

# Beech Grove Primary School

Beechwood Avenue, Middlesbrough, TS4 3AP

**Inspection dates** 3–4 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement.

- Overall achievement requires improvement because the standards pupils achieve at the end of Key Stage 2 are lower than they should be, particularly in reading.
- Teaching requires improvement as it is not yet of a consistently good standard. This is because teachers do not always have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The pace at which pupils learn is often too slow because they spend too much time listening to teachers talking and too little time working independently.
- Work set in some lessons is insufficiently challenging and more-able pupils make less progress overall and have less opportunity to develop their thinking skills.
- Some pupils in Key Stage 2 do not enjoy reading and do not read often outside school. As a result, current progress in reading is slower than it should be. Insufficient time is spent developing reading skills and promoting in pupils a love of literature.
- Despite the recent reduction in the persistent absence of a small group of pupils, attendance remains low overall. This is because school leaders have yet to develop a consistent whole-school approach to tackling the problem of pupils' absence and punctuality.
- Governors do not yet have sufficiently good levels of understanding of school data to offer senior leaders effective enough support and challenge in their efforts to improve pupils' achievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- Overall, teaching and, consequently standards are improving slowly across the school.
- The vast majority of pupils' behaviour both inside and outside lessons is good because of the way in which all staff implement the school's behaviour policy.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- The headteacher has successfully overseen the merger of two schools and has developed a strong senior leadership team and 'one school' ethos.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons and parts of lessons taught by 16 teachers. Joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspection team listened to pupils from Years 1 and 6 read; they also, alongside senior leaders, examined the quality of work in the books of pupils from across the school.
- The inspection team studied health and safety documentation, teachers' curriculum planning and documents relating to the procedures to check the performance of staff and the quality of teaching, as well as the school's system for checking pupils' progress.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior leaders, members of the school staff, three members of the governing body and with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team had informal discussions with 24 parents at the start of the school day. Two parents made their views known on the online questionnaire (Parent View).

## Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Kaye

Additional Inspector

Lucie Stephenson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Beech Grove Primary school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school opened on its current site in September 2011 and was created from a hard federation (the coming together of two schools under the same governing body) of Marton Grove Primary School and neighbouring Beechwood Primary School.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number from other ethnic backgrounds.
- A much higher-than-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those from service families).
- An average number of disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs are supported through school action.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is a little higher than the national average.
- The school meets the current floor standards set by the government for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has an eight-place provision for pupils who have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Currently seven pupils attend the provision.
- There is a breakfast club operating on the school site which offers free breakfast to pupils which is managed by the governing body.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to good and better by:
  - increasing teachers' expectations of how much work pupils can produce and the speed at which pupils can learn
  - reducing the amount of time teachers spend talking to pupils and increasing the opportunities for pupils to work independently
  - ensuring work set matches the needs of pupils more accurately and that more-able pupils are offered a sufficiently challenging curriculum which enables them to improve their thinking skills.
- Improve pupils' attainment in reading in Key Stage 2 by:
  - raising the profile of reading across the school and offering a wider and more interesting selection of books in the school library
  - ensuring pupils have more opportunities to read both to adults and independently in class
  - engaging parents more effectively so that they recognise the importance of listening to their children read.
- Increase levels of attendance by ensuring school leaders take a more consistent approach to improving the attendance and punctuality of some pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by increasing opportunities for governors to undertake further training on interpreting school data in order to increase the effectiveness of the support and challenge they offer senior leaders in improving pupils' achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- As the majority of pupils joined the school in September 2011 from two separate schools it is not yet possible to accurately ascertain the levels of progress made by pupils between Key Stages 1 and 2. However, through the analysis of five terms of the school's tracking data it is clear that an insufficient number of pupils are making good progress currently, particularly in reading in Key Stage 2.
- The vast majority of children who start Nursery have social, language and early numeracy skills well below those typically expected for their age. As a result of good teaching and the rich and exciting experiences offered in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit, most make good progress and develop early reading, writing, mathematical and social skills closer to those expected nationally at the start of Year 1.
- While standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2012 were lower than those expected nationally, tracking data shows that standards in 2013 have improved. This is confirmed by lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. However, not all pupils make equal progress across the key stage. Pupils build well on the good start made at the end of Reception in Year 1 but progress dips in Year 2 with insufficient progress being made. As a result, pupils' progress overall requires improvement.
- Last year standards in Key Stage 2 were lower in writing than in reading or mathematics.
- Current school data shows that the majority of pupils are now making better progress than previously in writing. This improvement is as a result of the school's concerted efforts to improve standards in writing by using several different strategies. For example, pupils are now given greater opportunities to write longer pieces of work in a range of different styles in history and science.
- Recent tracking data shows that Key Stage 2 pupils' progress in reading has slowed and now requires improvement. While younger pupils read regularly in school and many say they enjoy reading, older pupils are more reluctant readers and do not always read regularly to adults or enjoy taking books out of the school library. School leaders are aware of this but have not as yet put in place planned improvements to both the school library and the profile of reading across the school. Nor have they yet been successful at increasing the numbers of parents who listen regularly to their children read at home.
- Approximately 75 per cent of pupils in the school are known to be eligible for free school meals. This group attained standards below those expected in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2012 in English but were broadly in line in mathematics. Their attainment was below that of other pupils overall by approximately two terms in English and mathematics. However, current tracking information shows attainment for this group is beginning to improve. Consequently, the gap in attainment with other groups is narrowing slowly.
- This is because the school is effective in its use of pupil premium funding, offering pupils a range of different support including one-to-one sessions with teaching assistants. While there is further work to be done, this reflects the school's commitment to providing an equal opportunity for all pupils.
- Overall, the achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below that of their peers but once again is showing signs of improvement. However, pupils who attend the on-site ASD provision make better progress than their peers, particularly in mathematics. The small number of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to those from White British backgrounds. Consequently, achievement for all groups requires improvement overall.

