



Belle Moor School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116457
LEA Southampton LEA
Inspection number 284140
Inspection dates 28 March 2006 to 29 March 2006
Reporting inspector Linda Kelsey

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Belle Moor Road
School category	Community		Shirley
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Southampton SO15 7QU
Gender of pupils	Boys	Telephone number	023 8032 5333
Number on roll	598	Fax number	023 8077 0318
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr John Green
Date of previous inspection	15 November 2004	Headteacher	Ms Cassie Ellins

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	28 March 2006 - 29 March 2006	284140

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Bellemoor's students come from across the City of Southampton. A quarter of them do not have English as their first language. There is a small but steadily increasing number of asylum seekers mainly from Eastern Europe. Most of these students start school with little English but very quickly learn to communicate effectively. Students' prior attainment when they start the school is below average. The number of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average.

When the school was inspected in November 2004, it was judged to require special measures.

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 has made good progress since being subject to special measures following the last inspection in November 2004. It now provides an acceptable standard of education and, from the evidence of the significant improvements made; there is a clear capacity to continue this improvement under the direction of the headteacher and senior leadership team. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Although, standards are still below the national average, students' progress is improving in lessons. This is because teachers are planning students' learning better. Through improved assessment procedures teachers know what students need to do to raise the quality of their work. Teachers and their assistants (associate professionals) provide students with the support they need to improve. Students are keen to do well and their behaviour and attitudes in class have significantly improved since the last inspection. Behaviour, usually good, is occasionally unsatisfactory. In addition some lessons are not organised well enough and do not challenge all the students who as a result become bored and restless. Students enjoy coming to school and are now more punctual at the start of the day and when getting to lessons. As a result, attendance has improved and exclusion rates have fallen.

Good new appointments and the restructuring of the management team have led to improved and effective leadership. As one student said the 'headteacher has united the school in a special way'. The strong management now includes subject leaders. This is better organised and more accountable within each department. The Local Authority continues to offer good support, through its guidance of the management team and through monitoring teaching. However, the impact of these improvements has not yet been fully evaluated.

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What the school should do to improve further

- ensure all lessons are challenging so that the learning of all students accelerates and their standards rise.
- evaluate the impact of improvements to ensure they lead to higher standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are below average overall. In 2005, the results of national tests fell at both key stages for the second year running and targets set by the school were not met.

Achievement is now satisfactory overall because all students are now making much better progress in their lessons and standards are close to average in English, mathematics and science. This is because more of the teaching is better than it used to be and assessment information is used more effectively. Students are making good

progress in mathematics and the foundation subjects and at least satisfactory progress in English and science. In history, standards at Key Stage 4 have risen sharply and are now above the national average. While there is still lots of catching up to do in English, mathematics and science for Years 9 and 11 students, so that they reach their targets, the students in Years 7, 8 and 10 are doing much better and their challenging targets are more realistic and achievable.

Teaching time has been increased for English and students know what they are expected to achieve. In one mathematics class, targets were displayed in a lively way so that students could refer to the different levels. All these strategies are having a positive impact on raising standards. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress, and some of these make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Students say that they enjoy coming to school and are well behaved and courteous both in and out of lessons. Relationships are friendly and the school feels a safe place. Students take care to be considerate to others in crowded areas. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory and exclusions have been reduced.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Lunch menus have improved as a result of intervention by the lively school council and reflect the cultural diversity of the students. Students genuinely feel involved in the decision making processes in school and say, "We have much more responsibility for what goes on here and communication between teachers and students has improved a lot." The prefect system contributes well to the school community and is highly valued by younger students. Prefects have benefited from 'team building days'. There are positive links with the outside community. Students benefit from a variety of work experience placements. For instance, 'Operation BISK-IT' provides a work related learning project which allows students to develop knowledge of Business and Enterprise skills. Students have much more confidence in their oral and communication skills which serves them well and contributes effectively to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall and has improved significantly since the last inspection visit. There is now very little inadequate teaching and there are good features in many lessons. The drive to focus on students' learning, and thereby raise standards of achievement, is at the heart of what the school is trying to do and it is beginning to

succeed. In the very few unsatisfactory lessons, students were bored because there was insufficient challenge.

Teachers know their subjects well and form strong relationships with students, helping them to gain in confidence and achieve satisfactorily. Careful planning means that teachers engage their students and encourage them to work co-operatively as well as independently. Students show good attitudes to learning and relationships in the classroom are very good. The best lessons seen had both challenge and flair. These were seen in a Year 8 English where students re-wrote Macbeth in the style of Homer Simpson and Star Wars. In a Year 8 history lesson, students made a 'human bus' to model racism in the 1960s Deep South and spoke very movingly about the impact this had on them.

