

Beechwood Primary School

Linden Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 9RD

Inspection dates

16–17 May 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Although the school has improved since the previous inspection, the quality of provision is not yet securely good.
- Leaders at all levels do not identify and challenge the underperformance of pupils rigorously enough. In particular, leaders do not ensure that teaching meets the needs of pupils.
- Leaders do not use assessment information sharply enough to ensure that pupils are supported to make consistently good progress across all subjects.
- Pupils who need to catch up are not always supported precisely enough in lessons and interventions.
- Teaching, learning and assessment do not ensure that pupils receive consistent support that allows them to make good progress. Most notably, the progress of pupils who are in the early stages of learning English is too variable.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not make consistently good progress in every year group and across subjects. Although funding is used appropriately, disadvantaged outcomes are not yet good.
- The most able pupils, many of whom make strong progress in the early years, are not well supported to reach the highest standards as they move through the school.

The school has the following strengths

- Governors are committed and proactive in ensuring that they challenge leaders to raise standards in the school.
- The early years provision is good. Children thrive and develop the skills and knowledge they need for key stage 1.
- The curriculum is well planned so that pupils are interested and engaged in the subjects they are learning.
- Behaviour is good. Staff expect all pupils to have positive attitudes towards learning. Most pupils are motivated to learn.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are good. The social and emotional well-being of pupils is a priority. Vulnerable pupils and their families are supported so that pupils engage in learning better.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the way leaders use assessment information to raise standards by:
 - strengthening the way leaders use the assessment systems to quickly identify pupils who are not making enough progress and support them to catch up
 - continuing to refine the use and accuracy of the assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills so that pupils are given specific support that matches their precise needs
 - routinely checking to ensure that leaders' actions to support pupils are making a positive difference to the specific barriers that pupils face in their learning
 - making wider and more precise checks of pupils' outcomes across subjects in the national curriculum.
- Improve the quality of teaching for different groups of pupils by:
 - teachers using their knowledge of what pupils know, understand and can do to plan for what pupils need to learn next
 - moving learning on at the best rate for each pupil so that new learning is consolidated and the level of challenge is high, especially for the most able pupils or for those who are ready to achieve more.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Although leadership and management have improved since the previous inspection, leaders have not yet sufficiently raised the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement so that they are securely good. While leaders have raised expectations of both pupils and staff, they are not yet suitably rigorous in identifying and challenging where pupils need to catch up, so that pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked relentlessly with leaders across the school to set up assessment systems to identify where and how to improve outcomes for all pupils. However, these procedures are not fine-tuned or accurate enough to drive the rapid progress that some individuals and groups of pupils need to make. Leaders do not yet check how well pupils are doing across all subjects.
- Leaders do not ensure that the additional support and intervention that they provide makes enough of a difference to pupils' achievement. Leaders do not monitor closely from the beginning of each intervention to check that pupils are making sufficient progress. Too often, leaders do not ensure that the interventions and strategies being used actually meet the needs of pupils.
- Leaders have set up a range of strategies to address the inconsistencies in teaching. Most teachers are responding well to training, such as access to an outstanding teacher programme, mentoring and peer support. Performance management is used effectively to hold teachers to account and career progression is closely linked to this. However, leaders are not precise enough in identifying where teachers are not meeting the needs of the groups of pupils in their class, including those who need to catch up, disadvantaged, those in the early stages of learning English, and the most able. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is still too variable.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It provides pupils with positive opportunities to develop their wider knowledge and skills. In particular, the development of French and science throughout the school is an increasing strength of the curriculum. Pupils are achieving increasingly well in these subjects. Equally, the sports premium is used to increase participation in sports, both in school and in extra-curricular activities. As a result of training and the use of specialist physical education teachers there is higher participation in sports by girls and pupils taking part in local competitions.
- All leaders lead by example and are polite, care for others and promote tolerance and equality. As a result, there is a calm, open and respectful atmosphere in the school and pupils and adults have confident and trusting relationships. This positively links to the way the school plans the curriculum to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and the teaching of British values. It also contributes well to keeping pupils safe, behaviour in classrooms and behaviour around the school.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is effective.
- Governors know the school well as they are fully involved in all aspects of school life.