**The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- Teaching across the school varies too much in quality and too much requires improvement. Although some good teaching was seen during the inspection, there is not enough for pupils to make consistently good progress, as also evidenced by work in pupils' books.
- Learning in lessons sometimes moves along too slowly and fails to hold pupils' interest. In these lessons pupils spend too much time listening while adults talk, and teachers often have low expectations of what pupils can achieve in the time given. Too often questions asked of pupils and activities set do not give them sufficient opportunity to think, develop their ideas and work independently. As a result, pupils achieve less well and produce less work, particularly the more-able.
- Work set in some lessons does not match the needs of pupils and does not stretch more-able pupils sufficiently well. A scrutiny of pupils' books showed this clearly and pupils' comments that learning in some lessons was 'too easy and boring' further confirmed this.
- In lessons in which teaching was graded good, learning was often fun, enjoyable and challenging for pupils. This could be seen in an English lesson in which pupils were compiling a report by carefully selecting key information and matching it to subheadings. The teacher explained quickly and clearly what was expected, reminding pupils of the previous day's learning. Her effective use of questioning enabled pupils to think about what was required for a good report. Her gentle use of humour by making a deliberate mistake was appreciated by pupils, who took delight in correcting her error. Their enthusiasm to get started on the required research was evident and resulted in pupils of all abilities making good progress.
- The majority of teachers mark books diligently, offering pupils positive comments and encouragement through the effective use of the school's marking system.
- Children who attend Nursery and Reception clearly enjoy coming to school, as evidenced by the enthusiastic way in which they search for their name to self-register and the speed at which they settle down to work. The views of one parent echoed the views of others when describing staff as 'very friendly and always willing to help'. Staff work closely together and children benefit from a wide range of activities, both in the classroom and outdoor areas, which offer good opportunities to explore and develop independence.
- Pupils who attend the school's autistic unit often join others in mainstream classrooms, learning alongside peers. The small amount of specialist teaching observed in the unit was of good quality and this, combined with pupils' inclusion in mainstream classrooms helps develop their social and academic skills.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils** requires improvement

- School staff have worked exceptionally hard at improving the behaviour of pupils. The school's carefully structured behaviour policy is closely adhered to by all members of staff. This has resulted in an improvement in pupils' behaviour across the school.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and show polite and caring attitudes towards each other, staff and visitors both inside and outside the classroom. However, pupils spoken to still felt that although disputes between pupils had reduced considerably they still sometimes resulted in playground fights.
- Pupils spoken to were clear about the different forms that bullying can take. They were particularly aware of the dangers of cyber-bullying and felt that staff and the school's e-safety policy had ensured they had a good understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet.
- The majority of pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and are proud of their achievement. Pupils show consideration and support towards each other and feel their views are listened to by school leaders and that they influence decisions made on improving the school environment.
- Overall levels of attendance are low despite the work undertaken by parent support advisors, who diligently follow up pupil absence. However, a significant reduction in levels of persistent absenteeism this year can be attributed to the quality of their work. Although senior leaders are

aware of the problem, they have yet to implement an effective whole-school approach which successfully focuses pupils, staff and parents on improving attendance and punctuality.

## **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Overall, leadership and management requires improvement because the achievement of pupils is not yet good enough and the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good. However, the headteacher has been highly successful at bringing together staff and pupils from two different schools to form a single, unified school on one site.
- The headteacher has also successfully developed a leadership team which is beginning to bring about improvement in many aspects of the school's work against a backdrop of parental concern at the amalgamation of the two schools.
- Due to a change in the structure of the leadership team and further training, middle leaders are beginning to take a more active role and, as a result, the curriculum is improving and offers pupils a wider range of activities both in school and through visits to places of interest.
- These experiences offer good opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. For example, visits to a local farm gave Key Stage 1 pupils a better understanding of where food comes from and the ethics of food production.
- Teaching is monitored across the school and effective action is beginning to be taken by the headteacher through the management of staff performance in order to improve areas of weakness. As a result, the quality of teaching, although still requiring improvement, has begun to improve. However, further improvement is needed in a number of classes if teaching is to become good overall.
- School leaders ensure performance targets for staff link directly to pupils' achievement and targets within the school's development plan. Checks on the performance of staff are undertaken rigorously and the headteacher uses this information to make decisions on teachers' pay.
- Due to the recent change that school has undergone, the local authority has offered significant support to school leaders. More recently this support has been at the request of the school in order to develop the school's leadership team further.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - School governors come from a diverse range of backgrounds and bring a range of skills and experience to the governing body. They are actively involved in most areas of the school and, in partnership with the headteacher and senior leaders have developed an effective system for checking the performance of staff which rewards good teaching and addresses underperformance. They take a careful and measured approach to the management of pupil premium funding, which has enabled them to give support to eligible pupils and increase their levels of attainment and progress. However, governors have yet to access relevant training on interpreting school data, which would increase their understanding and enable them to offer a more effective challenge to senior leaders on the achievement of pupils. Safeguarding policies within school are securely in place, and the health and safety committee carries out regular inspections and has ensured that safeguarding procedures meet current requirements. However, further liaison is needed between the school and other agencies, including the police, to ensure the continued safety of pupils when crossing the road outside the school gates.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111577
<b>Local authority</b>	Middlesbrough
<b>Inspection number</b>	411879

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	345
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	The Rev.Sue Richardson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sheila Hauxwell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 818577
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