

Belmont Primary School

Lauderdale Drive, Hunters Hill, Guisborough, North Yorkshire, TS14 7BS

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and leadership team set a clear vision for the school, nurturing staff and pupils to improve continually. Staff morale is high. Strong teamwork is central to the school's achievements. Leaders know the school's strengths. They identify and address any weaknesses promptly. The school is improving.
- Children in the early years make a good start to school. An above-average proportion of children reach a good level of development by the end of Reception.
- Due to effective teaching, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. A high proportion of pupils reached the expected standards in Year 6 in 2017. The proportion reaching the higher standards, however, is not as good, especially in writing and in mathematics.
- In writing, pupils use and apply their skills well across a range of subjects. However, sometimes they do not use the vocabulary and sophisticated language needed to reach the higher standard.
- In mathematics, opportunities for pupils to solve challenging problems are strong in some classes but overlooked in others. This hinders pupils' progress, especially that of the most able.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress. Leaders use additional funds well to provide effective support for vulnerable pupils and to foster emotional well-being.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive. An atmosphere of tolerance, trust and respect pervades. Pupils cooperate thoughtfully and respond promptly. They are proud of their achievements and are eager to try their best.
- Behaviour is good. Low-level disruption is rare. Pupils are kept safe and they feel safe.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment opportunities during and after school. Strong partnerships are fostered within the locality.
- Governors provide effective support and challenge. They ensure that the school provides value for money and check the school's effectiveness regularly. Together with leaders, they have addressed the areas for improvement in the previous inspection.
- Arrangements to manage the performance of staff are good. However, the targets set for teachers are sometimes too vague. An overwhelming majority of parents would recommend the school to others.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that a higher proportion of pupils reach levels of greater depth in mathematics and writing by:
 - making sure that all teachers challenge pupils consistently well so pupils ponder over mathematical questions and find their own strategies to solve problems, especially those who are the most able
 - extending pupils' knowledge and use of more complex vocabulary and sophisticated language in their writing.
- Continue to improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure that targets set for teachers are sharply focused on the progress that is to be made by specified groups of pupils
 - analysing information about pupils' behaviour more systematically and strategically
 - further reducing the number of incidents that happen in the playground and cloakrooms.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has led improvements across the school continuously since his appointment in 2014. A strong and experienced team of senior leaders, appointed at the same time as the headteacher, provide effective support and challenge for staff.
- Senior leaders' passion for the school to become outstanding is shared by the whole team of staff and governors. They gather and analyse pupils' progress and achievement data carefully to help them find any areas that need improvement. In this way, they strive to provide the very best education they can. Senior leaders know the schools' strengths and focus in on the correct aspects of teaching and learning that need attention in order to raise standards quickly.
- Recently, middle leaders attended in-depth training linked to their subject leadership roles. This support assisted middle leaders to make crucial changes across school so that pupils' achievement increased. For example in reading, a number of new initiatives has helped to boost boys' interest in reading. Volunteers from a local charity read regularly with pupils who need a little extra practice, especially some of the disadvantaged pupils. The sharp focus on reading and effective leadership produced excellent results by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 last year.
- Senior leaders hold staff to account for the quality of teaching and learning in their classrooms. The headteacher keeps a regular check on the quality of work in pupils' books and observes teachers to make sure that they are promoting good rates of progress in their lessons. Senior leaders tackle any underperformance in teaching promptly by providing support and challenge as required.
- Although arrangements to manage the performance of staff are effective, leaders do not set sharply focused targets for teachers on progress that needs to be made by different pupil groups. As a result, pupils' progress is not always as high as it could be.
- Leaders have been effective in making sure that standards in mathematics and writing continue to improve. Last year, a well-above-average proportion of pupils in Year 6 reached age-related expectations in reading, mathematics and writing combined. However, the school is not complacent about this success. In particular, senior leaders acknowledge that there is still scope to further increase the proportion of pupils reaching greater depth in mathematics and writing.
- Senior leaders use SEN funding wisely to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Staff provide this group of pupils with work that is planned carefully, and teachers' time is used effectively to give them direct support in several subjects. The deputy headteacher champions the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, working closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that pupils receive any help that is required. Consequently, these pupils make very good progress from their different starting points.
- A dedicated middle leader tracks the progress of disadvantaged pupils and uses

innovative ideas to meet their needs. Governors created this post specifically to empower disadvantaged pupils, using the school's pupil premium grant. Disadvantaged pupils have the chance to share their own ideas about what might help them to improve, and many of their suggestions have already been actioned. Leaders use all funding astutely and, as a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress. In the past three years, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils has increased continually.

