

Beecholme Primary School

Edgehill Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 2HZ

Inspection dates

10–11 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have not secured the necessary improvements to the school. They have not improved teaching effectively, nor tackled the weakest teaching quickly enough. As a result, outcomes for pupils are inadequate. Pupils do not have an equal opportunity to succeed because teaching varies too much in quality.
- Governors have been ineffective in holding leaders to account for securing improvements. They have not insisted that leaders set sufficiently ambitious targets for success.
- Leaders do not make effective checks on pupils' progress to ensure it is being consistently sustained. Their analysis of the performance of key groups of pupils lacks precision.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate because some teachers plan lessons that are poorly matched to the skills and needs of pupils.
- Teachers do not give pupils the necessary opportunities to apply their mathematical skills and explain their reasoning. This inhibits their progress.
- The most-able pupils are not provided with the guidance and feedback they need to master skills and achieve the higher levels of attainment.
- Standards in reading and writing are too low. Steps taken to improve the teaching of these subjects are not effective in improving outcomes for pupils.
- Some teachers do not apply the training they have been given to support effectively the learning of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well and treat one another with respect and kindness. Senior leaders promote and uphold the school's expectations for behaviour.
- The curriculum provides a broad and balanced range of opportunities for learning, which widen pupils' horizons and promote the enjoyment of learning well.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- Leaders ensure that there is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Leaders have ensured that teaching in the early years has improved, so that standards are rising quickly and pupils are better prepared for Year 1.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - evaluating plans for improvement frequently and accurately, using well-managed, reliable information
 - setting ambitious targets for improvement
 - checking the quality of teaching thoroughly and using this information to provide effective support and training to improve its quality
 - developing governors' skills in challenging the effectiveness of school leaders and holding them to account.
- Improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils, so that both become consistently good or better, by ensuring that teachers:
 - use accurate assessment information to plan lessons that match the needs of pupils
 - make effective use of training and resources to improve rates of pupils' progress
 - help pupils master their skills in mathematics more
 - provide effective guidance and support for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Senior leaders and governors have not tackled weaknesses in teaching promptly or effectively. They have not ensured that actions taken to improve teachers' skills have led to consistent improvements in the quality of teaching. Leaders do not check on the progress of pupils frequently or thoroughly enough to make sure their plans for improvement are having the necessary impact on learning. As a result, pupils' attainment remains too low.
- Leaders' plans for improvement are clearly linked to suitable priorities, but targets for success are not ambitious enough to raise standards to the required level. Leaders do not check that pupils are making good progress and catching up when necessary. Their plans include a wide range of training and guidance for teachers. However, leaders have not made sure that these actions have led to consistent, prompt improvements in the quality of teaching. Leaders have not managed the introduction of a new assessment system well. As a result, the information they are using to evaluate pupils' current progress and attainment is unclear. This has led them to have an inaccurate and incoherent view of the school's effectiveness.
- Middle leaders do not make sufficient impact on raising standards. Some lack a sharp and detailed knowledge and understanding of outcomes for pupils. Middle leaders make ineffective checks on the impact of teachers' training and use of resources on pupils' learning.
- Leaders do not ensure that objectives set when managing the performance of teachers are challenging or sharply focused on helping to raise standards quickly.
- The headteacher ensures that clear, well-communicated values of consideration, inclusion and respect are upheld and understood. Pupils and parents value the caring and welcoming culture of the school. This ensures pupils feel safe and treat one another with kindness and consideration. They feel valued and confident to express their views. However, equality of opportunity for all pupils is lacking despite these firm foundations. This is because the progress of some pupils is restricted due to weak teaching, while other pupils benefit from teaching that is much more effective.
- The curriculum offers a broad and well-balanced range of experiences and themes. A progression of skills for each subject is clearly defined. A Year 5 topic on the Antarctic is inspiring pupils to satisfy their natural curiosity about the wider world. It is helping them to develop a wide range of subject-specific skills. Pupils learn to appreciate the styles and techniques of different artists in each year group. However, some pupils' work shows that they do not learn new skills or acquire knowledge across the curriculum in sufficient depth.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well developed. Leaders make sure pupils experience exciting activities, such as a workshop for pupils at The Royal Ballet, which broaden their horizons. Pupils are taught about modern British values well in a systematic, empathetic manner which prepares them well for their future lives.
- Leaders have made some effective decisions about how to spend additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. For example, additional support for older pupils has helped to ensure that more of them reached the expected standard in writing by the end of Year 6 in 2015. However, gaps in other subjects between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their peers have not closed enough.
- The primary school sports funding has been well used by leaders to increase girls' participation in, and enjoyment of, competitive sport outside the school day.
- School leaders asked the local authority for additional support in 2014, which was provided. However, the local authority has not established an accurate view of standards. This has limited the effectiveness of the challenge the local authority has been able to offer school leaders and governors.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

