

Beckers Green Primary School

Beckers Green Road, Braintree, CM7 3PR

Inspection dates

17–18 January 2013

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.

- Pupils achieve well as a result of teaching that is rarely less than good and often outstanding. In Years 1 to 4, pupils have done particularly well and made outstanding progress from low starting points.
- Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and plan the right level of work to suit their different ability levels.
- Teachers organise their highly proficient learning support assistants very well. Their help and guidance have a very beneficial impact on pupils' learning and well-being.
- Strong leadership and management and excellent relationships at all levels underpin the school's success.
- The headteacher's leadership is resolute and determined. Teaching and pupils' achievement have improved considerably since the last inspection and continue to do so.
- Pupils behave well in and around the school. They are kind and respectful. Older pupils' behaviour is outstanding; they are excellent ambassadors for their school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the great majority of pupils attend regularly, a few parents do not make sure their children attend school every day despite the school's considerable efforts. Consequently, these pupils do not make enough progress in their learning.
- Children in the Reception classes make outstanding progress in their personal development, but their progress in learning basic reading, writing and mathematical skills is not as fast because they do not have enough opportunities to practise these skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons and groups of pupils or individuals working with learning support assistants or teachers. They looked in on pupils during lunchtime and mid-morning break times.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils' work in all year groups and heard some pupils from Years 1 and 2 reading.
- They held meetings with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, groups of pupils from Years 2 and 6, and some of the school's 'eco-warriors'. They spoke informally with many pupils during lessons and at break times.
- Inspectors looked carefully at safeguarding documentation, information about pupils' progress, self-evaluation documents and development plans.
- The views of 45 parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into consideration, as were the views of parents who spoke with inspectors at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Cheryl Thompson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Watson

Additional Inspector

Christopher David Cheswright

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above-average-sized primary school with 11 classes, serving the local community.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join the school partway through their primary education. Many of these pupils are disabled or have special educational needs, often emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- No pupils are currently educated in alternative provision away from the school site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above average. This extra funding is for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Three members of the teaching staff have joined the school since the last inspection. Most of them started their teaching career at Beckers Green.
- The governors manage a daily breakfast club on the school site.
- The school has established links with the local housing association, and shares an attendance officer with five local schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In the Reception classes, improve children's early speaking, reading, writing and mathematical skills by:
 - making better use of what teachers know about children's starting points to give them more opportunities to practise and reinforce these early skills.
- Improve the rate of attendance by:
 - making clear to parents and carers their responsibilities for making sure their children come to school every day
 - developing further the role of the attendance officer in holding parents and carers to account for making sure their children do not miss school for minor reasons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start school with skills in communication, language, literacy and numeracy that are well below the levels typical for their age group. Their personal, social and emotional development is also much less well developed. They make good overall progress in their Reception Year and by the time they start Year 1, their attainment is below rather than well below average.
- Children in Reception are making outstanding progress in developing their personal and social skills. Their progress in developing basic literacy and numeracy skills requires improvement. Teachers' knowledge of how to teach these skills is good, but they do not give children enough opportunities for practising these skills to promote more rapid progress.
- Older pupils make good or better progress, except the few who attend poorly. These pupils make good progress in catching up when in school, but in the longer term they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 4 make outstanding progress. They have benefited from the improved quality and stability of teaching in recent years. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are making good progress now but have had an inconsistent quality of teaching in the past. As a result, they have had to catch up on learning. For example, a good number of pupils do not know their multiplication tables as well as they should, and this slows their progress when solving problems.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, not only academically but also in developing a keenness to do well. Their self-confidence develops well as a result of their teachers setting them the right level of work to succeed. Pupils who join partway through the year have their learning quickly checked on so that teachers can make sure they are given the right level of work and make good progress.
- Pupils supported by pupil premium funding make good and sometimes outstanding progress. In the 2012 Year 6 national tests, their attainment was above that of pupils in this group nationally. Within the school, the gap in attainment between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others is closing at a good rate and is smaller than that found nationally.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Excellent relationships between all staff and pupils underpin pupils' good progress and their keenness to learn. The school's focus on encouraging pupils to develop their personal qualities for learning such as resilience, perseverance and risk-taking has had a strong impact. Pupils say things like, 'I'm not giving up', or, 'I'll have a go at doing it that way.'
- Teachers' understanding of how well their pupils are learning is outstanding. As a result, lessons are planned precisely to build on what pupils already know, or to revisit work pupils have found difficult. An outstanding feature is teachers' ability to reflect on the impact of their teaching. Teachers can easily discuss in depth what went well and what could have been improved.
- A consistent feature of all planning is that learning support assistants are used very effectively to help groups or individuals. They are always clear about what they are doing and tell the teachers how well, or not, pupils have done.
- Teaching for pupils supported through pupil premium funding is consistently good. 'Nurture

group' activities help pupils to develop good self-confidence and social skills. A range of small groups led by very experienced learning support assistants or teachers give eligible pupils extra support. For example, they have extra practice in using letter sounds to spell simple words.

