

Belmont Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101422
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	276517
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2006
Reporting inspector	Arnalena (Nina) Bee

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 on roll	
School	472
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Rick Nelson
Headteacher	Mrs Carolyn Barclay
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 1999
School address	Belmont Road Erith DA8 1LE
Telephone number	01322 432057
Fax number	01322 434124

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an above average size school. The pupils are mainly from White British backgrounds. Children start in the Nursery with levels of attainment expected for their ages. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. The number of pupils with statements is above average because the school provides specialist provision for six pupils with visual impairment and physical disabilities. The number of pupils who have free meals is below average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Belmont Primary is a satisfactory school with some good features. Throughout the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain standards above average for their age by the time they leave. The introduction of 'Big Writing' has had a significant impact on the progress pupils make in their writing. Standards in this subject are well above average, and pupils achieve well. Standards in mathematics and science are above average.

Children in the Foundation Stage make a satisfactory start to their education and make satisfactory progress. This continues through Years 1 and 2. Teaching and learning throughout the rest of the school are satisfactory. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and the purpose of each lesson is clearly set out. The well-trained teaching assistants offer effective support to pupils with particular needs. The few pupils who are visually impaired, or who are physically disabled, receive good support with work that is well matched to their needs. However, work is not always well matched in classes for other pupils. At times, pupils find work too hard or too easy. All pupils are beginning to assess their work for themselves. This enables them to see how well they are doing. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and does not always show pupils how to improve. There are extensive systems in place to monitor teaching, but there has been too little emphasis on what the pupils are learning, or how identified weaknesses will be followed up to ensure that they are addressed properly. The recently formed curriculum team, although enthusiastic, have had too little time to have had much of an impact on pupils' achievement in all subjects.

Parents are generally supportive of the school, although a very small minority say their concerns are not listened to and others are worried about the progress that their children are making. Pupils report that they generally enjoy school, but say that work is sometimes too hard or too easy. Leadership and management are satisfactory and have been most successful in promoting English and pupils' personal development. As a result, pupils develop a mature attitude to learning and behave well. Pupils are polite, eager to talk about their work during lessons and enthusiastically engage in conversations at other times of the day. For example, one girl, a member of the eco-committee, spoke passionately about the importance of re-cycling paper as she took a large bin of paper to the big hall for re-cycling. The school places great emphasis on pupils thinking of those less fortunate than they are and each class proudly supports a national or local charity.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop the school's partnership with parents so that all parents are actively supportive of the school.
- Ensure that all teachers plan activities that are accurately matched to the wide range of abilities within each class.
- Monitor teaching more effectively to ensure that all weaknesses are identified and addressed.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In the Nursery and Reception classes, standards are broadly at the level expected for their ages. Children make satisfactory progress. Standards in Year 2 are average in reading, writing and mathematics. In relation to their prior attainment, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The 2006 national test results show that standards in English are well above average in Year 6. The

school's focus on 'Big Writing' has improved achievement in writing considerably. Standards are above average in mathematics and science. Achievement is satisfactory in mathematics and science but better in English. Pupils with visual impairments and physical disabilities achieve well because they are given activities that are tailor made for their specific needs. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make similar progress to their classmates. The needs of all pupils are not always met and consequently, a few pupils do not make the progress they are capable of. In effective lessons where all pupils' needs are considered carefully, progress is good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including that for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils themselves say they like school, but sometimes wish that lessons were more fun. They have a well-developed understanding about keeping healthy by eating the right food and taking exercise. They talk excitedly about the 'Fruit Cup' awarded to the class that has eaten the most fruit. All pupils work together well, both in and out of lessons. They show a mature attitude when discussing issues during School Council meetings and listen to each other attentively. Behaviour around the school and in classes is consistently good. Older pupils care for the younger ones and take their responsibilities very seriously. They know that there is always an adult they can turn to if they have a problem. Attendance is satisfactory. The school has been successful in giving pupils' confidence in themselves and developing good attitudes to learning. This prepares them well for when they move on to their next stage of education and adult life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In particular, the way pupils are supported by the teaching assistants is increasingly effective. Learning objectives are carefully thought out and pupils are well informed on what is expected of them. However, teachers do not always plan activities to suit the wide range of abilities within their classes. This results in higher attaining pupils not always being sufficiently challenged. In addition, lower attaining pupils, including pupils with learning difficulties, sometimes find the activities they are given too difficult. At times progress is hindered because of these weaknesses in teaching. When teaching is good, activities are accurately planned so that all pupils learn well. All pupils are beginning to self assess how well they are doing but this system is not yet firmly embedded in all classes, and as yet, is not impacting on achievement. There are some examples of good marking but these are inconsistent. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to inform pupils how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provided by the school is good. It provides especially well for the development of skills in writing. The study of French also contributes to this development of language skills. The good curriculum programme, residential trips and the many opportunities provided for them to take responsibility all provide well for pupils' personal and social development. There

are good links between subjects, for example, geography and English and this leads to good reinforcement of skills, in particular in writing, in different subject areas. The curriculum is enhanced well by a wide range of visits and by visitors to the school. There is good specialist provision for pupils with visual impairment and physical difficulties, which enables these pupils to be well integrated into all activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care and personal support given to pupils is good, but guidance, in the form of setting individual academic targets and tracking pupils' progress is only satisfactory. Good pastoral care is taken of the pupils. Systems for ensuring that they are safe are robust, as are those for child protection. All teaching assistants have a first aid qualification and pupils know who to go to if they have a problem. Pupils who join the school part way through their education settle quickly because their personal development is promoted effectively. Older pupils speak enthusiastically about the opportunities they have recently been given to mark their own work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher leads an enthusiastic team of staff committed to raising standards and providing the best for pupils. A few parents expressed dissatisfaction with the school's leadership and management. There is a difference between the school's perception of leadership and management and the views of these parents. They very strongly feel that the school does not listen to their concerns.

Implementation of recent priorities identified in the school improvement plan has led to improvements in standards and achievement in writing. The role of teaching assistants has been developed well. They play an important part in supporting pupils, in particular, in small groups outside the classrooms. There are very detailed procedures for planning, monitoring and evaluation which involve all staff with leadership responsibility and which are diligently implemented. However, their impact has been limited because they do not focus sufficiently on improving the achievement of pupils. In addition, weaknesses in teaching although identified, have not been effectively addressed. The school's self review, although satisfactory, tends to paint a rosier picture than actually exists, in particular in relation to the quality of teaching and learning. Governors are committed and supportive of the school and have contributed effectively to developing the school's links with the community. They are aware of the schools' strengths and weaknesses but are not sufficiently aware of pupils' achievements. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we came to visit your school. We really enjoyed the time we spent with you and this letter is to tell you what we found out.

We know that you all behave very well and that you are very concerned about the welfare of others. We were very impressed by the amount of work you do for various charities and how much money you have raised. You are all very sensible and when you spoke to us you were polite and very honest. We understand that some of you would like lessons to be more fun.

We have asked your teachers to help some of you more by giving you work that is challenging for you, but not too easy or too hard. Your parents will be pleased about this. We hope that you will continue with the systems that enable you to mark your own work that have recently been introduced. Some lessons are not as good as others so we have asked your teachers to look at lessons that are less successful and see what they can do to make them better. Most of your parents are happy with how the school is helping you but a few are not. We have asked the school to work more closely with your parents so that all parents feel that their views and concerns are listened to.

Once again, thank you for helping us in our work. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nina Bee(Lead inspector)