

Bedonwell Junior School

Bedonwell Road, Belvedere, DA17 5PF

Inspection dates 6–7 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- In recent years pupils have attained above-average levels in English and mathematics by the age of 11 because of good teaching.
- Rigorous teacher assessment shows that increasing proportions of pupils are now making faster progress in all years and are achieving better scores than were attained in 2012.
- Teaching over time is good because most activities are carefully planned to meet pupils' needs. Their work is very carefully marked, and teachers give very precise suggestions for improvement.
- Governors are well informed and are prepared to challenge as well as support school leaders.
- The headteacher and his leadership team understand what needs to be done to further improve the school. Their priorities include raising the numbers of pupils achieving the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils speak very positively about their school, behave well and have a very clear sense of right and wrong. Leaders promote pupils' involvement in reflections upon behaviour and as a result they are keen to treat adults and each other with respect.
- The curriculum offers carefully planned links between literacy and other subjects. As a result pupils read purposefully across a range of topics and write well-structured responses in science and humanities as well as English lessons.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding because pupils who are capable of making faster progress are not always set hard enough work or asked questions that make them think deeply about topics.
- Marking is very thorough but pupils sometimes over-rely on teachers' suggestions for improvement rather than being given consistent opportunities to plan their own next steps, hindering their progress.
- While senior leaders check the impact of teaching on pupils' progress very carefully, the middle leaders are not yet fully involved in this process and as a result some inconsistencies in teaching remain.

Information about this inspection

- Three inspectors spent over 10 hours observing 24 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 16 teachers. Additional activities included observations at break time, on entry to and exit from school as well as a school assembly.
- Four lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors also made visits to a series of parts of lessons to check how pupils responded in their work to teachers' marking.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, school leaders and subject leaders. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 46 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as views communicated during informal discussions with parents and carers and a recent school survey to which 95 parents and carers had responded. A letter from one parent was taken into consideration and the views of the staff were gathered through meetings and 42 staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and examined the work in pupils' books.
- The school's own attainment records for the current as well as previous academic years were checked in addition to published information on pupils' achievement. Planning and documents checking aspects of the school's work, records relating to pupils' safety and welfare, including the school's single central record of checks on staff, and attendance records were also examined.

Inspection team

Patricia MacLachlan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jan Edwards	Additional Inspector
John Sweet	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bedonwell Junior School is four-form entry and larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium (extra money provided by the government for pupils in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families) is below the national average. There are currently no pupils from service families..
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils with African, Indian and any other Asian heritage are the next largest groups and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is now above the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is very slightly above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported through a statement of special educational needs or school action plus is slightly below the national average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum standards for attainment and progress expected by the government.
- The school has experienced changes to the leadership team. The deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher who leads on literacy have been appointed as senior leaders and a new year head team of middle leaders has taken up post since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To consolidate the improvements in teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - helping pupils to identify and assess for themselves the success criteria that will improve their work to meet higher levels of attainment
 - consistently setting open-ended questions and longer-term investigations that challenge pupils, especially those who are capable of making more rapid progress
 - enlisting the most skilled teachers across the school to model for all adults the ways in which frequent and probing questions can help pupils to make progress by expanding and explaining their answers more carefully.
- Further strengthen the leadership and management of teaching by:
 - training middle leaders so that they are empowered to join senior leaders in checking the impact of teaching upon pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good.

- Pupils from all backgrounds make good, and sometimes better, progress across the school. Some inconsistencies remain, however, and this means progress is not yet outstanding. Their progress is most rapid in those lessons where teachers check regularly how well pupils are doing and promptly adapt activities to increase the challenge or provide support where needed and ask questions to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Attainment on entry is significantly above the expectations of seven-year-olds nationally. By the time those pupils leave the school at age 11 there is a well-established trend of attainment in mathematics and English that is significantly above the national average because teaching is good and expectations are high.
- In the past, rates of progress in English and mathematics from one year to the next were less consistent. The reasons for this have been identified and addressed so that increasing proportions of pupils currently in the school are making consistently good progress. More ambitious targets are being set and regularly reviewed. Tailored support is arranged if pupils fall behind their classmates. As a result, school records, external moderation reports and pupils' books all show that more pupils in all years are producing a higher standard of work than pupils of the same age last year.
- The school provides and evaluates customised support, well matched to individual needs and, as a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have made rapid progress. Similarly, pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve at least as well as their classmates.
- The pupil premium grant is used to pay for small-group activities in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result the majority of pupils in receipt of this funding are now making the same good, or in some cases better, progress as their peers and there is little difference between the average scores in English and mathematics achieved by both groups.
- Younger pupils recognise sounds and letters and link them (known as using phonics) to read accurately because teaching is effective. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading and the public library is visited weekly by all classes.

The quality of teaching is good.

