

# Beal Vale Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105672
<b>Local authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	377276
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Liz Godman

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>	183
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Richards
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Richards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 September 2008
<b>School address</b>	Salts Street Shaw Oldham OL2 7SY
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 7705752
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Liz Godman  
Terry Bond

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 14 lessons taught by 7 teachers and met with groups of pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school's self-evaluation, development planning documents and records of monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. Inspectors scrutinised questionnaires completed by pupils and staff and 44 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number coming from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. The school meets the current floor standards set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

There is a nursery on the school's site. It is not managed by the school's governing body. It receives its own inspection and the report is available on the Ofsted website at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because teaching and achievement are not outstanding as marking and feedback are sometimes inconsistent and pupils have limited knowledge of different cultures.
- The quality of teaching in the Reception class is outstanding. Children’s skills are below those typical for their age when they start school, but they make very rapid progress, especially in the development of communication, language and literacy skills and in their personal and social development.
- Overall pupils’ achievement is good. Pupils make consistently good progress in Years 1 to 6. By the end of Year 6 an above average proportion of pupils reach the expected Level 4 in both English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is good and lessons provide pupils with interesting activities, enabling them to learn at a good pace. Although there are examples of good practice, the use of assessment and marking of pupils’ work are inconsistent. As a result, pupils do not always know how to improve their work or have time to check and correct it. Occasionally, during lessons, teachers do not make sufficiently regular checks on pupils’ progress and understanding.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They have good attitudes to learning and say that bullying is rare and that they feel safe in school.
- Leadership and management are good. Leaders and managers have taken effective steps to improve the school’s performance since the last inspection. They know the school well and use this to make sure that the quality of teaching and pupils’ progress are at least good. The good curriculum ensures pupils’ good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall. Pupils are able to participate in art, music and sporting activities.

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

- Ensure that marking and assessment are used consistently in all classes and in all subjects by:
  - using marking to give pupils regular written feedback on how they can improve their work
  - providing more regular opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and others' work
  - making accurate checks during lessons to identify and rectify pupils' mistakes and misunderstandings
  - providing time for pupils to respond to teachers' marking and to make any corrections.
  
- Extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different cultures represented within the school and more widely by:
  - making good use of the opportunities that arise for this
  - ensuring this is planned for and covered in the curriculum.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Children join the Reception class with skills below those typical for their age. They make very rapid progress across the areas of learning because the teaching is outstanding. This progress is most marked in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development. Many children are exceptionally keen to write independently. No opportunity is missed for them to do this, whether they are modelling with clay or playing with toy animals in the Noah's ark. Children's eagerness to share their work and the other children's responses are typical of the outstanding attitudes to learning and the exceptionally well-developed social skills of children in the Reception class.

Pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree that their children are making good progress. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' skills are above average in reading and writing and broadly average in mathematics. Year 2 pupils use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to read unfamiliar words and they talk enthusiastically about the books they like. Pupils' reading skills continue to develop so that by the end of Key Stage 2 most are fluent and competent readers and their attainment in reading is above average. Their overall attainment is also slightly above average, with an above average proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 in both English and mathematics.

Pupils' learning in lessons is good. They show a good interest in the activities provided, especially when they can use a practical approach or their curiosity is stimulated by the use of different media. For example, pupils in Year 4 enjoyed calculating areas and perimeters when designing zoo enclosures, as well as considering the moral dilemmas surrounding animals in captivity. Year 3 pupils

concentrated intently when watching a video of a storm as part of their English lesson on *The Mousehole Cat*.

Throughout the school, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress due to the accurate identification of their needs and good support from teaching assistants both in lessons and in small groups.

### **Quality of teaching**

All parents and carers returning the questionnaire said their children are taught well. The inspection confirms the quality of teaching as consistently good, with some examples of outstanding teaching.

Teachers and support staff build good relationships with the pupils. This secures their positive attitudes to learning. Lessons proceed at a good pace, with challenging activities which sustain pupils' interest. Teachers use questions well to encourage pupils' thinking and to extend their understanding of spiritual and moral issues. For example, Year 5 pupils responded thoughtfully to a short animated film considering how it portrayed loneliness and loss. Staff have high expectations that pupils will be able to work independently. Consequently, most do and this is most marked in the Reception class and in Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 2 showed a good level of independence in writing sentences in order to answer mathematical questions about directions. Pupils in Year 1 wrote at length about their visit to the park. In this lesson, the teaching assistant supported some who found the task more difficult and ensured pupils used their knowledge of letters and sounds to write words independently and accurately.

