



Beauchamp Middle School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109692
LEA BEDFORDSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278247
Inspection dates 23 November 2005 to 24 November 2005
Reporting inspector Ms. Linda Killman LI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Hawk Drive
School category	Community		MK41 7JE
Age range of pupils	9 to 13		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01234 300900
Number on roll	517	Fax number	01234 300901
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Andrew McConnell
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Sally Ellis

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Beauchamp Middle School is an average sized community school. Numbers have increased recently. Most pupils stay at the school for four years. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 5 is broadly average. Attendance is above the national average. There is a higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, pupils for whom English is not their first language and pupils with special educational needs. Following a period of turbulence the school is now settled, with key teaching and leadership positions secured.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for pupils and provides sound value for money. In its self-evaluation, the school judged itself to be better than this but it needs to improve standards and pupils' progress to justify this view. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and are poised to take the school forward. The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. They are central to the school's priorities and its friendly ethos. Attendance is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and the vast majority behave very well and show courtesy and respect. Standards on entry to the school are broadly average and when pupils leave they have made satisfactory progress that accelerates in Years 7 and 8. Most parents are satisfied with the school. However, there are weaknesses. Standards and progress in mathematics and science have fluctuated in recent years and the school's checking procedures have not been wholly successful in dealing with this. Some groups of pupils, for example high achievers and those from minority ethnic groups, do not always make as much progress as they should. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features. For example, computers are used effectively to enhance the quality of learning in other curriculum areas. However, subject leaders have not been consistently effective in checking pupils' progress and in evaluating the quality of teaching in order to improve it. A number of features contribute further to the pupils' personal development and to its ethos. The school environment is well kept and cared for. Pupils appreciate and have access to a broad range of enrichment activities including clubs, educational trips and visits from experts to talk to them. The school has an after school club for those pupils requiring care beyond school hours.

What the school should do to improve further

- Track pupils' progress through the school systematically, using this information to speed up the rate of improvement, especially in science and mathematics.
- Develop further the effectiveness of subject leaders' monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.
- Ensure that all groups including high achievers, pupils whose first language is not English and minority ethnic pupils make good progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards in Year 5 are broadly average. Satisfactory progress is made by most pupils by the time national tests are taken in Year 6. However, there is some variation among different groups. Less progress is made by high achievers, minority ethnic groups and pupils who have English as an additional language. Standards in the 2004 national test results were broadly average in English, but below in science and mathematics, because pupils made insufficient progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The same results show girls' achievement to be below the expected levels in mathematics and science and boys do less well than girls in English. In 2005, results in mathematics and science recovered, bringing the overall level of attainment broadly back into line with

national averages. However results for girls and boys show the same pattern as in the previous year. A smaller proportion of pupils than nationally achieve above-average levels. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 make good progress in English, mathematics and science. The school has begun to analyse more systematically its information on pupils' progress and achievement. Following analysis of recent results the school is teaching boys and girls separately in mathematics. It is too early yet to determine the impact of this initiative. Pupils' progress is being checked and the views of pupils considered. The school is not yet effective in identifying groups or individuals, such as high achievers, who are not moving forward rapidly enough and in planning for their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is a strong feature. Pupils enjoy school and like its ethos and friendliness. They feel safe in the knowledge that there is an adult to turn to if they have a problem and that firm action is taken on bullying. Behaviour in classes and around the school is good. Effective support is provided for pupils with challenging behaviour. The school is inclusive. One boy talked with warmth about the friends he has made across a range of cultures. Pupils are justifiably proud of the very significant sums of money raised for charities. The school effectively encourages pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle. In discussions with pupils, inspectors were struck by their maturity, courtesy and confidence. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies are effective in reinforcing the school's values. The school develops pupils' self-esteem by providing them with many opportunities to succeed. Staff show courtesy and are good role models for pupils. They listen to pupils well and value their contributions. As a result, mutual respect is evident in the very good relationships between pupils and staff which underpin learning in the school. Pupils' respect for their surroundings is impressive. The school's environment contributes to this by being clean, tidy and attractive, with a striking range of displays of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations for pupils, move their learning on swiftly and invite them to assess how well they have done. In others, the teacher talks for too long, leaving the pupils passive and not involving them enough. Teachers are clear about what they want children to learn and check regularly that they are on track. However, not all work is closely enough matched to learners' needs or abilities. Positive relationships generate a productive working atmosphere. Behaviour is good so pupils concentrate well and complete their work on time. Pupils confidently ask and answer questions to increase their understanding. Books are regularly marked. At best, marking tells pupils if they have learned all that they should and targets are set for improvement