They attend a wide range of school activities, such as assemblies and parents' events. Governors improve their understanding through informal discussion, annual surveys of parents, and by frequent visits to see pupils' learning and their work.

- Governors regularly attend training which is provided by the local authority and the school. This includes developing an understanding of how pupils' knowledge and skills are assessed. They have successfully challenged school leaders about pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. However, they do not yet have a strong enough understanding of pupils' progress from their various starting points. Governors continue to be proactive in developing their understanding of this area of their work.
- Governors' financial management is robust and they routinely challenge leaders about the timely and appropriate use of funding. The use of pupil premium and funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used carefully by leaders, and monitored and evaluated well by governors.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The vast majority of parents and pupils agree that pupils are safe and happy in school and that pupils know what to do if they have any concerns.
- Pupils stay safe online because the safe use of the internet is promoted through a wide range of opportunities, including at the beginning of each computing lesson. Staying safe when using social media is a priority met through staff training, assemblies, lessons, and advice and guidance to parents.
- Leaders take swift and appropriate actions to identify and protect pupils who may be at risk of neglect, abuse and sexual exploitation. Well-trained staff work closely and effectively with outside agencies. As a result, there is a culture of vigilance in the school and any concerns about pupils' safety and well-being are quickly addressed. Agencies are rigorously and appropriately challenged if the school does not consider that they are acting quickly enough to keep pupils safe.
- Pre-employment checks on staff and suitability checks on contractors and visitors are thorough, which ensures that pupils are kept safe. Leaders protect pupils from radicalisation by making sure that all staff fully understand the risks to their pupils of radicalisation and extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment, although improving, are not yet consistently good.
- Teachers do not yet use assessment thoroughly enough to plan for the specific needs of pupils. There are too many occasions where tasks are not sufficiently well planned to meet the different levels of pupils. For example, in phonics, inspection evidence indicates that lower-attaining pupils are not consistently well supported over a number of lessons, to develop a good understanding of letters and the sounds that they make. As a result, pupils do not make consistently good progress over time.
- Teaching does not ensure that pupils are sufficiently challenged to make the rapid

progress of which they are capable, most notably the most able pupils and those who are ready to achieve more. Staff generally use questioning skilfully to develop pupils' understanding, but this is not a consistent picture in all lessons. On occasion, pupils access work that is too easy for them.

