

De Beauvoir Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100224
Local Authority	Hackney
Inspection number	285746
Inspection dates	24–25 May 2007
Reporting inspector	John Collins

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	298
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Laura Bayford
Headteacher	Mr Vijay Bhanaut
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2001
School address	80 Tottenham Road London N1 4BZ
Telephone number	020 7254 2517
Fax number	020 7275 7456

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average-sized primary school is situated in an inner-city area of high social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is very high and about one-quarter of these are at an early stage of learning English. Pupils come from many ethnic backgrounds, the largest groups being of White background other than British, Black Caribbean and Black African. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is average. Over one quarter of all pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are higher than average proportions of pupils joining and leaving than at the usual times. Standards on admission are low with many children having poor language and number skills. There are mixed age classes in Years 3, 4, and 5. The school is aiming to achieve Extended School status and currently provides breakfast and after-school clubs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school that provides a satisfactory education with some good features. It has improved much through the determined efforts of the leadership. The headteacher and senior staff have laid the foundations for success and this is already being seen in improved standards. Achievement is now satisfactory overall and good for older pupils. The legacy of under-performance is now being replaced with improving achievement. The headteacher, governors and the leadership and management teams are providing a strong direction to the school's future development. The headteacher has won the confidence of many parents who have a high regard for the school. One parent commented, 'This school is like an extended family'. The headteacher has raised staff expectations and has taken the right steps to bring about improvement. Some of these have had a rapid impact. For example, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are now good and pupils are improving at a good rate in writing. Subject leadership is good and is now having a positive impact on improving teaching and learning and raising standards. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the school is well placed to build on recent success.

In the Foundation Stage children make satisfactory progress from low levels on entry but their standards are still well below those expected at the end of the Reception year. Pupils continue to make steady progress as they move through the school because the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some lessons lack sufficient pace which hampers pupils' progress. Marking does not always guide pupils on what they need to do to improve. However, this is not so for all classes. Teaching, for example, in the upper school is good and sometimes better, leading to a more rapid rate of progress. Consequently, standards have continued to improve and at the end of Year 6 are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Nevertheless, more needs to be done to improve pupils' handwriting and presentation. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities improve steadily and meet the targets in their individual education plans because the good provision is targeted and managed well.

This is a strongly inclusive school at the heart of which lies the care of pupils' personal and pastoral needs. Academic guidance is strong. The school is setting challenging targets and this is having an impact in how well pupils achieve in English, mathematics and science. The curriculum is good and provides a very good range of extra clubs and activities. In the Foundation Stage there is an insufficient range of opportunities for children to make independent choices.

Pupils enjoy school and play a full part in the school's extra activities. A good curriculum interests and engages all pupils and makes learning fun. Provision has been extended through the breakfast and after-school clubs which are appreciated by both pupils and parents. Attendance has improved significantly and is now average. Pupils know about staying safe and keeping healthy through taking part in sports and are able to make healthy food choices. They behave well and mix together easily. The school council and the language buddies give them a voice in school affairs such as improving the library of which they are justly proud. Their progress in basic skills is preparing them satisfactorily for later life.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make teaching more consistent by increasing the pace of lessons and ensuring that marking offers better guidance for pupils on what they need to do improve.
- Improve the curriculum in the Foundation Stage by giving children more opportunities for them to become independent learners

- Improve the quality of handwriting and presentation of work.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In the past pupils have not achieved as well as they should. Drive from the leadership and improved teaching have led to improvements and an increased rate of progress. The latest school assessment and tracking data and scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the trend of rising standards and achievement has been maintained. By the end of Year 6 pupils are reaching broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. The recent focus on developing writing and science has led to a significant improvement on the results in 2006. Current tracking indicates that the proportions of pupils likely to attain average standards are now much closer to the national average. A good success is the increase of pupils attaining above average levels in their work. Pupils' overall achievement has also continued to improve. It is now at least satisfactory and there are pockets of good progress among many different groups within the school. The rate of progress increases in the upper part of the school where teaching is good and sometimes better and, as a result, these pupils achieve well. However this is not yet consistent across the school. The school gives close support to minority ethnic groups including Turkish and Black Caribbean pupils, and they now achieve equally as well as other groups. Pupils with special statements of educational needs, those with learning and disability difficulties achieve well in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. The high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. This is a happy school because the pupils have a strong sense of respect for themselves and others. They are polite, courteous and friendly, and enthusiastic about their learning. Behaviour in and around school is good. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and improving. One pupil said, 'Education is important, we must come to school to learn lots of new things if we want to get a good job'. Pupils are acquiring a good knowledge of how to keep healthy and are proud of their efforts and success in being able to grow healthy foods in their new school garden. They have plenty of exercise in physical education lessons, sports clubs and during break and lunch times. Pupils have important roles and responsibilities around the school and contribute well to creating an orderly community. Pupils leave the school confident and well-rounded individuals.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Steps already taken have resulted in a continuing upturn in national test results. The school is receiving highly effective support from the local authority. Teaching in well targeted groups of pupils for reading, writing and mathematics is particularly effective. As one parent said, 'My daughter's education is coming