■ The governance of the school

- Governors have not asked the right questions to challenge leaders rigorously about the quality of teaching and the pace of school improvement. They have accepted proposed targets for improvement in plans, which are not ambitious enough to raise standards sufficiently.
- Governors regularly review how leaders plan to use additional funding and consider a suitable range of information when making decisions about teachers' pay and performance. However, their scrutiny of information has not been searching enough to ensure that the right decisions have always been made.
- Governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are understood and implemented consistently.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have ensured that members of staff understand the importance of safeguarding arrangements and receive the necessary training to implement agreed procedures. Parents are confident about the work of school leaders to keep their children safe.
- Safeguarding procedures are well understood. However, checks on the premises sometimes lack rigour.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- Some teachers plan lessons and set activities which do not match the needs or abilities of pupils closely enough. This is because they do not use information about pupils' capabilities effectively. Some pupils are not challenged sufficiently and others do not receive the support or advice they need. As a result, too many pupils make inadequate progress.
- Many pupils receive limited feedback when they write an extended piece, which fails to explain how they might improve or extend their writing skills. Some teachers have introduced changes to the way they help pupils to develop skills in writing as a result of recent training. This is helping pupils understand how to enrich their writing and assists the most-able pupils in the mastery of grammatical skills. However, leaders have not ensured that this is typically the case.
- Teachers build well on the success of pupils in acquiring early reading skills so that most learn the sounds that letters make securely. However, the development of pupils' ability to understand what they are reading is not taught consistently well, despite additional staff training. This slows pupils' progress as they move through the school and results in low standards of reading by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Teachers often fail to provide pupils with effective guidance on how to apply their skills when solving problems in mathematics. Pupils are not questioned effectively about how they have arrived at a solution or completed a calculation. However, better teaching in Years 5 and 6 has enabled a larger proportion of the most-able pupils to attain at the higher levels in mathematics.
- Support staff and the leader for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs help weaker learners to make good progress in many of the additional lessons they provide for individuals or small groups. However, leaders do not ensure teachers help build on this progress effectively when these pupils return to their main class.
- Teachers have received training to help them plan more effective activities for pupils who speak English as an additional language. However, work seen in many of these pupils' books provides little evidence of how advice and feedback are tailored to their particular needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Members of staff understand safeguarding procedures well, and implement them consistently. Appropriate staff training has been arranged and completed in a timely manner. Staff are vigilant about supervision and promote positive and supportive relationships with both pupils and parents.
- The safeguarding policy has been updated to reflect the most recent advice, but this has not yet been considered by governors. Checks on the suitability of staff are robust.
- Leaders ensure that extensive checks on the safety of the premises and potential risks are carried out routinely. However, they have not gone on to take steps to reduce some risks posed by the building and equipment.
- Pupils can identify different forms of bullying. Pupils spoken to could explain how the school teaches them to stay safe. This includes when they use the internet and exchange emails.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils treat one another with respect and courtesy. They demonstrate kindness and consideration towards one another. Disabled pupils say they feel fully included in school life.
- Low-level disruption from pupils in lessons is very rare. Pupils look after the school and their equipment. They arrive properly equipped for physical education and other lessons. Pupils take pride in their work, even when it fails to challenge them fully. Parents agree that behaviour is well managed. They told inspectors that leaders and staff are easy to talk to if they have a concern or a question.
- Instances of bullying and other discriminatory behaviour are rare. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
- School leaders and the parent liaison officer have been effective in improving attendance and punctuality, so that it is now above average.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Most children enter the Nursery Year with skills that are lower than those typical for their age. Recent information indicates that their progress is improving. As a result, more children are achieving a good level of development. The proportion is now in line with the national average.
- Pupils' work seen on inspection demonstrates wide variations in rates of progress between classes and subjects. Books from the previous school year show that pupils were making better progress in Key Stage 1 as a result of more effective teaching at that time. However, current work from Years 1 and 2 shows that this has not been sustained. Pupils' progress in mathematics slows when they are not supported effectively to apply their mathematical skills or explain their reasoning. Pupils' work shows that they make better progress in Years 5 and 6. However, this is still often insufficient for them to recover from previous underachievement.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check is above the national average. However, pupils do not go on to broaden their reading skills rapidly enough. As a result, reading standards are below the national average by the end of Year 2, and well below average by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is weaker than that of other pupils, given their starting points. Interventions intended to support these pupils are often effective. However, this is not built on well enough when pupils return to work in their main class.
- Outcomes for pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 are much lower than the national average in reading, and lower than average in writing and mathematics. Not enough pupils make or exceed the expected progress from average starting points at the beginning of Year 3.
- The proportion of the most-able pupils who attain the higher levels is below average. However, the proportion who do so in mathematics has improved and is now above the national average. The proportion of the most-able pupils who exceed expected progress from higher starting points is well below the national average in reading.
- Gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils entitled to additional funding and others are narrowing in some subjects and year groups, but are still too large. Provisional information for 2015 indicates that in-school gaps have narrowed in mathematics and closed in reading and writing. However, in reading and mathematics, this is due to a decline in the attainment of their peers. The gap in attainment with other pupils nationally remains almost identical. Better progress in writing has narrowed the gap with the attainment of other pupils nationally by about six months.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language represent a majority of pupils. Many of these pupils do not make enough progress because the guidance they receive on how to improve their work is not consistently helpful.

