



# Beckley Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114490  
**LEA** East Sussex  
**Inspection number** 279394  
**Inspection dates** 8 June 2006 to 8 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Kathryn Taylor AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Main Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Beckley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Rye, East Sussex TN31 6RN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01797 260324
<b>Number on roll</b>	96	<b>Fax number</b>	01797 260324
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Mark English Smith
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 February 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Margaret Hufford

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 8 June 2006 - 8 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279394
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

## **Description of the school**

Beckley is a small village school. Almost all pupils attending the school are from white British backgrounds and have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is about average. Socio-economic circumstances are average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve.

This is a happy school with a strong family ethos which provides well for pupils' personal development. It runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Most parents are pleased with the school, although some say that improvements are needed, a view with which inspectors agree.

Standards are broadly average in English and science by age 11 and the quality of education is satisfactory overall. Nevertheless, pupils underachieve in mathematics between Years 3 to 6, and standards are below average by age 11. The school has identified the need to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics and raise standards. Weaknesses in planning and marking pupils' work mean that pupils are not always challenged sufficiently and the school's expectations of what the pupils should achieve by the end of Year 6 is too low. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory as senior managers do not have a clear enough picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. Nevertheless, the school is making effective use of external support to address some of the weaknesses it has identified. It has the capacity to improve and is improving, albeit slowly. Provision in Reception is satisfactory.

The school is not effective and does not provide satisfactory value for money. Inspectors disagree with the school's own view that it is satisfactory. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards and progress in mathematics between Years 3 and 6 and the headteacher's and subject leaders' roles in checking and evaluating teaching, learning, standards and pupils' progress.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve pupils' achievement in mathematics between Years 3 and 6.
- Improve the way teachers plan and mark pupils' work so as to support and challenge all pupils to improve.
- Implement systems to regularly and rigorously check and evaluate the standard of the school's work, particularly teaching and pupils' learning and progress.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Standards at age 7 and 11 are broadly average. Although achievement is satisfactory overall in Reception and Years 1 and 2, there is underachievement, particularly in mathematics, between Years 3 to 6.

The evidence available does not support the school's view that children's attainment on entry to Year 1 is low. It is at least average. Most pupils in the current Reception class have good basic skills in mathematics, communication, language and literacy.

The year-on-year variations evident in overall standards at age 7 and 11 are fairly typical of small schools. However, senior managers cannot easily explain these variations, or those across subjects, because of weaknesses in their tracking of pupils' progress, and in checking teaching and learning. Data for 2005 show that standards in English and science at age 11 were broadly average and progress was satisfactory. Mathematics standards were, however, below average and progress was inadequate as was the case in 2002 and 2004. About half the pupils in Year 6 in 2005 did not make the overall progress expected of them, due to this inadequate progress in mathematics. The targets the school sets for Year 6 pupils are also too low, when taking account of the same pupils' attainments when they were in Year 2. The school does not have a clear picture of standards that pupils currently in Year 6 are likely to attain, or indeed why some pupils are not on course to attain the standards reasonably expected.

Pupils with learning difficulties generally make satisfactory progress. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved and are now average.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils understand how to stay safe, the dangers of substance abuse and the importance of healthy lifestyles, diet and regular exercise.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their consistently good attendance rates. Pupils form very good relationships, behave well and are confident that any incidents of bullying are swiftly resolved. They are articulate, very polite and friendly. Although they generally have good attitudes towards learning, at least some pupils in Years 3 to 6 say they could sometimes be made to work harder.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, including their appreciation of other cultures. Pupils contribute very positively to the school and local community. The school council, which meets periodically, gives pupils a voice. Pupils lead a range of successful fund-raising activities, and older pupils perform jobs such as supervising younger children. Pupils' good social skills prepare them appropriately for secondary school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Inspection evidence shows good relationships and behaviour management are consistent features of teaching. Teachers and pupils also use ICT increasingly well to support learning across a number of subjects. Staff

plan interesting activities and create lively displays to celebrate pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are generally used well and provide effective support for pupils with learning difficulties. In Reception and Years 1 and 2, tasks are appropriately matched to pupils' needs. In Years 3 to 6, this is not always the case and expectations are not always high enough, especially for potentially higher attaining pupils.

The school has gained very little information about the quality of teaching and learning from checking lessons or evaluating pupils' work. The school recognises that weaknesses in standards and progress in mathematics at age 11 stem from shortcomings in teaching. All teachers have therefore received additional training to improve their knowledge and skills. While this appears to have had a positive impact on improving teachers' confidence and lesson delivery, there is as yet no clear picture that this has had any significant impact on all pupils' learning and progress.

