

Beit Shvidler Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136402
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	382053
Inspection dates	19–20 June 2012
Lead inspector	Ronald Cohen

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eddy Breuer-Weil
Headteacher	Sara Keen
Date of previous school inspection	No previous report
School address	261 Hale Lane Edgware Middlesex HA8 8NX
Telephone number	020 8238 2746
Fax number	020 8958 4175
Email address	admin@beitshvidler.org.uk

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Ronald Cohen

Additional inspector

Linda Rafferty

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 13 lessons taught by nine teachers, and talked with groups of pupils, two members of the governing body and with staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documents associated with safeguarding procedures and self-evaluation. They examined data and other information about pupils' progress. They listened to pupils reading and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors scrutinised the school's improvement plans as well as the curriculum documents and teachers' planning for lessons. They also took into account the 126 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with those completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This primary school is below average in size. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. This is reflected in the below average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. There are many more boys than girls. The school has recently moved from independent status to voluntary aided status. It moved into new purpose-built accommodation in February 2012. The current oldest year group is Year 5. The school caters for Jewish children, the vast majority of whom come from a range of religious orthodox backgrounds. The school has an extended school day to accommodate both secular and religious studies. The school runs a breakfast club. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because the quality of teaching is not yet outstanding to raise achievement to the highest level. Key strengths are pupils’ behaviour and the school’s inclusive ethos. Pupils, parents and carers typically praise ‘this very warm and caring community school’.
- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve well. Across the school, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from broadly expected starting points. At the end of Year 5, attainment is broadly in line, and improving well, with that expected for pupils of this age in writing and above this in reading and mathematics. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn and develop well, and make good progress.
- Teaching is typically good. In the more effective lessons, teachers encourage pupils to become resilient and independent learners. However, in a few lessons, where the teaching is satisfactory, pupils are not always sufficiently engaged in finding things out for themselves. Also, pupils are not always encouraged sufficiently to tackle challenges they find most difficult.
- Pupils’ behaviour is outstanding. The school is happy and harmonious because pupils respect each other and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. Older pupils are excellent role models for the younger ones. Pupils confirm that they feel safe in school. Adults pay close attention to pupils’ individual needs.
- The headteacher, staff and the governing body use their accurate knowledge of the school to improve its performance. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance focus clearly on developing the skills of staff to meet the ever-changing needs of pupils. The monitoring of teaching and pupils’ progress by recently appointed middle leaders is, however, not yet sufficiently robust. The good curriculum encourages all pupils to become confident learners. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted

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extremely well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop and ensure consistently outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers give greater opportunities for pupils to engage in exciting independent learning activities, particularly those that extend their writing skills
 - ensuring that teachers challenge pupils to their maximum ability.
- Increase the effectiveness and the impact of some middle leaders in monitoring teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire strongly agree that their children make good progress. Inspection findings support these views. When they arrive in the Nursery, children's skills and knowledge are typical of those expected for children of their age. However, about half the children have weaker skills in some aspects of their development, for example problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, or communication, language and literacy. By the end of Reception, they have made good progress in most areas of learning, including sounding out with increasing accuracy the new words they read. This is because the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) captures children's interest through practical, language-related tasks and games. During the inspection, the children's good progress was demonstrated with a Nursery 'graduation ceremony' in the presence of parents. This event celebrated, and highlighted clearly, the success of their learning and progress during the year.

Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school. By the end of Year 5 (currently the oldest year group), attainment in reading and mathematics is already at, and in a few cases above, that expected nationally by the end of Year 6. Pupils' skills in writing, however, although improving at a good pace, are not yet as securely developed. Nevertheless, this represents good achievement overall. Attainment in reading is above average by the end of Year 2 and is securely above that usually seen for pupils of this age by the end of Year 5.

The gaps in performance between groups of pupils are closing. Boys are closing the gap significantly with girls, and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are similarly catching up with their peers. The rapidly increasing proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as pupils whose

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circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, learn and progress as well as other pupils. This is the result of a whole-school focus on, and staff training for, the carefully targeted intervention programmes that are provided for these pupils.

Quality of teaching

The good teaching ensures that, overall, pupils learn well. Pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, thrive in an encouraging atmosphere both in classroom-based lessons, and in the small-group and one-to-one activities. The more successful lessons are characterised by challenging activities which stretch all learners appropriately, and where pupils are encouraged to become more independent in their own learning, rather than passive recipients of explanations by the teacher. Teaching assistants in these lessons are seen both by pupils and the teacher as an integral part of this process, and they are deployed well to make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. For example, in one Year 3 lesson, where the pupils were engaged in the practical demonstration of bringing together science and design and technology, the pupils worked in pairs to produce 'monsters'. The major feature of the monsters had to be moving parts, which were driven by pneumatics. The teacher and teaching assistants gave strong support to pupils, encouraging them to work at the edge of their knowledge. However, their support did not impede the pupils' ideas, even though these were sometimes 'outside the box'. Even in the failure of one or two ideas, the pupils learned much.

Not all lessons allow the pupils freedom to learn by doing and discovering for themselves. In these few lessons, judged to be satisfactory, teachers speak too much, and pupils are not always sufficiently nor quickly engaged in learning independently. As a result, their concentration wanes and opportunities are missed for pupils to write in a more extended manner.

