

Beamont Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135161
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	381820
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2012
Lead inspector	Lynne Read

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	423
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Roberts
Headteacher	Karen Morris
Date of previous school inspection	25 March 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lynne Read

Katherine Lee

Jean O'Neill

Additional Inspector

Additional Inspector

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons taught by 12 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, a group of parents and carers, a representative from the local authority, senior managers and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including the school's documents for self-evaluation and safeguarding. They also studied standards in reading, pupils' workbooks and the tracking system used to monitor pupils' progress. Inspectors considered the 105 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as those from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

The school is larger in size than most primary schools. The very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds; a small number have minority ethnic heritage and speak English as an additional language. A higher than average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school has Healthy School status. It meets the current floor standards which sets the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

There have been significant changes in staffing and leadership over the last two years. The headteacher has been in post for four terms and a new senior management team has been established.

A private provider offers 'wrap-around' day care for nursery children within the Early Years Foundation Stage unit. This provision is subject to a separate inspection and report.

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	3
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school that is improving rapidly. The school is not yet good because teaching is not consistently good and there is a variable pattern of achievement across classes. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress overall, but there are too few opportunities for them to develop and practise early literacy skills. Across Years 1 to 6, achievement is satisfactory although it varies between classes. There are increasing pockets of good progress in Key Stage 1 and examples of accelerated progress, especially for the older pupils in Key Stage 2. Attainment is broadly average by Year 6 but too few pupils attain the higher level in mathematics.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall; some is good and outstanding but there is a small amount of inadequate practice. There are good relationships in lessons and pupils are keen to learn. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, assessments of children's progress are not sufficiently detailed or used effectively in planning challenging activities or to prepare them for Year 1. Occasionally in Key Stage 2, work is not carefully matched to pupils' learning needs or the more able are not challenged fully, especially in mathematics. Some pupils have useful advice so they know how to improve their work. This is not consistent practice across all classes.
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and the promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Measures to ensure pupils' safety have been sharpened and meet requirements. Attendance is improving rapidly but is below average.
- The headteacher and senior leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and are driving improvement energetically. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance are satisfactory. However, leaders do not monitor teaching rigorously enough to ensure consistency across Key Stages 1 and 2. Some

improvements for the Early Years Foundation Stage are partially implemented and not fully effective.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - developing more detailed and frequent assessments of children’s progress ensuring that assessment information is used effectively to plan challenging activities and ensure a smooth transition into Year 1
 - providing a wider range of opportunities for children to develop and practise early reading and writing skills on a continuous basis
 - ensuring that improvements are implemented swiftly and consistently and are making the desired impact on children’s learning.

- Ensure the quality of all teaching is at least good throughout the school to raise achievement beyond satisfactory by:
 - ensuring that work is consistently planned at different levels of difficulty and includes good challenge, especially for the more able in mathematics at Key Stage 2
 - providing clear information for all pupils to help them improve their work
 - developing a more rigorous system for monitoring teaching and learning and ensuring consistency of practice across classes.

- Improve attendance further by working with a few families to reduce the rate of absence.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaire feel that their children are making good progress. Inspection findings partly support these views. There is some good progress, especially in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, some pupils have gaps in their prior learning that are currently being addressed through intervention work or booster groups. Achievement is satisfactory overall and attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6.

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below those expected for their age and progress is satisfactory across the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is not yet good because activities do not extend children’s learning sufficiently. There are too few opportunities for them to independently explore books or follow stories and act them out. Early writing skills are taught but children are not sufficiently encouraged to practise and consolidate that learning through the free-choice activities provided, both indoors and outside. As a result, children’s communication, language and literacy work is below the level expected and weaker than the other areas of learning, as they move into Year 1.

An increased emphasis on learning phonics ensures that most pupils read confidently and attainment is broadly average by Year 2. Very effective lessons throughout school, together with new, good-quality books, promote reading well. Pupils experience a wide range of fiction and non-fiction material and, by Year 6, attainment is broadly average with a good

proportion of pupils reaching the higher level. Most are confident, expressive readers. In Key Stage 1 achievement is improving and much is good. Some pupils experienced a slowing of progress as they entered Year 1 but this shortcoming has largely been overcome through precision teaching and intervention work. Teachers are mindful of boys' relatively weaker performance in previous years, especially in literacy. Well-chosen resources and intervention work are helping to close that gap rapidly.

Following the 2010 and 2011 tests, the school identified a number of issues with teaching and learning and introduced measures to address them. Lower junior pupils are catching up on their performance in Key Stage 1, which has been lower in previous years. However, across Years 3 to 6, progress is variable and closely linked to the amount of challenge provided in lessons. This especially affects some more-able pupils in mathematics who are not always stretched. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have clear targets that are well used in lessons; they make equal progress to their classmates. Those who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make satisfactory progress.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers feel that their children are well taught. Pupils have similar views and say they learn a lot in lessons. This is a similar picture to that seen during inspection. Some teaching is good, most consistently so in Key Stage 1. The proportion of good teaching across the school, however, is not high enough to ensure consistently good learning.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is satisfactory. Planning takes account of children's interests and includes some opportunities for independent learning. However, tasks do not routinely include enough challenge to take learning forwards or consolidate and extend skills, as teachers often have insufficient assessment information to plan activities well. Assessments of children's progress are not recorded in sufficient detail or on a routinely frequent basis across the three classes. There is little evidence to support some assessments in the Reception classes, making it more difficult for the Year 1 teachers to ensure a smooth transition as children embark on the National Curriculum programmes of study.