- Precise and very regular checks on how well they are doing ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good or better progress. They have the right level of work and appropriate resources and support to help them succeed. The school has good links with outside agencies to call on if expert advice is required.
- Reading is taught well. All staff have a good knowledge of how to teach phonics (the sounds that letters make). An outstanding feature is the way teachers ensure that pupils who find reading difficult read with an adult every day. These pupils make exceptional progress and are very enthusiastic about reading.
- Teaching for gifted and talented pupils is outstanding, leading to exceptional progress, particularly in mathematics. A few Year 5 and 6 pupils are working at a level expected of much older pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are proud to be part of their school community. All staff, parents and carers have very positive views about behaviour in school. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations set for them to be kind, courteous and respectful. They work hard in lessons and take care with their work, responding thoughtfully to their teachers' marking or comments about how to improve.
- All parents and carers agree that their child enjoys school and feels safe. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They have a clear understanding of what constitutes various forms of bullying, including through mobile phones and emails. Older pupils take a very mature and responsible approach to keeping themselves safe, and prevent or deal with any such bullying.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy taking on responsibilities throughout the school and do so very conscientiously. Older pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They provide excellent role models for others to follow. For example, Year 6 value that they are trusted to use their 'common room' sensibly at dinnertimes and do not abuse this trust.
- Pupils offer thoughtful responses when given the opportunity to reflect on spiritual or moral issues in lessons. Older pupils develop a very good understanding of how to resolve arguments through their training as 'peer mediators'.
- Most pupils attend regularly and arrive punctually to school and lessons. The school uses a good range of strategies to encourage regular attendance. However, there are a few pupils whose parents and carers do not ensure that they attend school as often as they should, and these absences affect the school's overall attendance rate. The recent appointment of a school attendance officer who also works with five other local schools is beginning to make a difference.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has sustained and built on 'the marked improvements' noted at time of the last inspection, just under two years ago. Together with senior leaders, her constant drive for improvement has led to pupils' progress increasing substantially.

- Senior leaders work together exceptionally well as a team and share the headteacher's high aspirations for pupils' success. The main reason why leadership and management are not yet outstanding is that there is more work to do to iron out the inconsistencies in progress in the Reception classes and to tackle persistent absenteeism.
- Attention to detail and outstanding management systems are at the heart of the school's success. The school tracks the progress of individual pupils thoroughly, so senior leaders and know exactly how well individuals and different groups of pupils are learning. They hold teachers to account for the progress their pupils make.
- Senior leaders provide excellent role models in their own teaching and support colleagues, including those at the early stage of their careers, very effectively. Consequently, all staff are confident, open to new ideas to improve the children's education, and work highly effectively as a team.
- School development planning is sharply focused because it is based on excellent analysis of data and the senior team's thorough understanding of their colleagues' strengths and areas to improve. These plans show that school leaders are always seeking to improve, and reflect their strong commitment to ensuring that all groups of pupils have an equal chance to do well.
- The way subjects are planned and taught meets the needs of pupils well. The strong drive to ensure pupils are well equipped with basic literacy and numeracy skills is very successful. The good range of trips and visitors widens pupils' horizons and makes their learning exciting and relevant.
- The local authority has provided good support for school improvement in past years, and the school has chosen to continue buying in such support. The local authority has confirmed the school's excellent self-evaluation and provided good training for governors.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are diligent in ensuring that the school meets national safeguarding requirements. They make excellent use of their individual professional expertise in supporting and challenging the school. They know the school well because they visit frequently and have a very good understanding of what performance data tell them about pupils' progress and whether it is rapid enough. From the 19 visit reports written in the autumn term, it is very clear that governors challenge and hold the school to account for improvement. They are very well aware of the quality of teaching and the strategies used for helping teachers make further improvement, such as linking pay closely to pupils' achievement. They also track spending decisions carefully, including the use and impact of pupil premium funding.

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	114794
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	405537

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	303
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Bojko
Headteacher	Helen Ryan
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2011
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