

Beever Primary School

Moorby Street, Oldham, OL1 3QU

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2014

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.

- Senior leaders are utterly determined to provide the best for pupils at Beever Primary. The school has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Attainment has risen and pupils achieve well. Most pupils make at least expected progress and many do even better, particularly in mathematics and reading.
- Teaching has improved because of the strong leadership of teaching and learning. Most teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are keen to learn and do well.
- Pastoral support is very strong. New pupils say they feel welcomed and they settle in quickly to school life.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and that they know who to turn to if they have any worries or difficulties.
- The school's leadership, including governors, has a clear understanding of how well the school is doing and gives the school clear direction for future improvements.
- The school strives to provide a range of additional enriching activities, which help pupils grow in confidence and broaden their horizons. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoyed a visit to a theatre in London. Others enjoyed learning to play water polo and in 2013 became the local water polo champions.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View and the school's own questionnaire consider their children are happy and well cared for at school. Almost all of these parents said they would recommend the school to other parents. The school amply fulfils its mission statement of 'encouraging children to learn and achieve in a secure, caring environment'.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. A few lessons do not interest, challenge or engage pupils, especially the most able, to try their best and reach their full potential.
- Pupils make slower progress in writing than in mathematics and reading. Standards in writing are rising, but they remain below average. Pupils' writing is sometimes spoilt by poor grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 part-lessons and made several other short visits to lessons to observe teaching and learning.
- They scrutinised pupils' work, observed break times and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, school staff, senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- A number of documents were examined. They included the school's view of its own performance, records of the checks made on teaching and learning, the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 10 responses on the online questionnaire (Parent View), analysed the school's own questionnaires, and took account of correspondence from parents.

Inspection team

Fiona Gowers, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Faheem Chishti

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is significantly higher than that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is above average.
- Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. Few are at the early stages of learning English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the usual times is much higher than that found nationally.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching from good to outstanding so that pupils' attainment continues to rise throughout the school, particularly in writing, by:
 - ensuring lessons interest and inspire pupils to do their very best
 - ensuring the most able pupils are given hard enough work so more of them reach the higher levels in tests and assessments
 - continuing to improve pupils' punctuation, grammar and spelling and their knowledge and understanding of letters and the sounds they make.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Leaders and staff rigorously tackle discrimination and strive to give pupils, whatever their circumstances, equal opportunities to be successful.
- Most children start school with skills that are well below those expected for their age. They then go on to make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Children clearly enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They develop a real thirst for learning and gradually learn to stay focused on their work for extended periods. As the children themselves explained: 'We look, listen and think. That's how we learn!'
- In some classes, almost half of the pupils can change during the school year. This high level of coming and going has led to some fluctuation in overall attainment levels in some classes. However, lesson observations and checking the work and progress records of pupils who are new to the school, show that these pupils do just as well as others. Newcomers quickly settle into school because of the very strong pastoral support.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 are rising, but remain below average.
- The school is generally good at getting pupils to the expected level for their age by the end of Year 6. In 2013, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in mathematics, reading and writing matched the national average. Standards are broadly average in mathematics and reading, but remain below average in writing.
- The most able pupils are making faster progress in some classes because more is expected of them. However, this is not the case in every class. In a few lessons, the most able pupils are given work that is too easy and so they fail to reach their full potential.
- Achievement in mathematics has accelerated because teachers' subject knowledge has improved through additional training. This is paying dividends in helping pupils to systematically improve their numeracy skills as they move from one class to the next.
- The school is successfully developing a love of reading through fun activities, such as the 'reading bug' clubs and adults recommending books that they have enjoyed reading themselves. Pupils are encouraged to read a wide range of different types of books. This is particularly helping pupils who speak English as an additional language to enrich their vocabulary.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 are improving their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard remains below average and this can hamper their fluency in reading.
- The quality of pupils' writing is improving. Pupils now have regular opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing and have a clearer view of how to improve their writing. However, recurring errors in pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling prevent some pupils doing as well as they could.
- An emphasis on learning through talk caters particularly well for those pupils who are learning English as an additional language. This helps such pupils do just as well as others in school.
- Pupil premium funding is used well. School leaders carefully explore the reasons why any pupils are not doing as well as expected, and then provide effective support. Many pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are now making faster progress than other pupils in school and their levels of attainment and attendance have risen since the previous inspection. Although their attainment still remains below that of other pupils in school by approximately two terms in reading and writing and one term in mathematics, it is now on a par with similar pupils nationally, except in writing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. The school gets to know the specific needs of individual pupils very well. The school keeps a careful check on any pupils whose attainment is significantly lower than that expected for their age and regularly evaluates the impact of any support provided.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Most teaching is typically good and some is outstanding.
- Lessons are well planned and technology is used well to support learning.
- Many teaching assistants have received specialist training. They support teaching effectively as they generally focus on supporting the learning of a particular group of pupils in a lesson.
- From a very early age, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage develop into enthusiastic learners because there is good range of fun activities for them to explore. For instance, children clearly enjoyed writing menus and then making their own sandwiches and eating them in their 'Beever Café'. Activities provide interest for all, but some are not challenging enough for the most able.
- Pupils make the best progress when they are very involved and inspired to give of their best. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were fascinated as they used different formulae to check which of the Elizabethan ships would be fit to sail when loaded with differing amounts of weaponry.
- Pupils in a Year 2 mathematics lesson also worked extremely hard and made rapid progress. They stayed interested and involved throughout this fast-paced lesson and the most able pupils were provided with work which stretched them and allowed them to fulfil their true potential. Much was expected of the pupils and they rose to the challenge.
- In most lessons, pupils have a clear view about how to improve their work. For example, a group of pupils, who were using various poetic devices to describe paintings, explained they were using similes and metaphors to improve their writing as this would 'help give the reader a picture in their head'.
- The pace of most lessons is good. Teachers are generally quick to get pupils working on suitably challenging tasks, although occasionally work for some of the most able pupils is not hard enough, so their learning slows and they do not reach their full potential.
- In a few lessons, pupils make slower progress because the learning activities do not interest or involve them as much. In such lessons, some pupils sit back, at times, and let other pupils do all the hard work.
- Marking has become more consistent and helps pupils improve the content of their written work or the accuracy of their mathematics calculations, for example. However, marking does not always clearly show pupils how to improve their grammar, punctuation and spelling and so some pupils do not write with technical accuracy.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Adults get to know individual pupils very well and adapt their teaching to help pupils understand their work more easily.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most pupils say they are very happy at school. Indeed one group of older pupils described Beaver Primary as 'the best school we could ever imagine!'
- Pupils are well mannered and respectful. They work well in groups together and readily listen to the ideas and views of others.
- Pupils readily engage with a range of responsibilities and carry out roles, such as peer mentors and playground pals, with maturity and care.
- The school has effective systems in place to reward pupils who work hard and behave well. From the very start of their time in the school, expectations of them are high and the children respond well. For example, a child in the Early Years Foundation Stage, wearing a 'Star of the Week' badge, proudly explained the badge shows that: 'I am always good and I always want to