An appropriate range of activities, either initiated by the children or led by the teacher, contribute well to children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school has plans to improve the outdoor area to enhance children's learning more effectively than it does currently. The success of guided reading sessions and the teaching of reading throughout the school are reflected in the pupils' good reading skills and their love of reading. A very high proportion of pupils, when asked, said they preferred reading to any other relaxing activity. Teachers plan themes, topics and frequent visits to enhance pupils' knowledge of the outside world. Such activities, together with links with charities in Africa, help teachers to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.

Increasingly effective use is made of marking and target setting for pupils, whose notebooks have clear references to their targets. Older pupils are mostly aware of their target grades. Marking is often helpful, and tells pupils what to do in order to improve. However, just occasionally, where the marking refers to work needing to be done again, a pupil's response is not shown clearly in their notebook.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in this highly harmonious community. It reflects the distinctive ethos of the school, which inculcates polite, courteous and respectful behaviour in the pupils. Inspectors concur with the wholly positive views of parents and carers that behaviour is typically of the highest quality and that pupils are safe in school. Behaviour and safety are equally good at the school's breakfast club which is well attended and much enjoyed by those that attend. Older pupils work, learn and play alongside younger ones with a watchful and caring eye on their safety. There is a true 'family-feel' throughout school. Newcomers are treated with great respect. They quickly understand the robust philosophy, which is predicated on the fact that rules are sensible and are therefore to be followed. Pupils of all ages thoroughly enjoy school and their very positive attitudes to learning add much to the ethos and sense of community that wraps around the school.

Pupils say that behaviour is extremely good in lessons and around the school. There have been no instances of homophobic bullying, name-calling or racism. Pupils, parents and carers confirm this but recognise that there is a keen awareness of how such incidents would be addressed. Pupils understand clearly the different types of bullying, and how to keep themselves safe, both in and out of school. They are aware of the dangers associated with using the internet and can explain how to avoid cyber-bullying. Attendance is consistently above average. The school effectively promotes the importance of regular and punctual attendance to parents and carers.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, other senior and subject leaders and the governing body are highly ambitious for the school. Accurate self-evaluation identifies where professional development will have most impact. Staff undertake a range of training courses and feel well supported in the development of their skills. The school's priorities translate to individual targets for staff through a well-established system of performance management. Strong leadership continues to improve teaching and achievement and sustain pupils' outstanding behaviour and safety, thus highlighting the school's capacity to improve further. The school works effectively to help all pupils succeed in their learning. Staff use and update regular assessment information and discuss this with the headteacher. However, recently appointed middle leaders, although learning quickly in their new posts, are not sufficiently rigorous at using and analysing assessment data to monitor teaching and pupils' progress in the subject areas for which they are responsible.

The governing body is knowledgeable about the school's strengths and priorities. It provides strong challenge and support for the headteacher in equal measure. The school meets requirements with regard to safeguarding. Its policies and procedures for ensuring the pupils' safety are robust. There is a strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity by school leaders, managers and staff. Discriminatory practice is not tolerated and gaps in performance between different

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groups are closing. The highly inclusive school ethos is resulting in increasing numbers of pupils wanting to attend the school, as its strong reputation for meeting the specific needs of each pupil, including the most-able pupils, spreads.

The curriculum is good, because it juxtaposes its religious and secular elements to enable it to meet its key emphasis on developing pupils as well-rounded, educated individuals who care about the community in which they live and also pay regard to global issues. Pupils are encouraged to embrace diversity. Pupils' work on display around the school illustrates pupils' pride in their own culture and respect and knowledge of other cultures. Partnership links with other schools and organisations, for example the Tikkun Africa project, enable pupils to join in a charitable programme to bring education to poor children in the townships of South Africa.

The excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the curriculum encourages them to develop honesty and moral principles, and is what parents and carers value so highly about the school's vision. The overwhelming majority of the parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire express their confidence in the school's leadership and the staff to continue to drive the school forward. A small number of parents and carers, though, feel that the school does not appear to deal with their concerns. Inspection evidence indicates that parental concerns are discussed and addressed and the overwhelming view of most parents and carers is typified by one parent's comment that the school 'is caring and responds to all my concerns, speedily and with sensitivity'.

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).

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.
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.

21 June 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Beit Shvidler Primary School, Edgware, HA8 8NX

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. It was a pleasure to join you in lessons, to talk with many of you and to listen to some of you read. There is a very strong family feel to your school. This is what many of you, your parents and carers told me you like so much. Your regular attendance at school also shows how much you and your families value your time here.

Beit Shvidler is a good school. You learn well and make good progress because the teaching is good. You all show great respect for each other and are also very interested in the lives and views of people around the world. Your behaviour is outstanding and you all get on well together at break and lunchtimes. You told us that you feel safe in school and that adults take very good care of you. We agree!

We think your school could be even better than it is now. We have asked the leaders of the school and your teachers to make sure that more and more lessons are outstanding and that they encourage you to be working at problems and projects that make you work at the very limits of your knowledge and skills. It might be hard at first, but you will definitely benefit in the end and learning will be even more fun! We have also asked that some subject leaders in the school check even more closely on how well you are learning and progressing.

You can help by making sure that you work as hard as you can, and that you continue to support each other in that very friendly manner, which is such an integral part of life at Beit Shvidler School.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Cohen
Lead inspector

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