The effective use of teaching assistants is consistent throughout the school and contributes well to the effective teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils in Year 6 were enthusiastic in designing a story board for an animation they were making and those in Year 4 eagerly used laptops to explore the relationship between area and perimeter. Effective teaching enables pupils to make consistently good progress in developing reading skills.

Although there are examples of good practice, the use of assessment and marking to support pupils' learning is inconsistent. Consequently, pupils do not always receive clear written feedback on how they can improve their work and they are not always given time to respond to the teacher's marking or to make corrections. Pupils do evaluate their own or others' work, most notably in the Reception class and in Year 1, but this is less frequent in other classes. Occasionally in lessons, teachers do not make sufficiently accurate checks on pupils' progress. As a result, their mistakes or misunderstanding go unchecked and are not corrected.

Teachers make good use of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social understanding. However, reference to different cultures is less evident in lessons, assemblies and around the school. Consequently, while pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, their cultural development is the weaker element.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Almost all parents and carers who returned the questionnaire say that their children feel safe in school. Pupils confirm this. They say that bullying is rare and, if minor incidents do occur, they are confident that these will be dealt with effectively by staff. They understand the different forms of bullying and how they can stay safe, for example on the roads or when using the internet.

Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. They are keen to learn and do all that is asked of them in lessons. Occasionally, when working in groups, some pupils rely on others to take the lead and to record the work because they do not have a clear role in the activity. Pupils are courteous and respectful to one another and to adults. The school manages pupils' behaviour effectively and it is a calm and orderly environment. Pupils with identified behavioural difficulties respond positively and their behaviour has improved over time. The behaviour of children in the Reception class is outstanding. They live up to the high expectations set for them and respond with confidence and maturity. They show high levels of sustained and independent learning, when working outside, in their classroom or in the indoor open plan area.

Pupils' attendance is average and has improved this year. The school has given a high priority to improving attendance by using a range of successful strategies, including the weekly class award.

## **Leadership and management**

The school's leaders have high expectations of pupils' achievement and have secured good improvement since the last inspection. Leaders at all levels are increasingly involved in improving the quality of teaching. For example, professional development has involved teachers observing one another. This has contributed to a more consistent approach in the classroom and has accelerated pupils' progress across the school. The school's monitoring and evaluation are accurate. There is a clear and accurate understanding, shared with the governing body, of the school's strengths and areas requiring improvement. The school's performance is managed well and actions to improve it are described clearly in the school's development plan and implemented effectively. Governors make careful checks, for example, on the effects of additional support on improving pupils' progress. The school has identified some inconsistencies in the use of assessment to support learning and teachers recognise this as an area for further development. Accurate self-evaluation, good improvement since the last inspection and the commitment of all staff give the school good capacity for further improvement.

The school's broad and balanced curriculum enables pupils to acquire good skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics and it promotes their spiritual, moral and social development well. The curriculum provides varied enrichment activities including visits, art, music and sports. However, the extent to which it deepens pupils' knowledge of different cultures, both in school and in the wider world, is more limited. This is because activities to promote this are not consistently planned into the curriculum and opportunities which arise are sometimes missed.

The school has good relationships with parents and carers and encourages them to support their children's achievement. In response to parental requests, the school established a homework club. Good partnerships with other schools are helping Year 6 pupils to prepare well for the transition to secondary school and particular care is taken to ensure a smooth transfer for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well by ensuring that all pupils make good progress and that all are included fully in school activities. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. Careful checks ensure that pupils are safe and that risks are assessed and minimised.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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](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.

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.

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## 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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.**



23 May 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Beal Vale Primary School, Oldham, OL2 7SY**

Thank you for your welcome and your help with the inspection.

You go to a good school and make good progress in English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6 because you are taught well. The youngest children have an excellent start because of the outstanding teaching in Reception. They quickly learn to both work independently and with other children and start to read and write well.

We saw you all enjoying learning, because of the interesting things you do. Sometimes your work is marked well and the teacher's comments show you how you can improve it, but this does not happen all the time and sometimes you do not have time to check or correct your work. In a few lessons, there are not enough checks to make sure your work is correct and that you all understand the tasks set for you.

You behave well in lessons and around the school. You are keen to learn and told us that bullying is rare and that you feel safe in school. Your parents and carers agree that you are safe in school. We saw you enjoying interesting activities like visiting the park in Year 1 or making animations in Year 6. These help you to work well together. We know that Year 4 are very good at understanding issues and dilemmas, but would like all of you to have more opportunities to learn about different cultures.

Your headteacher, staff and governors know the school well and want to make it even better for you. To help them with this we have asked them to:

- make sure you know how you can improve your learning and your work
- help you find out about different cultures locally and around the world.

I know that you will continue to work hard and wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Liz Godman  
Lead Inspector

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