good-quality additional support is provided for those who find tasks more difficult. In the best lessons, there is very good use of ongoing assessment with teachers swiftly modifying their plans as a result so that learning is highly individualised throughout. This was seen to be extremely well done in a lesson in Year 2. The teacher provided a range of engaging activities very well matched with high expectations for all abilities. She consistently checked pupils’ understanding and gave them their next steps, ensured good listening and concentration and was consistent with her use of praise to celebrate success. Pupils were very clear about expectations and how to evaluate their own success accurately. As a result, pupils were highly motivated and engaged and made

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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outstanding progress with their reading and writing skills. In practice, there remain instances, particularly in Key Stage 2, where these features are not used as consistently. Similarly, many examples of high quality marking and feedback were seen, in keeping with the school’s agreed policy, but this is not always the case.

The curriculum has improved considerably since the last inspection. It is well planned to focus on the progression of basic skills, though pupils’ presentation of their work, other than in ‘Big Write’, does not always show off their skills to best advantage. The curriculum is well enriched and extended with a variety of opportunities which are enjoyed by pupils and have a high take up. Many partnerships are exploited which result in specialised educational visits and extension activities for those with a gift and talent, for example. A multitude of clubs suit the needs and interests of all. Topics chosen for study are often stimulating. However, they are mostly initiated by teachers and pupils have yet to fully find their voice and collaborate in making more choices in directing their own learning.

Good-quality care for all pupils lies at the heart of the school’s ethos. New arrivals are settled in carefully and structured programmes for those who need additional nurture and support are swiftly put in place, often in partnership with a range of other agencies and help children develop confidence. One parent volunteered about pastoral care that, ‘This has been excellent, continuous and done in a very caring and supportive way.’ Additional interventions are usually well targeted and secure good progress, though the monitoring of their success occasionally lacks sufficient rigour. The governing body provides a breakfast club onsite where pupils make a happy and positive start to the day. Older children are proud to volunteer and work in partnership with adults to provide excellent care for those who attend; behaviour here is exemplary.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management have improved significantly in most respects since the last inspection. The school’s continuous drive to raise aspirations for pupils and staff has generated high morale. Senior leaders ensure self-evaluation is accurate and data are presented clearly, interpreted accurately and used to set future priorities for improvement. All middle leaders have yet to be equally effectively in this. Everyone is clear about priorities, but milestones, expressed in terms of outcomes for pupils, are not always set, so that the school cannot always closely evaluate its progress

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towards them. The governing body ensures statutory responsibilities are met. For example, at the time of the inspection, good arrangements were in place to safeguard pupils through clear policies and strategies; parents and carers are confident that their children are safe in school. Governors are aware that their role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school is not rigorous enough. They have responded positively to training and support by reorganising their structure and putting new systems in place.

The school is inclusive and the performance of groups is tracked to ensure equality of opportunity. For example, gaps between the performance of girls and boys and between those entitled to free school meals and other pupils are closing. The school tackles discrimination determinedly and all pupils, whatever their need or disability, are integrated and included in all that the school has to offer. Community cohesion is promoted well within the school’s locality though plans to establish meaningful links with contrasting schools in the United Kingdom and beyond are in their early stages and their impact has yet to be evaluated.

Partnerships are developing well through innovative means of communication, a well-presented web-site and the general high visibility and accessibility of staff. Plans are in place to promote further the development of parents’ and carers’ skills in supporting their children’s learning. Links with other local schools are used well, for example, for academic coaching of particular pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are well cared for and thrive in this exciting environment. The many and varied activities ensure that children make good progress and achieve well. Children’s

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knowledge and skills are lower than expected on entry to the setting. Their communication, language and literacy and personal skills are particularly low. Children gain a wide experience of the six areas of learning because their needs are carefully assessed and their progress tracked closely. Any gaps in learning are identified and addressed. When they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, an increasing number of children have caught up with their peers nationally in all areas of learning.

Children become confident and develop a range of skills that equip them well for the future. They are successfully encouraged to be independent; for example, they can organise themselves with coats and snacks. They learn good manners, know how to take turns and handle equipment with care. They are taught to keep themselves safe and healthy, for example, by regular hand washing. Children concentrate well when working in a group with an adult or at a task on their own. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The opportunities now offered in the newly-created outdoor classroom offer the same excitement, variety and freedom for children to explore and discover as they enjoy indoors.

Effective systems for leadership and management are so well embedded that, despite the temporary extended absence of the setting’s leader, children continue to thrive. The environment is well organised, vibrant and safe. Adults work seamlessly together to ensure that provision and outcomes continue to be good. Any potential barriers to learning are identified quickly and support put in place to ensure everyone is included. Strategies to develop thinking skills and good learning behaviour are well embedded here and resources well directed. Leaders have identified the need to develop further the involvement of parents and carers in the work of the setting. However, parents and carers, quite rightly, value highly the care that is taken to ensure children are happy and enjoying school life.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 lower proportion of parents and carers than is usual responded to the questionnaire. Of those who did respond, almost all expressed their satisfaction with the quality of their child’s education. A very few parents and carers raised individual concerns. These were discussed with the school while preserving the respondents’ anonymity. One view expressed by a parent or carer and which was representative of several received noted that, ‘Belmont is a happy school and I am impressed with the

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fact that the children from all year groups seem to be encouraged to befriend and look out for younger children.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Belmont 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 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 191 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	68	12	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	55	17	45	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	13	34	23	61	1	3	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	50	17	45	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	42	22	58	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	14	37	23	61	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	47	19	50	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)	15	39	16	42	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	17	45	20	53	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	26	22	58	1	3	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	32	20	53	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	32	25	66	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	20	53	18	47	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	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.



20 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Belmont Community Primary School, Grantham NG31 9LR

Thank you for your contribution to your school's recent inspection. Special thanks go to those of you who completed questionnaires for us or spoke directly with inspectors. We learnt a lot about the school from these activities and watching you at work and play. We were impressed with your politeness and good manners.

We found that yours is a good school. We were struck by the friendly and welcoming atmosphere when we arrived. You study interesting topics and enjoy learning. This, together with your good behaviour, is contributing to your good achievement. Your teachers are good at their job. They mostly make sure that your work is pitched at the right level for you, but we have asked them to make sure that this is always the case so that you all reach the levels of which you are capable. We have also asked them to help all of the older pupils to develop the skills they need to be able to work on their own and to concentrate well, to think hard and solve problems for themselves. The younger children are now learning to do these things very well.

Your headteacher has made a huge contribution to the improvements in school since the last inspection, with the help and support of other school leaders and staff. We have asked that leaders and governors who are new to their role are helped to quickly be able to play their full part too.

You can all play your part by coming to school every day and continuing to behave well.

On behalf of the team, I wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey
Her Majesty's Inspector

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