



Bemrose Community School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112951
Local Authority City of Derby
Inspection number 289471
Inspection dates 11–12 January 2007
Reporting inspector Tony Beaver

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Uttoxeter Road
School category	Community		Derby
Age range of pupils	11–16		Derbyshire DE22 3HU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01332 366711
Number on roll (school)	891	Fax number	01332 296955
Number on roll (6th form)	40	Chair	Mr Roland Furber
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Headteacher	Ms Jo Ward
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2004		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–16	11–12 January 2007	289471

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bemrose is a mixed 11–16 community school in Derby. It is a little smaller than most secondary schools, but numbers are increasing. Well above average numbers are entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The school links with two 11–18 schools for post-16 courses. More than half the pupils join the school other than at the normal times, many more than do so nationally. Some pupils came from abroad and others are from different parts of the city. Well above average numbers have special educational needs, a statement of need, or are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The school was subject to special measures in June 2003. Following two monitoring visits by HMI, it was re-inspected in October 2004, when its improvement led to the withdrawal of special measures because it had demonstrated clear capacity to improve. The school has specialist Training School status.

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 accurately judges its overall effectiveness to be satisfactory. Effective leadership and management have inspired confidence and high morale in staff, pupils and parents to maintain a good rate of improvement since the last inspection in the quality of education and standards achieved.

Overall, pupils' rate of progress is satisfactory. One major factor limiting progress is that most pupils join the school after Year 7, and do not receive their full five years' compulsory secondary education at this school. The time available for them to learn, make progress and achieve their best is less than it is for pupils in most schools. Over half the pupils do not speak English as their first language. Standards are low overall in the Year 9 national tests and in GCSE examinations, where results in English and mathematics are often below those of other subjects. Nevertheless, there is an upward trend in results and over one third of pupils now gain five or more GCSE A* to C examination grades. The vast majority gain some qualifications at age 16. The school does exceptionally well to meet the needs of late arrivals. Those with little or no English when they join the school often make impressive progress.

Teaching and learning are good but it has yet to have its full effect on standards and pupils' achievement. Pupils enjoy learning and make good progress in most lessons. Teaching quality is well supported by the school's specialist status as a Training School. There is increasing emphasis on pupils' learning needs, and teachers use assessment information increasingly well to plan work to meet all pupils' needs. The range of the curriculum has increased, giving pupils good vocational opportunities in Years 10 and 11. The school is working to ensure attendance at courses offsite does not deprive pupils of lessons in school-based courses. It also recognises the need to expand the limited range of post-16 courses.

An impressive feature is the commitment and success of the school in caring for and supporting pupils from very different social, ethnic, economic, cultural and religious backgrounds. Difference is embraced as a strength. The school is a happy and harmonious learning community. Relationships are good. The large majority of pupils work hard, concentrate in class, behave well and are committed to learning. There is little bullying and very little evidence of racism; pupils say both are dealt with sensitively and effectively. Pupils with extensive and varied learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well cared for by dedicated staff. Pupils receive helpful support to enable them to achieve their potential as learners. The personal and academic support for late arrivals is exceptional; those needing help to learn the English language are very well supported. The school works exceptionally closely with parents, the local community and very many partners in education and care.

Since the 2004 inspection, the school has improved well the quality of education provided. It gives good value for money by helping pupils overcome disadvantage and learn successfully in a very supportive environment. The headteacher and associate headteacher give the school exceptionally clear direction towards further improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels have the competence and commitment to take the