but this approach is not consistently used by all teachers. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are in place but are not yet used effectively in planning for the next steps in learning. Teaching assistants provide extra help for pupils who need it. The best support is given when the teaching assistant is fully involved throughout the lesson and has sufficient subject knowledge to adjust the work to match learners' needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provided, including religious education, satisfactorily meets statutory requirements and responds to local needs. Provision for numeracy, literacy and science is satisfactory, while for information and communication technology (ICT) it is good, with some very good features. The computer suites are used well and strategies for enhancing other curricular areas using ICT are well in hand. All pupils have opportunities to join in with the broad and varied range of clubs and activities on offer throughout the day. They have a high take up and are much enjoyed. Visits are made to places of interest and pupils speak enthusiastically about a trip to France in the past. Proper attention is drawn to safety issues. A wide range of sporting activities encourages a healthy lifestyle.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school rates this aspect as outstanding. However inspectors, whilst recognising areas of strength, identify some aspects that require further development. The school takes great care of its pupils. There is a strong network of support in the school with the class teacher being the focus. Good procedures for child protection are in place. The school is vigilant and pupils feel safe. Vulnerable children are identified and supported very effectively. Daily staff briefings ensure that everyone is kept up to date with important information about pupils' needs. Risk assessments are up-to-date. However, within this positive picture, one area remains a relative weakness. Currently, the use of assessment to track and report pupils' progress in order to identify potential underachievement is not strong. In addition, learners are not set targets that challenge them enough to move their learning forward briskly. The school is currently developing systems with a view to increasing the rates of progress of all pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has successfully resolved significant staffing issues and with support from the deputy head has developed a staff team who create a positive setting for learners. Teachers leading year groups are beginning to direct improvement. Some subject leaders are becoming more effective by checking pupils' progress as they move through the school but this aspect is inconsistent. They do not always ensure that all teachers strive for improvement because the quality of teaching and learning is not checked and evaluated regularly enough. There is an inconsistent approach to the

analysis of data to make changes that will move learners forward at greater speed. The school has a plan for improvement linked to raising standards but the pace of improvement has been slow. Self-evaluation is sometimes overgenerous. Governors have a realistic view of the school and are especially pleased with improved behaviour of pupils and better relationships with parents. They have begun to review annually the school's performance and effectiveness and know that standards need to improve. The finances have been used well to support the drive to move the school forward. A good example of this is the funding invested to attract effective key professionals to join the school team. The school is in a secure position to improve because of a growing focus among leaders and managers on their accountability for the overall progress that pupils make in their time at the school.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school. We all enjoyed spending time in the school seeing you at work. We were impressed by your courtesy, respect and politeness. You gave us many helpful comments that helped us to form a true picture of the school. We found out that you take pleasure in coming to school. We know that because you attend regularly and you get to school on time. You feel safe at school and trust your teachers to help you if you are having problems. You know that prompt action will be taken if there is any bad behaviour or bullying. The school cares for you and encourages you to be healthy and to be safe. You attend many different clubs before, during and after school and we enjoyed watching the gym club's practice performance for a future display. You feel that the school prepares you well for the next stage of your education. During your time at the school you make progress but you could make even more. Your teachers will be checking your progress carefully to make sure that you achieve the very best that you can, especially in science and mathematics. We know that you have the right attitudes and will work even harder to reach your targets. Your teachers will be expecting a lot from you in the months and years ahead. With your help we are confident that the school will improve even further.