

Beever Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105627
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	377269
Inspection dates	20–21 March 2012
Lead inspector	Susan Walsh

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicky Carter
Headteacher	Greg Oates
Date of previous school inspection	11 December 2008
School address	Moorby Street Oldham OL1 3QU
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Registered childcare provision	Beever Children's Centre
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	39
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	December 2008



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Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Walsh
Stephen Helm
Pamela Hemphill

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 22 lessons taught by nine teachers. Meetings were held with staff as well as with members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at pupils' work, records of pupils' progress, development plans, and arrangements for safeguarding as well as other documents. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They also scrutinised 54 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and questionnaires from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

The school is similar in size to most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school part-way through their primary education is also above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language is above average. However, few of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. These pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. There is a children's centre on site. It is currently managed by the governing body, although the responsibility for management will transfer to Action for Children in April 2012. It was inspected separately at the same time as this inspection. The school also provides registered early years provision for a maximum of 39 children under five years at any one time. It is open from 7.30am until 6pm each weekday for 51 weeks of the year. This includes before- and after-school provision which is provided for children who attend the school. Children who are in receipt of funding for early education currently access provision in the school Nursery and staff from the children's centre work within the Nursery. The before- and after-school facility is based in the Nursery area. The school meets the current government floor standard.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It provides a good curriculum that promotes pupils’ good spiritual, moral social and cultural development. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and leadership and management result in pupils’ satisfactory achievement and mean that the school is not yet good.
- Children join the school with skills that are well below those expected for their age. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress overall to attain below average and steadily improving standards. The gap with the national average is closing steadily, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils’ basic skills in writing are also improving but at a slower rate. The rate of pupils’ progress in Key Stage 2 classes varies significantly.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall and results in pupils making satisfactory progress. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is inconsistent. For example, it does not always make clear what pupils are expected to achieve and tasks are not always closely enough matched to pupils’ needs and abilities.
- Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds get on very well together. Behaviour is consistently good. Pupils feel safe and are fully aware of the importance of personal safety.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Improved outcomes in reading and mathematics and the positive ethos in school reflect the ambition of the head teacher and other key leaders, including the governing body. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance are satisfactory, as illustrated by recent improvements to the teaching of writing. However, procedures to check on pupils’ progress are not precise enough and the school’s tracking system provides insufficient information about progress over time and the progress of different groups of pupils. The cycle of monitoring, evaluation and development-planning lacks some rigour and does not include middle leaders.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment and boost pupils' progress in writing by:
 - improving pupils' technical skills, especially the accuracy of grammar, punctuation and spelling
 - extending further clear guidance to pupils about how to improve their writing.
- Tackle inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 by:
 - ensuring that teachers are clear about what they expect pupils to learn in each lesson and evaluate each pupil's level of success
 - making certain that work is always carefully matched to pupils' ability levels
 - checking learning more effectively in lessons so that misconceptions can be quickly tackled.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on pupils' achievement by:
 - making sure that procedures for checking on the progress of all groups of pupils are more effective
 - involving middle managers more closely in monitoring and using data, observing lessons and scrutinising pupils' work
 - using the outcomes of school self-evaluation more effectively in developing plans for future improvement.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers feel that their children make good progress. While this is an accurate evaluation of progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, in Key Stage 2 progress is inconsistent leading to achievement that is, overall, satisfactory. Pupils in all year groups are eager to learn and approach their lessons with enthusiasm. They enjoy working in groups and pairs where they contribute their ideas confidently and listen respectfully to the views of others.

When children join the Nursery their skills are generally well below those expected for their age. Their communication, language and literacy development is particularly low, as is their personal, social and emotional development. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of good teaching and an interesting curriculum that is closely matched to their needs. In lessons there is a strong emphasis on helping children to learn to speak as well as to read and write. Good teaching enables pupils to continue to make good progress, achieve well and enjoy their learning in Key Stage 1. Attainment by the end of Year 2 is below average and improving securely, especially in reading where the introduction of a comprehensive programme of phonics is bringing about rapid improvement. Pupils are successfully linking letters and sounds to tackle unfamiliar words when they are reading and writing. Their confidence as readers is growing securely. However, there are occasional inconsistencies in the quality of teaching when delivering phonics lessons. For example, some staff have better articulation than others and a lack of clarity occasionally slows the progress of those who find learning more difficult.

Although attainment at the end of Year 6 is below average, including in reading, the gap with national averages is closing rapidly, especially in reading and mathematics. In the recent past pupils' progress in writing has been too slow. However, this is now picking up pace because the school is providing pupils with clearer guidance about how to improve their writing. Nevertheless, shortcomings remain to be tackled such as: pupils' grammatical understanding and accuracy; the accuracy of spelling; and the correct use of basic punctuation. Overall, pupils are more enthusiastic about mathematics lessons than writing. They say mathematics lessons are more enjoyable because there are lots of mathematics games and fun activities. Pupils are also enthusiastic about reading. Class readers fire their imagination and help them to consider some difficult issues. Older pupils work particularly well together. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils carefully explained the meaning of challenging words such as 'abhor' putting the words into different contexts to help aid each other's understanding. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils. When they are provided with high-quality support by skilled support staff, these pupils make good progress. However, the quality of support is variable. Many pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make better progress than other pupils because the school provides good-quality support for them and their families.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers feel that their children are well taught but inspectors judge the quality of teaching to be satisfactory overall because the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is too inconsistent. However, there is much good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The high-quality relationships between staff and pupils underpin the positive atmosphere in school and ensure that pupils generally enjoy learning. Teaching successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, when pupils in Year 6 studied the Michael Morpurgo book, 'Why the Whales Came', they were able to develop moral perspectives and to think deeply about moral questions. Teachers are successfully implementing improvements to the curriculum. More opportunities are being provided for speaking and listening. Consequently pupils are improving their verbal skills by extending their vocabulary. Teachers are also providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length. This is working well in Year 6 where pupils take a real pride in their work. However, in some classes in Key Stage 2 pupils are producing insufficient work because the teachers' expectations are not high enough and tasks are not always challenging enough. For example, in mathematics lessons in lower Key Stage 2, pupils of different abilities are sometimes asked to complete the same tasks which are generally too easy for most pupils. This acts as a brake on accelerating progress faster.

