

Belle Vue Primary School

Beaver Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA2 7PT

Inspection dates

18–19 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school because:

- Pupils are happy and well cared for by staff. They enjoy learning and are full of praise for the exciting extracurricular activities particularly in music and sport.
- Parents also feel this is a good school and praise the way staff manage pupils' behaviour and keep them safe.
- Teaching is good and is sometimes outstanding. It is particularly strong in the Reception Year and in Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. By the time they leave the school standards are above national levels.
- Pupils' good, and sometimes impeccable, behaviour in lessons helps them to make good progress. They are eager to learn and try their very best to succeed. Around the school pupils are considerate and polite.
- The school has improved from 'satisfactory' to good. Both teaching and achievement have improved. This has been led strongly by the headteacher, his deputies and the governing body.
- Improvement is driven by a relentless focus on what is going on in classrooms and how it can be made even better. Methods for monitoring the work of the school are outstanding. Support for vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs is highly effective.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough outstanding teaching and learning across the school.
- Activities in lessons are not always planned precisely enough to meet pupils' different learning needs. This sometimes results in work that is too difficult or too easy.
- In less effective lessons there is too little time for pupils to reflect on their learning or extend their speaking skills.
- Achievement in reading at Key Stage 1, particularly for boys, is not as strong as in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes and this consisted of 22 lessons. In addition, they observed the teaching of small groups receiving particular support for English and mathematics. The headteacher conducted two joint observations with an inspector.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and to parents as they brought their children to school in the morning. They took account of 49 responses from parents to the online Parent View survey.
- Meetings were held with the governing body, staff and a representative from Cumbria local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's monitoring of teaching and the improvement plan.
- Inspectors heard four groups of pupils read and checked the school's assessments of pupil progress in reading. They also looked at the school's tracking system showing pupils' progress in mathematics and English.

Inspection team

David Law, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Andrew Morley	Additional Inspector
Derek Sleightholme	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Belle Vue is an above average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The majority of pupils are White British and there are few who speak English as an additional language.
- The school exceeds the government's floor standards (the minimum standards and rate of progress expected for primary pupils).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring a more consistent match of planned activities to pupils' different learning needs
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning and develop their speaking skills.
- Improve pupils' progress in early reading skills at Key Stage 1, particularly for boys, by teaching pupils to use a wide range of reading strategies.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills, knowledge and understanding below those typical for their age and they make good progress to reach standards that are above those seen nationally by the end of Reception. Children eagerly explore the exciting activities available and enjoy learning. They make particularly strong progress in their personal development and, therefore, confidently settle into Year 1.
- Good progress continues across Key Stage 1 where pupils show very positive attitudes in lessons. They are eager to learn and keen to cooperate.
- There is good progress in mathematics and by the end of Year 2 nearly all pupils reach at least expected levels for their age. Pupils enjoy learning about numbers, as was seen in a Year 1 lesson about subtraction.
- Progress in writing has improved at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection with a rise in the proportion reaching Level 3, which is above the expected level.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in reading by the end of Year 2 is similar to the national picture but progress is not as brisk as it is in mathematics.
- Most pupils have a good knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics) but some, particularly boys, lack a broader range of reading skills to help them work out words and understand text. As a result, pupils are not always able to choose the most appropriate strategies, which leads to a loss of fluency.
- Since the previous inspection, attainment in standardised tests at the end of Year 6 has improved and is now above average. Pupils make good progress across Key Stage 2 because the quality of English and mathematics teaching is good.
- Pupils extend their reading through the skilful use of computers, for example to find out about topics in history. Year 4 pupils were fascinated when, using the internet, they made exciting discoveries about Vikings. Progress in reading at Key Stage 2 is good and in recent years over half the pupils reached the higher Level 5 by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' attainment in writing has improved because they have good opportunities to use their skills across the curriculum.
- The school has improved strategies for teaching mathematics and this has resulted in more pupils reaching higher levels. Pupils confidently use their mathematics skills to solve problems.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similarly good progress. The school expects all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to do well and does not tolerate excuses for anything less.