Assessment, although developing, still has shortcomings. Assessments in Reception are firmly established. Improved assessments have been introduced through the rest of the school. However, marking does not do enough to explore pupils' mistakes, guide them about how to improve, and challenge them to work harder and improve the presentation of work. Pupils are given individual targets, but weaknesses in marking raise questions about whether teachers select the most appropriate targets. Parents are keen to support their children's learning, but a few feel that homework is not used consistently to help their children progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and covers all subjects. That in Reception incorporates all areas of learning with a satisfactory mix of adult-led and independent activities for children. The accommodation limits access to outdoor activities, but improvements to the building are planned.

While the curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory, the timetables provided during the inspection indicate that there is not enough time allocated to mathematics in Years 3 to 6. Curriculum planning is not consistent across the school and does not specify sufficiently the coverage for different age groups within mixed-age classes. Policies provide too little guidance to teachers about the teaching of subjects.

The installation of interactive whiteboards and classroom computers has greatly improved ICT provision since the last inspection, enabling pupils to develop their skills well across subjects. Past weaknesses in provision for religious education have been addressed and the curriculum now provides good examples of work that promote pupils' understanding of cultural diversity. Curricular enrichment opportunities are good and include instrumental tuition and sporting activities. Visits, including residential visits and visitors to school, are greatly enjoyed by pupils and have a good impact on their learning. There are good links with other schools. The staff work hard to ensure that the physical education curriculum is taught appropriately, despite the lack of a hall.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Pastoral support is good, but there are weaknesses in academic guidance for pupils. This is why provision is satisfactory, rather than good. The headteacher and staff know pupils' personal needs well. They ensure they settle into school quickly, and support them well to make the transfer to secondary school. Child protection procedures are securely in place. Staff maintain good links with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Staff and governors take satisfactory steps to ensure the school is safe. Risk assessments are undertaken regularly.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 4

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory, due to significant weaknesses in checking teaching, learning, pupils' work, progress and standards. This limits the reliability of the school self-evaluation document.

The school has experienced some staffing and financial difficulties in recent years, which resulted in the headteacher having a heavy teaching commitment. As this is no longer the case, the headteacher has begun to make improvements, for example, to the way in which pupils' year-on-year progress is tracked and subjects are led. The pace of improvement is, however, slower than it needs to be. This is in part due to a lack of urgency on the part of the school and the lack of monitoring and effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders and teachers are not sufficiently alert to the weaknesses that need addressing, such as those related to marking, teachers' expectations, planning and some pupils' limited progress. Consequently, the work the school has done in the recent past has not yet impacted sufficiently on improving pupils' standards and achievement. Furthermore, there is still some uncertainty about precisely how to tackle weaknesses in mathematics, about the standards individual pupils in Year 6 are likely to attain and why some pupils are not on course to attain the standards that should be reasonably expected of them.

The headteacher and staff ensure the school is a caring community that effectively nurtures pupils' personal development, personal welfare and enjoyment of school. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, though slower than it should have been. Some weaknesses still need attention. Responsibility for leading subjects has recently been distributed to staff. Although the staff's roles are as yet limited, they have potential and are receiving appropriate training. Those improvements made and the school's voluntary participation in a number of external support programmes provides the school with the capacity to improve further.

Governance is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. Governors support the school well and have a secure understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	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	4	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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	NA
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**

We enjoyed talking to you and finding out about your school. Thank you for being so helpful and making us welcome. We think there are some good things about your school, and things that need to be improved quickly.

These are the things we especially liked about Beckley Primary School:

- Everyone who works in the school makes sure that pupils are happy.
- You are friendly, polite and helpful and your behaviour is good.
- You show respect for adults and each other and get on really well together.
- The staff provide many interesting activities that ensure you enjoy school.

These are the things that need to improve:

- The standards pupils achieve in mathematics by the time they leave the school are usually not as high as in other subjects, and some pupils do not make enough progress. Some older children also told us that they lack confidence with their mathematics work and find it difficult.
- We have asked your teachers to check the work in your books more carefully and improve their marking and planning, so that they can tell you how to improve, and encourage some of you to work harder.
- We do not feel your work and lessons are looked at often enough by your senior teachers, so that they can see where there are weaknesses and where they need to make improvements.

We would like to wish you lots of success in your future education.