Early years provision**requires improvement**

- The early years is more effective because improving progress has led to significantly better levels of achievement by the end of the Reception Year. The proportion of children attaining a good level of development is now in line with the national average. Children are therefore better prepared for beginning Year 1.
- Children's progress in the early years is improving because of the good range of activities and guidance they are offered, both indoors and outdoors. Teachers provide effective support to help children develop their early skills in reading, writing and mathematics. They implement effective strategies to ensure that children with little knowledge of English continue to make progress. However, they do not always use observations of children's learning effectively enough to provide activities which challenge them sufficiently.
- The early years leader keeps a close eye on the impact of teaching on children's learning. A new assessment tracking method is being introduced in the current school year. However, this does not allow school leaders to identify the progress children are making from the beginning of the year soon enough to check that improvements in teaching are continuing to raise standards.
- The early years setting is well maintained and provides a safe environment for children to explore and engage their curiosity. Children get along together well, guided by the very positive models of behaviour provided by adults in the setting. Parents agree that the setting enables their children to feel safe and happy at school.

School details

Unique reference number	102631
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	10005690

This inspection 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	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Diane Moody
Headteacher	Kaye Seamer
Telephone number	0208 6404795
Website	www.beecholme.com
Email address	head@beecholme.merton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 January 2012

Information about this school

- Beecholme Primary School is an average-sized primary school. It has a single class in each year group, apart from Year 3, where there are two classes. The school has a nursery which offers 26 part-time places in the morning and the afternoon.
- Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Many are of a South Asian heritage. About one in five are from a White background. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above the average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is also well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional funding, the pupil premium, is below the national average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for primary schools, which set the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited eight lessons to observe learning and teaching. This included a lesson intended to help pupils catch up with their reading skills. The lead inspector conducted a tour of the school with senior leaders, speaking with pupils, looking at their work and examining displays. A scrutiny of pupils' current work, and work completed in the previous school year, was undertaken.
- Inspectors visited a school assembly. They observed pupils at play and during the lunchbreak.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils and spoke with them informally around the school. They also spoke to a number of parents at the beginning of the second day of the inspection
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, the leader responsible for monitoring the expenditure of the pupil premium and the leader responsible for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Inspectors also met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documents including the school improvement plan, documents related to safeguarding, records of meetings of the governing body and information about the outcomes for pupils.
- The 22 responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent view, were taken into account.

Inspection team

Andrew Wright, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Martin Beale	Ofsted Inspector
Rebekah Liyambo	Ofsted Inspector

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