

Belvedere Infant School

Mitchell Close, Belvedere, DA17 6AA

Inspection dates 22–23 January 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' attainment in national tests in reading, mathematics, and writing are below average.
- Pupils do not make enough progress from their starting points.
- Children's progress in the Reception Year is not fast enough.
- The quality of teaching is not good because sometimes teachers' expectations are not high enough, which leads to them setting work that is too easy. This is especially true for the more able pupils.
- Some teachers do not check pupils' understanding regularly so misconceptions are not identified quickly.
- Subject leaders' assessment of teaching focuses more on what teachers are doing rather than on what pupils are learning.
- Pupils are not given opportunities to respond to teachers' marking and feedback. Consequently they often do not improve their work.
- Pupils are not given opportunities to develop their reading skills across different subjects.
- Senior leaders have been over-generous in their evaluation of the school's performance.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders are taking a robust approach to deal with weak teaching.
- Work in pupils' books shows improvement in their knowledge and understanding.
- The deputy headteacher has introduced effective systems to check pupils' progress and identify potential underachievement at an early stage.
- The headteacher and governors have been successful in appointing new senior and middle leaders. They have taken decisive actions to improve the school's effectiveness.
- Pupils feel safe; they behave well around the school and are eager to learn.
- Teachers and support staff provide a caring and supportive environment and develop good relationships with pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 13 lessons, of which six were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders to discuss the progress that groups of pupils make throughout the school. They analysed the school’s information on pupils’ attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with other leaders and staff, with two representatives from the local authority and with the Chair, Vice-Chair and two members of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors considered parents’ views of the school through informal discussions at the start of the inspection and the 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The team talked to pupils and listened to them read.
- Questionnaire responses from 23 members of staff were analysed. Inspectors analysed a range of documents, including the school’s checks on how well it is doing, the school development plan, documents relating to safeguarding, policies, information about pupils’ progress, the minutes of meetings held by the governing body, and records of behaviour and incidents. They also looked at the school’s website and data dashboard, and records of the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and additional sports funding action plan.
- Inspectors examined anonymised documents about the management of staff performance. They looked at attendance figures and pupils’ work.
- Inspectors examined school’s records related to a parental complaint to Ofsted.

Inspection team

Kewal Goel, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Barker

Additional Inspector

Lee Selby

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Belvedere Infant is a larger than average-sized infant and nursery school. It has three classes in each year group from Reception to Year 2.
- The school had a turbulent 2011–12 year, when because of asbestos, the school had to be vacated for almost six months. The pupils had to be educated on four different sites with limited resources.
- A large majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest group is Black African. The most transient pupils are of Eastern European origin.
- Over half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Some are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those from forces families and looked after children) is higher than usual.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is lower than national figures. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than average.
- The school has achieved Healthy Schools and Dyslexic Friendly School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so it is consistently good, to ensure pupils make rapid and sustained progress by:
 - teachers checking pupils' understanding regularly and adjusting plans if necessary to provide harder work, especially for the more able
 - ensuring that activities are always linked to what pupils will learn
 - developing pupils' reading skills across the different subjects
 - giving pupils, especially boys, more opportunities for extended writing.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by making sure that:
 - subject leaders use information on pupils' achievement more rigorously to check that achievement is improving
 - subject leaders' checking of teaching focuses on what pupils are learning rather than on what teachers are doing
 - leaders use the information about the progress of different groups more effectively, especially that of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because too few pupils make rapid enough progress over time because of weaknesses in teaching.
- Pupils' progress from their starting points is uneven. They do not make rapid progress and, as a result, attainment in reading and mathematics is below average and in writing it is significantly below average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage join the school with skills and capabilities that are below the levels expected for their age. The attainment is average by the time they leave the Reception classes, because the progress they make is good in most areas. However, the progress is not strong in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Targeted actions during last year have resulted in improved progress for Year 2 pupils in reading and mathematics. However, boys' attainment in writing has fallen to well below average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support provided by staff. The extra sessions provided outside classrooms for small selected groups are very effective. These sessions support pupils' development of basic skills in English and mathematics well.
- Overall, the progress of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, requires improvement, as their progress is similar to that of other pupils. There are missed opportunities in lessons to ensure the development of key vocabulary across all subjects.
- The attainment of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding improved slightly in 2013.
- More able pupils do not make good enough progress because extension activities and challenge are not consistently planned for in the lessons. They are not stretched through wider reading and discussion regarding authors and characters.
- Pupils' progress in reading is not good because they have few opportunities to develop their reading skills across other subjects.
- The school has placed a stronger emphasis on developing pupils' phonic skills (linking letters and sounds). The results of the phonic screening check improved in 2013.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because some teachers do not check pupils' understanding and adjust their plans to provide more challenging activities to accelerate progress.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities for extended writing to develop their writing skills.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils know and can do are not consistently high enough and the tasks set are not always sufficiently demanding, especially for the more able pupils.
- Some good teaching was seen during the inspection activities developed pupils' knowledge and understanding. In these lessons pupils gave thoughtful answers to questions.
- Work in current pupils' books show that pupils are making good progress. Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and praise them for attempting the tasks and suggest next steps in learning, but pupils are not given time to respond to teachers' feedback in order to ensure that they do not repeat their mistakes.
- The contribution of support staff in lessons and in sessions outside the classrooms is consistently good. They support pupils well and challenge them appropriately. However, they mainly support the less able and pupils with special educational needs.
- In a good Year 2 lesson, in an investigative activity for mathematics, the teacher ensured that learning was developed well, including challenge for the more able pupils. They had to measure height as well as stride and had to work out their own way of recording. Pupils made good

progress, as was clear from the high level of discussions between pupils.

- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. When pupils are given opportunities to talk to their peers or work in groups, they work very well in those situations.
- Teaching in the Early Year Foundation Stage is variable. In a good Reception lesson, children progressed well because teacher asked probing questions and created an exciting scenario that encouraged them to explore and develop their measuring skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good because pupils' attitudes in class and around the school are positive. They are eager to learn and want to do their best. Pupils respond to teachers' instructions quickly.
- Pupils are polite, cheerful, well mannered and respectful to each other and when the inspectors talked to them formally or informally.
- All the staff that responded to the staff questionnaire agree that behaviour in the school is good and consistently well managed, and the majority of parents who responded to Parent View agree that the school makes sure its pupils are safe and well behaved. During the inspection, behaviour observed at break times and lunchtime was good.
- In a mathematics lesson, all groups of pupils worked exceptionally well together, engaging and working out the tallest and the shortest. Cooperation with each other and engagement with learning were outstanding.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day and demonstrate safe practices around the school. They can identify risks and know how to keep themselves safe
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they are safe in the school. This is also the view of parents and school staff.
- Pupils play well together and enjoy good relationships with other pupils and adults. Most pupils are keen to participate in lessons and during assemblies.
- Pupils say there is little bullying and they know the difference between bullying and being unkind. They know about physical and verbal bullying. Pupils say that bullying and name calling, including racist behaviour, are rare and, if they occur, are dealt with promptly. This is reflected in the very low number of incidents recorded in the school's behaviour logs. There are only two incidents of fixed-term exclusions, one racist incident and no incident of permanent exclusion recorded by the school.
- Staff manage behaviour very well and pupils respond well to these behaviour management procedures. However, the quality of teaching in the classroom prevents them from achieving more. Sometimes a few pupils lose interest, but they are not disruptive.
- Pupils enjoy being given responsibility, for example as playground buddies, school councillors and buddies for new pupils.
- Pupils' attendance is improving due to the school's robust actions and is now average. The vast majority of pupils are punctual to the school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The quality of leadership and management is not yet good because many of the subject leaders are new and most of the leadership and management procedures are not yet fully established.
- Subject leaders have been busy in developing the resources for their areas of responsibility. During their monitoring and evaluation, they focus more on teaching rather than on learning and pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher and deputy have challenged underperformance and as a result the quality of teaching is improving.
- The school's checks on how well it is doing are more descriptive and less evaluative and judge the work of the school more generously than they should.

- The pupil premium funding is used to support individual and groups of pupils. The school has used this funding to increase provision for these pupils.
- Governors responded well to the demands of challenging times during 2011–12 when the school had to be evacuated because of asbestos. However, it took time to establish effective sustainable leadership and management with high ambitions for the future of the school. During this period of time staff morale was affected and this led to a high turnover of staff. That had a negative impact on pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are highly ambitious for the schools' long-term success and are working well together to create an inclusive environment where pupils' personal and emotional needs are met very well.
- Senior leaders have implemented effective strategies that have recently improved pupils' achievement, especially in Year 2.
- The deputy headteacher has been responsible for devising effective assessment systems and progress that pupils should be making. However, this is not clearly communicated to middle leaders because they are totally reliant on the deputy's analysis and are unable to interrogate pupils' assessment information and implement effective strategies to accelerate the progress of all groups of learners effectively.
- The curriculum has a wide range of topics and the school is preparing itself well to implement the new National Curriculum from September 2014. Pupils are given opportunities in science and geography for cross-curricular writing and using and applying mathematics, for example measurements. A wide range of activities and resources develop all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The curriculum successfully supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility and they show good concern for the needs of others. Philosophy for children develops pupils' higher order thinking skills. Assemblies include quiet time for prayer, reflection and celebration of special events, including multicultural events.
- Recently the school has introduced 'My Unique Story' for communication with parents. Most parents in their response in Parent View agreed that the school is well led and managed.
- The local authority provided a high level of support last year and carried out an audit in December 2013.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very clear about their roles and responsibilities and are not afraid to take challenging decisions to improve the school's overall effectiveness. They know about the quality of teaching in the school and how performance management is used to improve teaching. They are supportive of the school leaders and work closely with the senior team. Governors have undertaken extensive training in effective safeguarding, safer recruitment and on data to hold the school to account. Finances are monitored and managed prudently. They are fully involved in the procedures for appraisal and performance management.
 - Governors know about the additional sports funding and its use to develop pupils' healthy lifestyles. They are informed about the use of the pupil premium funding but they have not challenged the leaders about the use of the funding and its impact on improving the progress of pupils who are eligible for the funding.
 - Safeguarding procedures are robust.

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	101438
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	440435

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	315
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret O’Neill
Headteacher	Linda Mulley
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 February 2011
Telephone number	020 8311 9092
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