- The support for pupils who are at risk of falling behind is too variable. Some pupils are identified and supported well so that they learn effectively, but this is inconsistent across classes and year groups.
- There are too many occasions where pupils access tasks that are not sufficiently well planned to engage and sustain their interest. Although pupils behave appropriately, they are not well supported to develop an interest in their learning. Where learning is best, teachers provide stimulating resources, and expect and encourage pupils to have positive attitudes to learning.
- There is a sharp focus on developing communication, reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum. Where this works well, pupils have improved their skills in English and mathematics, but this is inconsistent across the school. As a result of the school's writing project, there has been an improvement in fiction writing, but this is not as well developed in non-fiction writing.
- The work of staff to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is more effective. Where learning is best, feedback on learning by support staff encourages pupils to do as much as possible for themselves, and this is particularly effective in supporting pupils' learning.
- Pupils are encouraged and take ownership of their own learning. Staff actively support pupils to develop the capacity to learn from their mistakes through a school-chosen initiative. This helps pupils to become increasingly willing to take risks in their learning and improve their work. For example, following a whole-school focus, pupils now take real pride in presenting their work well and trying their very best to produce good-quality work. Pupils also respond well to home learning. They like the homework grids, which give them choices for additional activities as well as those which are required to be completed.
- Teachers and leaders are widening the high-quality opportunities available to pupils in the wider curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to study science and French have improved considerably since the previous inspection. Pupils are engaging well with their regular science lessons and specialist French provision.
- The teaching of physical education and music has improved. Pupils are highly engaged in their learning in this subject. For example, in one lesson seen, pupils were highly motivated in learning how to throw a javelin successfully, and understand the scientific theories associated with this. One pupil said that she 'could not wait to practise throwing one'.
- Most parents feel that the school gives parents the appropriate information they need to know how well their children are progressing in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Regular planned opportunities to teach pupils how to keep themselves safe and care for others result in an open and nurturing culture. Pupils are taught the importance of different values through a 'value for the month' which is taught across the curriculum and in assemblies. Learning about British values fully contributes to fostering pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to create and maintain safe and positive relationships.
- Pupils keep themselves healthy because they know how to eat healthily and the school's high profile on physical education results in all pupils taking regular exercise. For example, children in Reception learned well about the importance of fruit and vegetables through making healthy plates of food in drawings and in the mud kitchen.
- Staff support the mental health needs of pupils well by working closely with pupils and families through the family support team and through the personal, social, health and economic education curriculum.
- There are very few instances of bullying or prejudice. Where this occurs, the majority of parents and pupils are satisfied that it is dealt with quickly and effectively. This contributes to the secure and trusting attitudes of the pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school, which is reflected by the care they take in their uniform and their confidence to talk about their school with each other and visitors. The weekly programme of different 'class ambassadors' contributes to this considerably.
- Behaviour around the school is calm and orderly throughout the day. This means that pupils feel secure, are punctual and are quickly ready for the next lesson. Elected year group play leaders and house captains contribute well to the positive behaviour in the playground and around school. Regular assemblies about positive behaviour maintain an appropriately high profile of the school's expectations. This range of initiatives has improved behaviour over time.
- Trusting and respectful relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils mostly respond quickly to instructions, which allows lessons to flow smoothly.
- Pupils are keen to learn and take pride in their written work, which is reflected in an improvement in the standard of presentation across the school.
- There has been a marked improvement in current attendance. This is as a result of the school effectively tackling the poor attendance of some pupils. Leaders successfully support vulnerable pupils and families through prompt action and the school's family support team. Leaders also work closely with outside agencies. This has ensured a greater clarity about the school's intolerance of holidays taken out of term time. As a result, the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and disadvantaged pupils, is rising rapidly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Leaders have improved attainment overall since the previous inspection, but outcomes remain inconsistent for some groups of pupils across year groups and subjects. Fewer pupils reach the standards expected in each year group in writing than they do in reading and mathematics. For some groups of pupils, the good progress made during the early years foundation stage is not sustained in key stages 1 and 2.
- The vast majority of pupils entering the school are in the early stages of learning English, and their outcomes are reflected in the overall school outcomes. Pupils at the early stages of learning English do not always do as well as they could.
- The lower-attaining pupils do not always make the progress in learning they should and across all year groups they make fewer gains in their learning than other pupils. This means the achievement gap between them and other pupils in the school widens.
- The proportion of pupils achieving greater depth in learning has improved across reading, writing and mathematics, but it is inconsistent across year groups and for different groups of pupils. This is because the most able pupils, and those who are ready to achieve more, are not challenged in their lessons to develop a deeper understanding and application of their learning. In particular, fewer disadvantaged pupils, including those who are more able, reach greater depth in learning than other pupils.
- Leaders use the additional funding that they receive to ensure that pupils are supported to ensure that there is no significant difference in the overall proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching at least age-related expectations in English and mathematics compared with other pupils nationally by the end of key stage 1 and 2. However, in other year groups there is inconsistency and for some disadvantaged pupils from different starting points. Standards are lowest for disadvantaged pupils who had low prior achievement.
- From very low starting points at the beginning of the early years, most pupils make good progress in phonics and reading by the time they reach the end of key stage 1, although this is not consistent. Current school predictions for outcomes in the Years 1 and 2 national phonics checks suggest that standards will continue to improve.
- Most pupils read widely and often, but there is inconsistency in progress in reading. For example, pupils who need support to catch up are not being consistently supported and challenged to make the rapid progress that they need to, in order to catch up to the expected national standards.
- Most pupils achieve expected standards in science. There is evidence of broad coverage of the curriculum in history, geography and religious education, but for some the work is too easy and for others it is too difficult. Leaders do not use their assessment systems precisely enough to ensure that pupils make good progress across all of these subjects.
- The majority of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make appropriate progress to enable them to reach their next goals in learning. In key stage 2, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least the same progress as other pupils, and in mathematics they make more progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders are accurate in their evaluation of the effectiveness of the early years. As a result, they continuously drive improvements which enhance the outcomes of children, both in their learning and in their social and emotional development.
- Most children enter early years with starting points below those which are typical. They soon catch up and make strong progress. By the end of Reception, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development across the curriculum is broadly in line with the national average.
- The high proportion of children who start the early years in the early stages of learning English rapidly acquire speaking and listening skills. A wide range of stimulating, language-rich resources and activities successfully encourage children to quickly develop their communication skills.
- All adults have high expectations of children and plan and deliver activities which build successfully on what children already know and can do. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make rapid gains in learning because provision is appropriately adapted and staff use questioning effectively, while at the same time promoting independence.
- The exciting indoor and outdoor learning environments are stimulating and ensure that children are motivated and interested in a broad range of fascinating and demanding activities. The outdoor learning 'zones' are well used by children to develop their literacy and mathematics, and their understanding of the world around them. For example, children were able to explain competently how they had watched caterpillars turn into chrysalises and butterflies. Other children chose to use a game of pin bowling to practise the subtraction they were learning in mathematics.
- Through careful modelling and high expectations, children become confident and behave well with adults and each other. They are happy learning independently, and with others. Children from all backgrounds play and learn well together. All statutory welfare arrangements for the early years are fully met.
- Parents are confident that their children are safe and are happy with the education their children receive. One parent said, 'The staff are amazing with the children and know the needs of all the children in their care.' The school 'goes the extra mile' to support parents to help their children to learn at home. This has ensured that more parents are involved in supporting their children's learning.
- Children are well prepared for key stage 1 because the majority of children have the knowledge and skills to progress well in their learning. Those children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have the confidence and emotional security to progress appropriately from their current outcomes.