- Teaching is good because supportive relationships are established. Pupils are consequently keen to learn. Stimulating tasks are planned to give pupils good opportunities to make progress. For example, in a Year 5 English lesson on planning stories from different points of view, pupils were enthused by taking part in a dramatic role play. The teacher's probing questions were well tailored to individuals' abilities and elicited some profound reflections. Sharing these responses helped all the pupils to improve their stories and make rapid progress.
- Pupils are adept at discussing whether their English or mathematics work has met improvement targets because teachers mark books clearly in a way that shows pupils how to revise their answers. Teachers, however, do not always help pupils to understand the success criteria for the levels above their current attainment and this makes it hard for some pupils to understand the precise steps needed to improve beyond their current shorter-term targets.
- The best teachers re-shape tasks quickly if pupils are not succeeding to help them to learn at their own pace. Skilled teaching assistants give detailed support to pupils who need additional help to understand tasks. However, pupils are not always set open-ended challenges that require them to conduct independent research over longer periods. This hinders the progress they can make.
- School leaders' own evaluation of teaching is accurate and focused coaching by the experienced deputy headteacher has enabled some teachers to improve their practice rapidly this year and pupils' outcomes as a result.

- The majority of parents and carers who responded to a recent school survey believe that their children are well taught and receive appropriate homework. They also value the school website that has useful guides to help them to understand how to support their children's learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good.

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. This is because pupils work very co-operatively with each other and are both articulate and considerate. Behaviour is good rather than outstanding because pupils report some inattention with teachers, other than their own, who cover lessons. As a consequence, the pupils themselves have devised an innovative scheme for rewarding good behaviour in such circumstances.
- Pupils feel well looked after by the adults around them. One summed it up as: 'If there is a problem, the teachers sort it.' The vast majority of pupils act considerately and respectfully towards each other and to adults. Year 6 pupils are proud of their role as Guardian Angels who help the Years 3 and 4 pupils to find and maintain friendships.
- Bullying is rare and the pupils report that it is dealt with effectively. Pupils have a good awareness of personal safety including cyber safety and have taken an active part in drawing up the school rules.
- Attendance is above average because effective strategies, led by the learning mentor, are deployed to encourage good attendance. Parents and carers believe that the school provides a safe and caring environment and inspectors agree. Pupils enjoy coming to school because the curriculum interests them and they value the certificates awarded for good attendance.
- Pupils know right from wrong and many older pupils resolve difficulties among younger children in the playground. Assemblies, that are enlivened by the pupils' own contributions, encourage deeper reflection and kind actions. This reinforces moral development and promotes social growth.

The leadership and management are good.

- Good leadership and management have ensured that the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The curriculum has been reorganised to provide much more systematic links between literacy skills and other subjects, resulting in better quality informative writing. Marking is consistently thorough with systematic opportunities for pupils to follow their teachers' advice.
- The headteacher and his very skilled senior team have developed a robust system for checking the quality of teaching, and this has improved classroom practice. Capable subject leaders check pupils' books and marking. They make sure that sequences of lessons offer interesting tasks that help pupils to make progress. Joint planning for older pupils now involves specialist secondary teachers to make sure that there are opportunities to attain the higher Level 6 scores for those who are capable of making more rapid progress in mathematics.
- Other middle leaders in this large school have been enlisted in tracking pupils' progress. However, their impact in raising the levels of progress and tackling inconsistencies is limited because they are not fully involved with the senior team in evaluating the link between teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The system for managing the performance of staff ensures that only those teachers who meet required standards move up the salary scale. Difficult conversations about teaching performance are not shirked when these are necessary.
- The revised curriculum strongly supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' understanding of diversity is enhanced by enjoyable religious education that is identified by the pupils themselves as important in helping them to understand each other. Opportunities to experience sports competitions and to participate in musical performances are relished.

Pupils' cultural horizons are widened by running their own high quality newspaper, which involves international as well as school news reports. Boys and girls contribute and a recent highlight has been a celebration of a boy's organisation of a readathon to raise £4,000 for charity. Enrichment activities with the partner secondary school, visits, including one to France, and a wide range of sporting and cultural clubs all enthuse the pupils and support social and cultural development well.

- Arrangements for transition from infant school and to secondary school have been strengthened in recent years with collaborative projects among senior leaders in the respective schools.
- Effective safeguarding systems meet statutory requirements and policies are scrupulously applied. Leaders promote equal opportunities and are assiduous in tackling any discrimination that may arise.
- The local authority has provided effective support to the school by enlisting an adviser to support the school's analysis and improvement of pupil performance. There has also been encouragement for partnerships with other schools to review the curriculum, assessment practices and collaborate on teacher development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the standards of achievement and teaching in the school because the headteacher provides regular summary reports under these headings. The literacy and numeracy members of the governing body visit the school and join learning walks and book checks with the subject leaders. Governors have an accurate understanding of how pupils are performing compared with national standards because they use the data dashboard reports and some have attended training in tracking pupils' progress in the school compared with national figures. Governors understand the link between teachers' pay progression and their pupils' progress because their staffing committee is collecting regular summaries of pay and performance from the headteacher. Checks are made that the pupil premium funds are spent on the intended groups because the curriculum committee is receiving reports from school leaders on the impact on attainment made by the funds. Oversight of safeguarding is systematic and the governing body takes a strategic role by checking the school development plan.

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	101420
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	413146

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	474
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hurt
Headteacher	Ivor Gordo
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 March 2010
Telephone number	020 8310 4174
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