The use of assessment to support learning is good; students know how well they are doing and how to improve their work. Teachers are getting better at setting work that matches the needs of all groups of students. A good example of this was seen in a Year 10 mathematics lesson where students used several different methods to solve quadratic equations and then taught each other using these methods. As a result, they all made good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

At the time of the last inspection, the curriculum was unsatisfactory. It has improved in significant areas and is now satisfactory because it is much better matched to learners' needs. The school makes satisfactory provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT and more effort is being made to use these skills in other subjects. Students appreciate the opportunities that some of them have to study two modern foreign languages. There is provision for some students to take their national tests a year early and thereby to begin studying GCSE courses in Year 9.

The school provides a satisfactory, and improving, range of courses for students in Years 10 and 11. They appreciate the widening range of options available and receive good guidance when making choices. A growing number of students receive flexible off-site provision and arrangements for this have improved so that these students now receive their full entitlement to English and mathematics lessons. The range of vocational courses provided in Years 10 and 11 is good.

There is strong take-up in the very good provision of extra-curricular and enrichment activities ranging from the Latin club to the well-attended Easter revision classes. Boys described these opportunities as 'brilliant' and were particularly enthusiastic about the wide range of sporting and musical opportunities available to them. These help to motivate students and add to their enjoyment of school whilst teaching skills in enterprise and working in a team.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Health and safety procedures are reviewed regularly. Arrangements for child protection are well established and adults throughout the school are made aware of their responsibilities. The rate of exclusions has declined significantly and the attendance rate has improved. External agencies are used to best effect and co-ordinated support is offered to students who need it, such as those at risk of exclusion.

Students know who to approach in case of difficulties or problems and do so confidently. A very effective 'peer mentoring' system with a 'no blame approach' contributes to a feeling of security amongst students. They also commented on how much they think the new 'house system' has helped to reduce bullying.

Teachers use special computer software in order to track the progress of students. This information is used to set challenging targets for all students. It is clear that this is effective as students have clear understanding of their own achievement and what they need to do in order to improve.

All aspects for the provision of students who have English as an additional language are good. Students with learning difficulties are well supported in lessons.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, supported effectively by the senior leadership and extended management teams, provides good leadership for the drive to raise standards and improve the quality of education. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection and the school has a good capacity for further improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate but there has not been sufficient time for the school to have evaluated how this has impacted on standards. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Good progress has been made with improvements such as the teaching of literacy through all subjects. The school works hard to ensure that all students achieve well for example, it provides extra learning opportunities for more-able students.

The headteacher's leadership has secured a strong commitment to improvement from the whole staff. As a result of many staff changes and a programme of training for curriculum leaders their overall effectiveness is satisfactory with good leadership now in several subjects. Incisive and effective monitoring has raised the overall quality of teaching and is used to ensure that staff training meets the needs of both the school and individual staff.

The school has made satisfactory progress in improving the recruitment and retention of staff. At present, there are only two posts that are not filled by permanent staff, and the school has addressed the unsatisfactory staffing of English. The school's budget is well managed and, despite a falling roll, the current staffing levels will be maintained in 2006-7 in order to sustain the school's improvement. The governing

body continues to function effectively, and is working closely with the headteacher to improve the school. The school's prospectus now meets statutory requirements.

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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>	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?	2	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	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	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	2	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	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Students

You will recall that I visited your school with three other inspectors, a few weeks ago to inspect the quality of the education you receive. I would like to thank you for your very courteous behaviour and for making us very welcome. You will be pleased to hear that because of all the improvements, and because you are all doing so much better, the school no longer needs 'special measures,' and it provides a satisfactory quality of education

During our visit we were particularly pleased to see that: * As you so rightly commented, your headteacher and her senior team are good at managing the school* Standards are getting better because you are being asked to work so much harder in lessons* Many of you told us that you now enjoy coming to school. We noted that more of you are punctual for the start of the school day and for lessons* Teachers are planning more challenging work for you because they now have a better idea of what you need to learn next to improve your examination results* Staff support you well in lessons particularly when you find the work difficult because of missed lessons or because you are still improving your English * Your headteacher is good at recruiting new teachers and making sure that they get the right training so they can improve their teaching and understanding of your needs

We have asked the school to work on: improving the teaching so more of it is good and you achieve better standards, and for the headteacher to make sure that she checks up that this is happening. Finally, can we say well done to everybody at Belle Moor. We wish you all best for the rest of your time at the school.

Yours sincerely

Linda Kelsey

HM Inspector