The quality of teaching

is good

- A strength of the teaching is teachers' ability to organise lessons. Particularly effective is the use of short but lively and practical activities to enthuse pupils. In one Reception class, for example, drama was used to stimulate exciting learning about the hungry fox creeping up on the chicken shed as the farmer's dog lay snoring.
- Teachers question pupils well to check their understanding – an improvement since the last inspection. Assessment is accurate, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage where it is based on astute observation of children.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and teachers involve them in planning the curriculum, so they are well informed about the needs of particular pupils, especially those with special educational needs. Consequently, when working with such pupils they intervene well to support learning.
- Teachers use resources well, especially the interactive whiteboard. Pupils thoroughly enjoy using i-pads and can do this skilfully because teachers have instructed them well.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in English and mathematics is strong as it also is in music,

physical education and information and communication technology (ICT).

- In most activities, learning is well matched to pupils' needs, as, for example, in Year 6 when pupils were challenged to explain how to multiply decimals and made outstanding progress. However, this is not always consistent and sometimes pupils find the work too hard or too easy, for example at Key Stage 1, when they are given reading books that do not help them to deploy a sufficiently wide range of skills.
- In most lessons time is used well so the rate of pupils' learning is frequently brisk as they move between activities or concentrate hard for a time on one particular thing. In a few lessons, however, pupils have too little time to reflect on their learning and develop their speaking skills. This is usually because the teacher spends too much time talking and pupils' chances to contribute are, consequently, limited.
- Across the school, pupils are keen to learn and interested in what they do. 'Teachers are fun and lessons are interesting.' was a typical comment from pupils. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and, consequently, so has pupils' achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- In lessons and around the school, pupils are considerate, polite and friendly. Many pupils talked about how well they get on together and one typical comment was, 'We like helping each other.' In the Reception classes, children's behaviour is impeccable.
- At lunchtimes, pupils are well mannered and most sensibly chat at the dining tables or help to clear away although sometimes noise levels rise too high. At playtimes, they behave well and most line up in an orderly fashion to come back into school. Pupils are eager to take on responsibility at playtime and lunchtime, when, for example older pupils look after younger ones.
- Pupils have a sound awareness of how to keep safe and say they feel very safe in school. They show a good knowledge about safety when using the internet.
- Pupils say bullying is rare. Parents and staff agree. There are no recorded racist incidents and exclusions are low. Name-calling is rare and pupils confidently say it does not happen because of someone's race, disability or religion.
- Attendance is above average. There is little persistent absence because school leaders have robust procedures for tackling it and consequently it has reduced since the last inspection.

The leadership and management are good

- Staff at Belle Vue work as a well motivated team. They have ready access to professional development. Strategies such as coaching and mentoring are well established and effective in improving the quality of teaching.
- All school leaders put a firm emphasis on the continual improvement of teaching. Expectations are high and the clear vision shown by the headteacher is shared by all. Both deputy headteachers provide effective support within what is a recently established senior team.
- Middle leaders are clear about their roles and keen to assume responsibility. The contribution of middle leaders has improved since the last inspection due to expert coaching from senior leaders.
- Gaps in achievement are picked up early through the school tracking system so it is rare for pupils to fall behind. If this does happen, school leaders take prompt steps to make up the difference. An example of this is seen in the robust actions to raise attainment in mathematics and English through the school.
- Pupils' progress is reviewed systematically and teachers have to account for the achievement of the pupils in their class. The performance of staff is rigorously managed to improve teaching quality.
- Strategies to monitor and evaluate the performance of the school, such as the frequent observation of lessons, are excellent. This has improved teaching and achievement since the

last inspection, which indicates a strong capacity to sustain further improvement.

- The curriculum is good. Pupils enjoy connecting aspects of their learning in topics, for example when using their writing skills in history, but work is still underway to develop this approach with other subjects. The mathematics curriculum is organised to cater for the most-able pupils and increasing numbers reach Levels 5 and 6 at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The strong tradition in music supports this and the school choir performs across the county. All staff promote equal opportunity well and all pupils have equal access to the rich extracurricular activities.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
- The local authority provides light touch support and the school values this.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is strategic and ambitious for the achievement of all pupils
 - is well informed about teaching and challenges senior leaders
 - aspires for the school to become outstanding
 - meets all statutory duties and ensures that safeguarding requirements are met
 - is keen to involve parents and take account of the views
 - listens to the views of pupils by meeting regularly with the school council.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	112228
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	401247

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	416
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Evans
Headteacher	Peter Ovens
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2010
Telephone number	01228 593161
Fax number	01228 607553
Email address	admin@bellevue.cumbria.sch.uk

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