learn!’

- A small minority of pupils find it more difficult to manage their own behaviour. However, these pupils are managed and supported very well and lessons are rarely disrupted.
- The school’s work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pastoral support for pupils and their families is particularly strong. The headteacher, learning mentor and special needs coordinator work tirelessly with pupils and their families. They liaise regularly with a range of health and social care agencies to help ensure concerns are followed up.
- Many of the systems to safeguard pupils are meticulously kept and are of the highest order.
- Pupils say they feel safe. There are a few concerns about bullying, but these are extremely rare and dealt with efficiently and with care.
- Although attendance dipped to below average following the previous inspection, it is now in line with the average. This is a result of the school’s more concerted action to rigorously follow up any non-attendance and to more actively encourage good attendance.
- Parents who responded to the online questionnaire Parent View were overwhelmingly supportive of the school. All those who responded consider their children are happy, safe and well looked after in school and that the school deals effectively with bullying and makes sure its pupils are well behaved. The school’s own questionnaires also confirm very high levels of parental satisfaction and support. Nevertheless, a very small minority of parents expressed some concerns regarding aspects of behaviour and safety. However, no evidence emerged during the inspection to indicate that the behaviour and the safety of pupils are not typically good.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong senior leadership has been the driving force behind the significant improvements made since the previous inspection.
- Pupils’ achievement has improved. A more rigorous check is made on pupils’ progress in lessons, books and assessments. Expectations are high and questions are asked if any pupil fails to make expected progress. Teachers are more accountable for the progress pupils make in their class.
- The leadership of teaching is strong. Senior leaders have a clear view of the quality of teaching. Additional support and training, and the chance to observe good practice are paying dividends. As a result, most of the teaching is now of good quality and some is even better. Teachers’ performance is well managed and linked appropriately to decisions about pay progression.
- The skills and confidence of middle leaders have grown. For example, these leaders have ensured that the support for pupils at risk of not doing so well is particularly strong and the provision for disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs is good.
- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well. The school provides a very harmonious community, which includes pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds. Pupils show a great deal of respect for the beliefs and views of others, including those from other faiths and cultures.
- The curriculum is improving and is continually adapted in response to how well pupils are doing. For example, the school has developed the curriculum around literacy themes in response to the need to improve pupils’ literacy skills and to support those who are learning English as an additional language.
- Additional sports funding is helping pupils learn how to keep fit and lead healthy lifestyles. For example, swimming has been subsidised for pupils in lower Key Stage 2 and, in 2013, the school was a joint winner of a local swimming gala.
- The local authority has full confidence in the school maintaining its pace of school improvement and considers it necessary to have only a light touch monitoring role. In addition, the school itself has been proactive in seeking specialist consultant support. This is helping to enhance the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and helping to accelerate progress in writing, for example.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are very committed to the school. They provide good levels of support and challenge in equal measure. Governors recognised that parents did not always find the school’s website easy to use and have significantly improved both its format and efficiency.
- Governors are very aware of how well pupils achieve. They keep a careful check on how the pupil premium funding is spent and that the additional funding results in improved achievement. They are aware of the use of performance management to reward good teaching and where aspects of weaker teaching have been successfully tackled.
- Governors endeavour to keep their skills up to date through additional training and consultant support, as well as their close links with the governing body of an outstanding school.
- The governing body ensures safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.

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	105627
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	430982

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicky Carter
Headteacher	Greg Oates
Date of previous school inspection	20 March 2012
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