Not all teaching in Key Stage 2 is clear enough about what pupils are expected to have learned by the end of each lesson. This makes it difficult for teachers to assess the learning and progress that has taken place and inhibits effective planning for future learning. Some teachers are proficient at using questioning to extend and check on pupils' learning but this is not consistent. In some classes pupils' misconceptions go unchallenged for too long. Marking is regular but does not always make clear enough to pupils what they need to do to improve their work, with the result that pupils in some classes continue to make the same mistakes.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are typically considerate to staff and courteous to visitors and each other. They contribute well to making this a happy and safe school in which to work and play. Pupils really want to please their teachers. Consequently, they behave well in lessons and usually work productively. Their enthusiasm only wanes when introductions to lessons are too long or the work is not well matched to their needs. They are able to cooperate well and enjoy learning together. Those who join the school at other than normal times settle in quickly and are positive about their new school. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and no parent or carer expressed any specific concerns about bullying or behaviour. Pupils admit that there are occasional fallings-out and name-calling but they say that any issues are very quickly resolved by staff. As a result, pupils feel very safe in school. The school informs children about how to keep safe when using the internet and pupils understand the potential dangers inherent in using social networking sites. Pupils are taught about the hazards they can face in everyday life and know how to minimise risk. Attendance levels are improving and are now broadly average because of the enhanced rigour and effectiveness of monitoring procedures and because pupils' attitudes to learning are becoming more positive.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. Issues identified during the previous inspection have been tackled successfully and, as result, achievement is improving securely, especially in reading and mathematics. Leaders and managers have appropriate plans in place to improve further pupils' writing skills and have provided enhanced professional development for staff, although they recognise that there is more to do. These factors illustrate the school's satisfactory capacity to improve further. Since the previous inspection leaders and managers have maintained the school's strengths in developing the well-being of its pupils. This is reflected in comprehensive arrangements for safeguarding which are enhanced by the close working relationship with the children's centre. Support for pupils' welfare and that of their families is good. The school does much to expand pupils' horizons through providing a good curriculum that provides an exciting range of visits and other enriching experiences. These are used well to secure pupils' good spiritual moral, social and cultural education development. Additionally, the school ensures that pupils have an appropriate understanding of a wide range of faiths and cultures. This makes an important contribution to the high levels of mutual respect seen in the school. Despite the harmonious school environment, the promotion of equality of opportunity is only satisfactory, because leaders and managers are not yet rigorous enough in monitoring the progress of different groups of pupils.

The school is aware that its current system for tracking pupils' progress is too unwieldy and is not fully accessible to staff. It does not provide a sufficiently robust overview of progress of different groups of pupils including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who join the school at other than normal times. Although the head teacher regularly monitors teaching in lessons, middle managers are not fully involved in monitoring the impact of teaching on outcomes for pupils including monitoring pupils' written work. Consequently the cycle of monitoring and evaluation lacks some rigour. Leaders and managers have a generally accurate view of the school's effectiveness. However, the outcomes of self-evaluation are not used with a sharp enough focus in planning for future improvement.

The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

The school provides care for children before school in the mornings and after school. The staff involved are employed and managed by the children’s centre. These members of staff then continue their shift in the school nursery where they help support children from the school setting as well as those who are placed in the nursery by the children’s centre. The very supportive relationships between children and staff result in happy, well settled and confident children. Children are actively engaged in a variety of interesting activities that are closely matched to their interests. Skilled staff are good at modelling and promoting language development. Consequently, children make good progress in their speaking and listening while they are in the setting. Behaviour is consistently good and children play well together. Although children’s progress is assessed, this information is not always used to plan specific activities that would further boost the progress of individual children during the before- and after-school sessions. The setting is well managed and systems to ensure that children are safe and secure are robust.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

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 for the registered provision	2

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	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



22 March 2012

Dear Pupils/Students

Inspection of Beever Primary School, Oldham, OL1 3QU

Thank you for being so friendly when I visited your school. Your school is currently providing you with a satisfactory standard of education, but there are lots of good things about it. We saw how most of you try your very best in lessons. We were very impressed by your good behaviour. You go on lots of trips that sound very exciting. Your work about the Titanic was very interesting and we were pleased to hear that you enjoyed your work relating to Shakespeare.

Your achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, your attainment is below that reached by other children in schools nationally. However, you are starting to catch up, especially in reading and mathematics. There is more to do in order to improve your writing. We have asked your teachers to help you to make sure your writing always makes sense and that your spellings and use of punctuation are accurate. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but sometimes teaching is not always clear about what you are expected to learn in lessons. We have asked your school to improve this. We have also asked your teachers to make certain that the work is always carefully matched to your needs and to make sure they check your learning regularly in lessons. Teachers do not always give you enough advice about how to improve your work when marking your books or through the use of targets so we have asked them to improve this.

Leaders and managers are working hard to improve your school but we have asked them to improve some specific aspects of their work. These include making sure that information about your progress is accurate and used effectively to help you learn. We are also asking them to be more rigorous in the way they check the school's work and to use this information to inform the plans they make.

You can all help your school by continuing to try very hard in all your lessons.

I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Walsh
Lead Inspector

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