on in leaps and bounds'. Where teaching is good the new interactive white boards are used well to support learning. Teachers make clear what is to be learned and explain tasks fully. Their questioning skills are good and this stimulates and motivates pupils' interest and engagement. Pupils respond confidently and make suggestions having discussed it with their 'talking partner'. In less successful lessons the pace is slow and introductory sessions are too long. Tasks are not explained as clearly as they could be and there is insufficient time for pupils to complete them. The marking of the pupils' work is inconsistent in helping pupils to improve and the quality of handwriting and presentation of work in books should be better.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced and promotes enjoyment of learning. A particular strength is the very good range of clubs and activities during lunch times and after school. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language and other groups with learning difficulties are well catered for through closely targeted additional support. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but sometimes there is a weaker balance between work chosen by teachers and activities selected independently by the children. The school has extended its provision in information and communication technology significantly, and this is beginning to be used effectively to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and contexts have been developed well and have had a knock on effect on raising standards. Pupils benefit from a well planned personal, social and health education programme. There are good opportunities to develop an awareness of healthy lifestyles through work on diet and exercise.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school has high regard to the safety and welfare of its pupils, who say they feel safe and valued. Child protection, risk assessments and health and safety arrangements are robust. Pupils receive effective support from all staff at the school based on good relationships. The work with parents of minority ethnic groups to support their children's learning is outstanding. Parents and pupils appreciate the breakfast and after-school clubs. These are helping to improve punctuality and support pupils' personal development by raising their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils with English as an additional language, learning difficulties and disabilities, and those with statements of special educational needs are supported well through accurate identification of their needs. Follow up work by well trained and knowledgeable school support staff and outside agencies ensures they play a full part in the life of the school. The tracking of pupils' academic progress is good. It has started to be used to set more challenging targets for all groups of pupils and has made a significant contribution to rising standards and achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and the leadership team provide a strong and clear direction. This has resulted in rapid improvements, higher standards and a rising rate of progress, especially among older pupils. The governors are effective in supporting the work of the school and challenging its effectiveness. The school's performance is rigorously

monitored and evaluated. In a short time the school has developed effective systems to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Information is used successfully to put in place detailed plans for improvement setting out challenging goals. Monitoring is improving the quality of teaching. All this has contributed to a trend of rising standards and achievement. In most respects, the school has been successful in reaching the targets in its school improvement plan because it rigorously evaluates its performance and accurately identifies strengths and weaknesses. The role of subject leaders has improved significantly since the last inspection. Very useful partnerships have been developed and contribute much to the rising trend in achievement. This is a strongly inclusive school with an ethos of valuing all its pupils and ensuring that all have equal opportunities. All who work at the school make a strong contribution to the personal development and well being of pupils. The school has a good 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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
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	3
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	2
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	3

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?	2

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

12 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of De Beauvoir Primary School, London, N1 4BZ

We were so pleased to visit your school and see you working so hard. Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work. The school council and talking buddies told us how much you enjoy school and how proud you are of having helped to improve the library. We were impressed by your good behaviour and your attitudes to your work.

We think there are lots of things your school does well:

- you are now reaching higher standards in English, mathematics, science and reading than ever before
- the headteacher, other staff and governors are doing a good job in leading and managing the school and helping you to do well
- you have told us how much you enjoy your lessons and we also think the teachers help to make learning fun and interesting
- we agree with you that all the staff look after and care for you.

We think there are some things the school could do to improve:

- we have asked the teachers to mark your work more thoroughly and to increase the pace of lessons
- we have asked the teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes to let the children make more choices for themselves.
- we think you could improve your handwriting and presentation in your books.

You can help by continuing to work hard and listen carefully. Ask your teachers if you don't understand. We are sure they will help you.

Good luck for the future.

John Collins Lead inspector