- A broad and interesting curriculum, including many enrichment activities, ensures that pupils enjoy coming to school and make good progress. Pupils spoke highly of the lessons and other activities that they take part in during and after school. Staff and coaches encourage pupils to participate in competitions and festivals of sport, and visiting musicians teach a wide range of instruments. Pupils take part in visits off site to enhance their learning in many different subjects. For example, pupils attend local theatre events and art centres to promote their cultural development. Meanwhile, older pupils are excited to attend their residential visit in an activity centre.
- Staff weave the broader aspects of learning, such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, into lessons across the curriculum. Senior leaders provide assemblies that challenge pupils' thinking about some complex issues so pupils can discuss 'diversity' and 'inclusion' in ways that they understand. Staff value pupils' ideas and give them many chances to make decisions and help around school, such as taking on the role of anti-bullying ambassadors and playground buddies. These numerous opportunities allow pupils to develop mature attitudes to the world around them, helping them to become well-rounded citizens in the school and the wider community.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly skilled and experienced in challenging the school to improve. They attend training regularly to update their knowledge and understanding and use their new skills to support senior leaders effectively.
- Strong teamwork underpins the success of governance at Belmont Primary. Every member of the team understands the specific roles and responsibilities they have within the wider governing body. Communication between different committees is thorough and keeps each governor in touch with the latest findings.
- Governors are not afraid to make difficult decisions when needed. They strive to achieve value for money while maintaining their high standards and expectations. In this vein, they recently requested additional information from staff and senior leaders to provide them with more evidence about pupils' progress before making decisions about salary progression.
- Governors are ambitious for the school and now work closely with a variety of staff so that they do not rely solely on the headteacher's reports to give evidence of change. Governors broker strong and positive links with industry, other schools and the wider community to benefit pupils and their learning.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are trained regularly to refresh their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding. New recruits undergo stringent vetting procedures, and named governors visit school frequently to check that staff follow the agreed systems and procedures.
- Administrative staff and senior leaders make sure that personal and private information is confidential. They also keep the single central record up to date, including any new supply staff or visitors when required.
- Senior leaders are passionately committed to supporting the most vulnerable pupils and their families. They work tirelessly to provide as much professional support as they can, initially drawing on skills within the staff team, but also seeking help from external agencies.
- All staff work together to promote a culture of safeguarding. They have a sensible scepticism that helps them to protect children from harm. For example, they share the motto, 'It could happen here', recognising that to keep children as safe as possible, they must always be vigilant and never dismissive about potential risks.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Over the past two years, senior leaders have strengthened and improved the quality of teaching and learning so that it is now good. Teachers provide clear explanations of new ideas and check pupils' understanding frequently throughout lessons to tackle any misconceptions.
- Teachers often make sure that lessons are engaging and that pupils develop the skills needed to work independently at tasks. For example, in a Year 2 writing class, pupils set to work quickly at planning their own superhero story, visibly excited by the theme studied. Regular routines and well-thought-out resources helped these pupils to use a more adventurous range of words in their work.
- Staff use effective questioning frequently to encourage pupils to give clearer explanations. In key stage 2 in mathematics, staff intervene to ask pupils how they have solved calculations. When this happens, pupils are keen to recall and demonstrate their learning.
- Teachers improve pupils' basic skills steadily with daily sessions to focus on reading practice and quick-fire mental mathematics questions. These short, sharp lessons help pupils to remember key facts and reinforce skills. Staff make good use of computer programmes that provide comprehension questions targeted at pupils' different abilities, during these sessions.
- Staff make sure that pupils read every day and encourage them to read regularly at home too. Pupils enjoy reading and discuss their preferences in some depth. They apply phonic skills effectively when trying to work out unfamiliar words and are not afraid to make their 'best guess' when pronouncing longer words. All pupils make

good progress in reading due to the recent improvements in teaching here.