school further forward. They evaluate performance accurately, identify what needs to improve and make it happen. The capacity to improve further is good. The school's popularity is increasing with pupils and parents, and its growing reputation as a provider of a good quality of education is leading to more applications for places. Consequently, the accommodation is increasingly stretched to meet the additional numbers of pupils.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The school accurately judges post-16 effectiveness as good. Although it is designated to provide for the 11–16 age range, arrangements, supported by partner schools and the local authority, enable students to continue their education at the school after age 16. There are few post-16 students, but their results from advanced vocational courses are consistently good, and ahead of the trend in national standards. Teaching, learning and support are good, and effective leadership and management aim to expand the limited range of courses available. Students are well supported and many, who would not otherwise have aspired to continue their education after age 16, are doing so very successfully. The large majority complete their courses. Most gain places in higher education. Value for money is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in English and mathematics in Years 10 and 11.
- Ensure better continuity of learning in Years 10 and 11 by closer coordination of courses in school with those supplied by partner institutions so that no lessons have to be missed.
- Expand the range of opportunities for post-16 students, and encourage more to take these up.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Overall, pupils from all social and ethnic backgrounds make satisfactory progress across Years 7 to 11. Standards are low because entrants to the school have exceptionally low starting points and the majority do not receive five years' continuous education at Bemrose. This limits their progress and achievement because they do not get as much access to good teaching to help them make progress as other pupils. Many pupils are initially disadvantaged when they join the school because they do not speak English as their first language. Some have no English at all on entry.

Most of the pupils present for the full five years make good progress, especially in Years 7 to 9, and achieve well from the good teaching they usually receive. The substantial numbers of pupils with extensive learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve satisfactorily only because they are well supported. Many pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress in learning the language from the expert teaching and support provided.

Standards are low in the Year 9 national tests and in GCSE examinations. However, they have improved significantly since 2003. In 2005 and 2006 over one third of pupils gained five or more GCSE grades A* to C. The vast majority gain some GCSE qualifications, but results in GCSE English and mathematics examinations are lower than those in most other subjects. Targets are challenging and usually achieved.

The few post-16 students make good progress and achieve well. Increasing numbers are continuing to higher education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The personal development of pupils' and post-16 students' is good, and reflected in their equally good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They enjoy school and work very well alongside others from different cultures to grow into caring and responsible young adults. The large majority attend regularly and behave very well in lessons and around school. They feel safe because they know that teachers treat them fairly and deal effectively with problems such as bullying. Pupils contribute well to the community, and raise funds enthusiastically for charities. They are committed to the school council system, which gives them a good opportunity to contribute to decisions affecting the school. Many participate in extra-curricular activities; some coach younger pupils in primary schools. Pupils are aware of the importance of diet and of keeping fit and healthy. For example, the 'Cycle to School' project is popular, and some pupils have created a garden to grow vegetables. Girls are less keen to join school sports' clubs, but they participate well in physical education classes. Pupils develop skills satisfactorily for their future lives. The pupils effectively gain personal skills for working life from enterprise projects and good community links, but their standards are low in the essential skills of English and mathematics.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Teaching and learning are good across the school. Pupils enjoy learning and make good progress in most lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and plan lessons thoroughly and skilfully to meet the learning needs of all pupils. Learning objectives are shared well, and teachers reinforce what has been learned at the end of lessons. They show great care for pupils, and challenge and encourage them to learn. Relationships are effective, and pupils respond with enthusiasm and good behaviour. Teachers use information and communication technology confidently to interest and motivate pupils. They make effective use of assessment information in setting targets for pupils to reach. They monitor progress carefully, identify pupils who require extra

help, and respond well to their learning needs. Teaching assistants are well directed and very effective in assisting pupils with learning difficulties. Homework is set regularly and encourages pupils to learn independently. Much marking is thorough and helps pupils to improve their work. In less successful lessons, teachers do not encourage pupils' active involvement enough and some pupils lose interest.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 3