Across the school, lessons promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development resulting in friendly, respectful relationships between pupils and staff. Planning is based on a broad curriculum, promoting creative, practical and physical skills in a balanced way. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and well deployed to ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs take a full and active part in lessons.

Improvements have been made to the quality of teaching but not all are embedded. Some lessons have a brisk pace and cater well for pupils of different abilities. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils rose to the challenges presented, calculating accurately and finding number patterns to 100. In reading sessions, Year 6 pupils enjoyed exploring the expressive use of language in graphic novels. Others noted what they knew about a topic and what they needed to know next, before embarking on well-planned study work. Occasionally, when pupils listen passively to the teacher for too long, the pace of the lesson slows or expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low, especially for the more able in mathematics. Some pupils have detailed marking and feedback, as well as helpful targets to

guide their work. However, this is not consistent practice and pupils sometimes forget where they should focus their efforts.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils say they enjoy school, have lots of friends and that they feel safe. Inspection findings confirm these views. A scrutiny of behavioural records and discussions show an improvement in behaviour over time and it is currently satisfactory. Pupils help to devise school and class rules; these are well known and respected. Pupils who have emotional or behavioural difficulties are well supported so they can cope with the conventions of school life. As a result, lessons are rarely disrupted and, in the majority seen during inspection, pupils were keen to learn and worked hard. A very small minority of parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire expressed concerns about the school's systems for dealing with bullying. Pupils themselves assert that bullying is rare and that adults deal quickly with any worries they might have. A few described examples of boisterous behaviour at playtimes; this has also been noted by staff. The school has plans to develop the playground and allocate areas for different types of activity in order to address this issue. Attendance has risen significantly over the last two years. Absences are followed up swiftly. Good habits of attendance are actively encouraged through praise and awards for individuals and classes. However, the school knows that more work is needed with a few families to reduce absences further.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Through anti-bullying projects and lessons on personal development, they are well equipped to deal with risk and know what to do if they have a problem. Sound opportunities exist for pupils to take on responsibilities. For example, school councillors are having an increasingly active role in the day-to-day running of school and in decision making.

Leadership and management

The headteacher is the major driving force behind recent improvements at the school. Senior leaders share a clear vision for the future and have high ambitions. They are providing effective leadership to improve achievement and teaching after an unsettled period for the school. Self-evaluation and development planning have been successful in ensuring that most pupils are back on track to achieve in line with expectations. Monitoring systems have led to improvements in teaching but are not yet sufficiently rigorous to ensure that action plans are implemented consistently and are making the intended impact on learning in every class. Nevertheless, sound capacity to improve is illustrated by better attainment and achievement, especially in Key Stage 1 and in literacy at Key Stage 2, and the closing of gaps in learning between boys and girls. Attendance has also improved.

Comprehensive evaluation systems, including very good use of assessment data, ensure that senior leaders have a clear overview of provision and performance. The information gathered is fed into school development planning, focused on the main priorities with clear actions and measurable targets. It is used to good effect to manage the performance of the staff, set targets for professional development and termly targets for pupils' progress.

A satisfactory curriculum has a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Pupils especially enjoy their weekly 'Golden Time' that provides outdoor activities, computer work and competitive

games. A strong emphasis on personal development helps promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Visits help to expand pupils' horizons and provide opportunities for them to meet people from different backgrounds. Staff and members of the governing body are focused on providing equality, ensuring that opportunities are open to all, regardless of disability or special needs. The school does not tolerate discrimination in any form and this contributes significantly to the harmonious community.

Good partnerships bring many benefits. Links with other schools ensure continuity of learning for those pupils transferring to secondary education, and those with the pre-school help to prepare children for full-time education. Health and safety has an appropriately high profile in school. Safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements. The governing body is supportive and committed to providing the best for pupils, drawing well on local authority expertise to support the school through an uncertain period. Members have recently undergone further training and are developing their monitoring role further and facilitating communication between home and school.

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.



4 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Beamont Community Primary School, Warrington, WA2 7RQ

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and appreciated all the help you gave us. Thank you to the pupils who filled in their questionnaire and those who chatted with us.

Beamont Primary provides you with a satisfactory education and is improving. The school helps you to develop into well-mannered and caring young people. You get on well together and take good care of each other. It is good to know that you like your teachers, learn a lot, feel safe and are happy in school. You are keen to learn and work hard. Your progress is improving well. You are reaching higher standards than before and more of you are meeting the targets that your teachers set. Well done! However, we think learning could be improved further so we have asked the adults in your school to:

- make sure that those of you in the Nursery and Reception classes always have challenging work, especially in reading and writing, to help you learn quickly and prepare you for Year 1
- ensure that all your lessons include work at different levels to meet your needs and provide good challenge for those of you who learn quickly
- provide clear information for all of you to help you improve your work
- ensure teachers check that all these improvements are working.

You can help by continuing to work hard, being keen to learn and keeping up the improved attendance. Thank you once again for the interesting conversations we had. Please accept our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Read
Lead Inspector

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