- In mathematics, teaching overall is good. In some classes, teaching is a real strength and so pupils make very swift progress. This reflects teachers' excellent subject knowledge. Pupils are frequently challenged to work at greater depth. They ponder exciting mathematical problems, make decisions about the best strategies needed to reach solutions and give reasons for their answers. These pupils thrive on a challenge and show great resilience. By contrast, in some classes teachers do not have as much confidence and skill. Pupils copy the teachers' methods to work out pages of calculations, without enough deeper thought. This hinders their chance of any new learning to occur, and progress slows as a result.
- The quality of teaching in writing has improved since the last inspection. Pupils' writing skills develop quickly in both key stages 1 and 2. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to use and apply their writing skills across a wide range of subjects and to write for many different purposes. In science, for instance, pupils write detailed explanations to clarify the results of their experiments. In history, they write letters in role as Roman soldiers. These opportunities make pupils keen writers who enjoy purposeful writing tasks. Although a high proportion of pupils across the school are currently working at age-related expectations in writing, too few are working at levels of greater depth. Teaching does not ensure that pupils use the sophisticated language and complex vocabulary in their writing that might help them to achieve the deeper understanding needed to work at greater depth.
- Several staff with specific expertise help teachers to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Across the school, pupils learn to play a variety of musical instruments including untuned percussion, stringed instruments and penny whistles. In physical education lessons, the school employs coaches to work alongside staff. In swimming and games sessions, coaches use their expertise to extend pupils' skills and fitness while also improving staff knowledge and confidence.
- Teachers plan lessons particularly well to make sure that those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress over time. During the inspection, pupils who have social and emotional difficulties were making excellent progress because teachers understood just what they needed to help them excel.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff and senior leaders get to know their pupils well. They all work together to make sure that pupils receive any help and support that is needed. The school often seeks support from other professionals who offer additional expertise to support vulnerable pupils. Parents appreciate the support provided whenever children are in need.
- Teachers use the wide curriculum and the school's strong focus on physical education to make sure that pupils understand how to keep themselves healthy.

Younger pupils enjoy their swimming lessons and explained that regular exercise in lessons and during the school day help to keep them fit.

- Pupils can identify the healthy options provided in their school lunches and welcome the fruit, vegetables, milk and water on offer in school. Many pupils explained how these food and drinks contribute to a healthier lifestyle.
- Parents commented positively on some of the school's innovative ideas to promote their children's well-being, including the use of peer massage and teaching relaxation techniques to calm and quieten pupils who experience stress.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about staying safe online because staff teach them about the potential risks and dangers involved. Pupils understand how to respond if they encounter any form of bullying, although they said that bullying does not occur very often in their school. Pupils said that they are safe and feel safe in school. They are confident that teachers tackle any misbehaviour, bullying or unkindness quickly when it does take place.
- Staff and pupils enjoyed their 'odd socks day' during the inspection. Although fun, this event also encouraged pupils to think and talk about inclusion, tolerance and embracing difference. Anti-bullying assemblies promote similar themes and help pupils to think more deeply about their actions and behaviours.
- The diverse curriculum and the many enrichment opportunities on offer ensure that staff prepare pupils increasingly well for life beyond school, in modern Britain. Recently, pupils designed and made poppy wreaths for the graves of local members of the armed services. Older pupils represented all the local primary schools by attending the town's remembrance service. They behaved maturely and took this honour proudly but solemnly, showing the importance of remembering the sacrifice of others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Conduct in lessons is highly positive. Very few low-level incidents take place and so learning moves along smoothly. Pupils usually respond promptly to questions, instructions and requests from teachers in school. Pupils are keen and confident to demonstrate their knowledge in front of others.
- Staff make sure that pupils have many opportunities to cooperate with others in their learning, and this helps to build friendly and supportive relationships between groups. Pupils listen attentively to their peers, showing tolerance and respect for different points of view. Pupils are polite and helpful as they move around school, stepping aside and holding doors open for visitors and younger children.
- The school's records show that any incidents of misbehaviour are more likely to occur at times when staff are not directly managing behaviour, such as in the playground, in the toilets and cloakroom areas. Leaders have not yet analysed this information systematically to prevent any recurrence of misbehaviours in these places.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils are currently making good progress across the school in a range of different subjects. This is because of effective teaching that helps pupils to develop their basic skills well. Inspection evidence, including a review of pupils' books and observations of learning, show that most pupils make good progress over time.
- Results in reading have improved in the past year because of the school's sharp focus on this subject. In key stage 1, nine out of every 10 pupils were working at age-related expectations last year. This is a much higher proportion of pupils than in other schools nationally. In addition to this, more than a quarter of the pupils in Year 2 were working at greater depth in their reading. Achievement in reading at the end of key stage 2 was equally as strong, and Year 6 pupils achieved higher scores, on average, than other schools across the country.
- In writing, pupils' outcomes improved slightly in 2017. This is because staff provide regular and purposeful opportunities for pupils to write in all subjects across the curriculum. At the end of Year 6 last year, in writing, more pupils reached age-related expectations than in other schools nationally. The proportion of pupils working at greater depth in writing was similar to that in other schools nationally. However, fewer pupils in Year 6 reached the higher levels in writing than in reading.
- Pupils' achievements in mathematics were also good last year. In mathematics, for example, eight out of every 10 pupils in Year 2 reached their age-related expectations. This was above other schools nationally. However, not as many of the Year 2 pupils worked at greater depth in mathematics, so fewer reached the highest standards. A similar pattern emerged at the end of Year 6 last year, with nearly all of the pupils reaching the age-related expectations for mathematics. However, a below-average proportion reached the higher levels.
- The school's own assessment information shows that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress in all subjects from their different starting points. In some classes, these pupils make swifter progress than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils has increased year by year since the previous inspection. Staff and senior leaders track progress carefully and try to remove any barriers that may limit learning for this group of pupils. Consequently, assessment information from last year shows that disadvantaged pupils often make better progress than other groups in reading, writing and mathematics. Work in pupils' books corroborates this data.