School details

Unique reference number	134701
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10031353

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	877
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Anita Davis
Headteacher	Mr Mark Sherwin
Telephone number	01582 518400
Website	www.beechwoodprimary.org.uk
Email address	beechwood.primary.head@lbc.luton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The early years provision is available part-time for nursery-aged children and operates full time in the Reception Year.
- Most pupils are of Asian heritage.
- The majority of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium funding is broadly average.
- There is on-site pre-school provision, which is owned and managed by a different

organisation. This was not part of the inspection.

- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 70 lessons and visited all classes. Most lesson observations were carried out jointly with senior and middle leaders.
- The inspectors held meetings with governors, a representative of the local authority and school staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, information on pupils' attainment and progress, curriculum planning, records of behaviour and safety, the monitoring of teaching and the management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documents and the website.
- A discussion was held with a group of pupils and informal conversations took place during lesson times and in the playground. An inspector listened to pupils read and talked to them about the books they enjoy. The questionnaires completed by 98 pupils were also included in inspection evidence.
- The inspectors took account of 23 responses to the online parental questionnaire (Parent View) and 21 text responses from parents and spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day and in a Parent Forum meeting. Inspectors also reviewed the survey responses of 98 members of staff.

Inspection team

Linda Bartlett, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Diane Hawkes	Ofsted Inspector
Keith Pullen	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017