The main school curriculum is good, and meets all statutory requirements. It meets all pupils' needs and helps them to enjoy learning. In Years 10 and 11, there are good work-related opportunities. Those who have difficulty following the mainstream curriculum in school are well provided for. However, attendance at some courses off-site prevents some pupils from being present in all lessons in GCSE subjects in school, and this adversely affects their opportunity to reach higher standards. The Year 7 'Bemrose Way' initiative promotes independent learning and enhances speaking skills. Personal, social and health education helps pupils' understanding of health and safety matters. GCSE courses in religious education and citizenship contribute well to pupils' understanding of local and world communities. Many pupils participate in a good range of extra-curricular sporting and other activities at lunchtimes and after school. The post-16 curriculum is satisfactory, but has a restricted range of courses. Students greatly value the opportunities provided.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Care, guidance and support are good across the school. Pupils from very varied ethnic and social backgrounds are very well cared for. Most pupils join the school at times other than the usual ones, and support for late arrivals enables them to achieve satisfactory progress despite less time than usual at the school. The all-age tutor groups and house system help them to settle in quickly. Child protection and health and safety are meticulously managed. Pupils with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support, both when withdrawn from mainstream classes for extra help and within mainstream classes. Effective staff and systems manage pupils who misbehave and help them cope with school. Support for the many pupils who arrive speaking little or no English helps them make rapid progress. Support for academic work is good. Pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve. Target-setting days involve parents and keep a sharp focus on progress. Pupils are given helpful guidance to enable them to choose courses and careers which best match their needs.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Leadership and management are good, both in the main school and post-16. Leaders at all levels show an extremely strong sense of purpose and vigorous determination to improve the quality of education and promote the well-being and achievement of all pupils. They ensure the school is a united, purposeful and well-behaved community, where all needs are met. The headteacher and the associate headteacher have formed a strong partnership and work together highly effectively. They have an outstandingly clear vision for the future development of the school, and share this with colleagues, pupils and parents. Morale is consequently high. Leaders and managers evaluate the work of the school exceptionally astutely and accurately by rigorous monitoring. Consequently, weaknesses are speedily remedied and planned purposes achieved. As a result, the school has improved well since the last inspection and raised standards. However, the monitoring and evaluation carried out has yet to have a full impact on pupils' achievement, standards and the school's self-evaluation. Governors are closely involved in the life of the school. They both support management and also hold it to account. Subject leaders are supported well by advanced skills teachers in improving teaching and learning. Training School status is used well to improve teaching, which is of consistently good quality. Managers deploy resources well. They ensure that the school is staffed by specialist teachers and a strong team of teaching assistants. However, the increasing popularity of the school stretches accommodation to its limits.

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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	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
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	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	3	
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?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
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	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 January 2007

Dear Pupils and Sixth Form Students,

Bemrose Community School, Uttoxeter New Road, Derby, Derbyshire, DE22 3HU

Thank you very much for your help and politeness during the recent inspection of your school. Inspectors were interested to hear your positive views about your school. This letter tells you the results of the inspection.

Inspectors were impressed with your good behaviour in class and around the school. We also noted that the large majority of you attend school regularly, get on well, and are happy to learn together. We think the differences in your social, cultural and religious backgrounds strengthen the community and are used in a positive way. Some of you do not speak much English when you enter the school, and most of you do not get your full five years of secondary education there because you join at all ages. But the good teaching, care, support and guidance you receive all help you to make satisfactory progress. As most of you miss out on some of your years of secondary education at Bemrose, examination results are considerably lower than those of most schools. In particular, your GCSE results in English and mathematics should be higher because they are below the results that you get in most of your other examination subjects. Timetable difficulties that involve some of you missing GCSE lessons when you follow vocational courses out of school are unhelpful to you in achieving better results.

Post-16 courses are giving good opportunities to students to continue their education and gain more qualifications. Inspectors were impressed to find that students are getting good examination results and gaining places at university. We congratulate these students, and look forward to hearing of more taking up these opportunities. The school works closely with its partners in the post-16 consortium, and inspectors fully endorse its efforts to increase the range of courses available.

Inspectors agree with you that your headteacher and associate headteacher lead the school very well. We are convinced that it has improved a lot since its last inspection, and it can go on doing so with your help, good behaviour and effort. We wish you continued success.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Tony Beaver

Lead Inspector