Early years provision

Good

- Children in the early years get off to a flying start in their education. Parents are pleased that their children settle in quickly, make friends and have supportive staff to look after them. Links between home and school are very strong.
- When they enter Nursery, children demonstrate a wide range of abilities. Many of

the children have weaker skills in communication and language compared to other aspects of their learning. Staff waste no time at all identifying children who need a little extra support and make sure that specialists, such as speech therapists, are available when needed. With this high level of care, children make swift progress.

- Over the past three years, children's achievement in the early years has improved. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of Reception has increased each year. In 2017, more than four out of every five children met the expected standards for their age.
- Staff set up interesting activities for children to explore, both inside and outdoors. Leaders and other staff use their observations and assessments of children to plan the next steps in their learning carefully. Teachers build progressively on children's previous learning so that each child's knowledge and skills build up securely over time.
- Teachers intervene sensitively and promptly to correct any errors or misconceptions in learning. For example, in a writing session in Reception, the teacher stepped in to demonstrate the correct way to hold a pen when one of the children was struggling to find a more comfortable grip. As a result, the child managed to use his pen successfully during the rest of his task.
- Reading has a high priority in the early years. Teachers hear children read regularly and teach phonics well. Parents access workshops led by staff and read ideas on the school's website to help them to support their children's reading at home.
- In mathematics, the most able children complete a larger number of tasks than others but, too often, this work is focused on children practising existing skills rather than pondering over new problems and different ways to find solutions.
- Staff are quick to improve outcomes for children in the early years. They analyse children's work and standards astutely to find any gaps in their learning. This year, staff noticed that achievement in expressive arts and design was lower than in other areas of learning. Consequently, they have increased opportunities for children to explore and use a wider range of media and materials during design tasks. As a result of this change, children were able to use many different resources to design and build a bridge for the characters in a story about Diwali.
- Leadership is strong in this phase of the school. All staff work hard as a team to ensure that the welfare requirements are met in full.

School details

Unique reference number	111662
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10037729

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	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Bloomfield
Headteacher	Chris Gibson
Telephone number	01287 635332
Website	www.belmont-primary.org
Email address	schooladmin@belmont.rac.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 November 2012

Information about this school

- Belmont Primary is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- Children in the Nursery class attend on a part-time basis, during the mornings or afternoons. Children in Reception attend full time.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils each day and runs several after-school activities. There is also a separate provider of childcare on site, which is not managed by the governing body and was not part of this inspection.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have been in post since the retirement of the previous headteacher in 2014. More than half of the staff are new to the school since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes across the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher observed jointly with inspectors in some classrooms. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about their reading experiences.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. Inspectors met with subject leaders and staff responsible for supporting pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who manage the school's pupil premium funding. Inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including that related to safeguarding, achievement, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and conduct at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' books from all year groups including work from a range of different subjects.
- Throughout the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their learning, safety and well-being.
- Inspectors took into account the 37 responses to a survey of staff, 35 responses from a survey of pupils' views and 58 online responses from parents to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the start and end of the school day to gather their opinions of the school's work.

Inspection team

Anne Humble, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Nimer	Ofsted Inspector

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