

Beckbury CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123460
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	292674
Inspection date	9 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Mike Capper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	54
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Chantrey
Headteacher	Jonathan Brough
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2001
School address	Beckbury Shifnal TF11 9DQ
Telephone number	01952 750287
Fax number	01952 750287

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

In this small school, the number identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average. Children's attainment when they start school varies from year to year but is broadly similar to that found nationally.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that successfully helps pupils to develop a love of learning and to grow in confidence and self-esteem. The school's motto of 'Small school, big family' is reflected in the good quality care, guidance and support given to pupils. Consequently, there is a calm and welcoming atmosphere in school that ensures that pupils are happy.

Teaching and learning are good and pupils achieve well, although progress is not even across the school. Provision for children in the Reception Year is satisfactory. By the end of the year, most children are working at the levels expected for their age. In the rest of the school, pupils make the best progress in the junior classes where standards have been rising for the last three years. Standards are well above average in the current Year 6. Progress is good in these classes because teachers successfully challenge all pupils and they plan work that is closely matched to their differing needs. In the infant class, where there are three age groups, the pace of learning, although satisfactory, is slower. This is because work does not consistently build well enough on pupils' different starting points and is not always pitched at the right level for all, especially in writing. Throughout the school, skilled teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning. Processes of setting targets are well established. This helps pupils understand how to improve their work.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils behave well and they are eager and happy learners. They quickly become sociable, confident and articulate and they take responsibility well. Pupils particularly enjoy the very good range of clubs, visits and visitors. These opportunities significantly enhance pupils' experiences, especially in the arts and in sport, and enrich the otherwise satisfactory curriculum. Vibrant displays show pupils' high quality artwork to good effect.

The school is well led and managed. There is a strong drive for further improvement and a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher has developed a good system for tracking pupils' progress in the junior classes, but this does not yet include information about younger pupils. This makes it difficult for senior managers or governors to check that all pupils are doing well enough so that any dips in progress can be dealt with as soon as they arise. Nevertheless, the school has demonstrated in their development since the last inspection that it has a good capacity for further improvement.

Parents are very pleased with the school and they support it very well. They recently raised funds to ensure the continued beneficial employment of a part-time teacher so that juniors can be taught in two classes in the morning. One parent captured the essence of this successful school when commenting that 'The school has helped my child to do well and to be happy and grow in confidence.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Help pupils in the infant class to learn more quickly by making sure that work is always pitched at the right level for all, especially in writing.
- Develop systems for checking that all the younger pupils are doing well enough.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good overall. Children make satisfactory progress in Reception and reach the standards expected by the end of the year. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in mathematics and satisfactory progress in English. Pupils do better in mathematics because teaching is more successful at meeting pupils' differing needs. In writing, where standards are below average in the current Year 2, pupils do not always spell or punctuate accurately.

In Years 3 to 6, consistently good teaching means that progress accelerates significantly. Pupils benefit enormously from being taught in small groups for literacy and numeracy lessons. Since this was introduced three years ago, there has been an upward trend in standards and they are well above average in the current Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points at the end of Year 2.

Throughout the school, pupils with (LDD) are supported well. They make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' thorough enjoyment of school is reflected in their very good attendance. In the Reception Year, children quickly make lots of friends and these good relationships are maintained throughout the rest of the school. Pupils support each other well and behave sensibly. They generally work hard, although some younger pupils do not always listen well enough and they sometimes lack independence.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils take responsibility willingly and the school council plays an important part in school life. For example, councillors contributed well to the recent development of the playground. Pupils show good concern and thought for the welfare of others by raising funds for charities and writing their own prayers. They make a good contribution to the community by taking part in events such as a flower show organised by the local fuchsia society. Activities such as these, and their good basic skills, prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They make healthy eating choices and are very enthusiastic about the sport that they do at school. They understand the importance of exercise and say that it will help 'us to concentrate in lessons'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Throughout the school, teachers are hardworking and conscientious. They get on well with pupils and use praise effectively to boost self-esteem and to encourage good behaviour. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to introduce new skills. Marking is good and helps pupils understand what they need to do to improve. Skilled teaching assistants give pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities good support, helping to ensure that they make good progress.

Teaching is most successful in the junior classes. In these year groups, work is challenging and is carefully planned to meet pupils' differing needs. Teachers use questioning well and there is a good pace to learning. In the infant class, work does not always build well enough on what pupils already know, especially in writing. This slows their progress. A teaching assistant offers good additional support to children in the Reception Year, but they spend too long at the start of lessons listening to explanations of work which is not aimed at them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Throughout the school, there is a clear focus on developing basic skills, although this is more effective in the junior classes than in the infants. Teachers have started to make closer links between different subjects and have rightly identified that this could be extended further in order to make writing activities more purposeful. There is a satisfactory curriculum for children in the Reception Year. However, it is limited by the lack of easy access to an outdoor area, which restricts children's choices.

The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of exciting experiences, helping to ensure that pupils greatly enjoy school. Visits and visitors support learning well and help pupils to acquire new skills. For example, pupils spoke very positively about a recent visit from a potter who showed them how to throw a pot. Pupils are encouraged to maintain their health and fitness through a good range of sporting activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a very happy school where pupils feel safe and secure because they are well looked after. One pupil expressed the views of others by rightly saying that 'there is always someone to help you if you are struggling'. The school works well with parents and outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being.

The school has thorough systems for assessing pupils' learning. Teachers are beginning to use this information to plan work that builds on pupils' starting points, although this is more consistent in the junior classes than in the infants. Pupils find teachers' marking helpful and have a good understanding of the targets that they have been set. As one said, 'The targets have helped me to improve my handwriting.' Pupils with LDD are identified early and provided with clear targets for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Despite a heavy teaching commitment, the headteacher's leadership has ensured that the school has moved forward quickly. Recent developments have had the greatest effect in the junior classes, where standards have risen over the last three years. In the infant classes, the pace of change has been slower due to staff illness which has made it difficult to ensure that initiatives are sustained or as effective.

Systems for evaluating school effectiveness are good. Day-to-day monitoring is thorough. Consequently, the headteacher has a good understanding of what is going well and what needs improving. There are good procedures for checking that all pupils are doing well enough in the

junior classes but this system does not yet include information on the progress of pupils in the infant class. There is a weakness in the use of performance data making it difficult for the headteacher to check that all pupils are achieving equally well.

Governors take an active part in holding the school to account and are well involved in financial planning. Although the school is working within a very tight budget, resources are deployed well to support learning and money spent on employing a part-time teacher has been used well to raise standards in Years 3 to 6.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	2
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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	3
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

Dear Children

Inspection of Beckbury CE Primary School, Shifnal, TF11 9DQ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were polite and friendly and you behaved well. We are pleased that you come to a good school and are able to learn in such a lovely setting.

Some of the things we found out about your school.

- Good teaching helps you to learn well and to make good progress overall. At the moment, you make faster progress in the junior classes than in the rest of the school.
- You are taught all the things you should be and you thoroughly enjoy school, especially the many clubs, visits and visitors.
- You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. It is great that you are learning to grow your own food. The fuchsia displays that you had made for the flower show were magnificent!
- All adults in school are very kind and caring and they give you good help with your work.
- Your headteacher and governors are leading the school well and are working hard to make it even better.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Help you to learn more quickly in the infant class by making sure that work is not too hard or too easy, especially in writing.
- Use information about your learning to check that younger pupils are all doing well enough.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future. We hope you continue to help your teachers by working hard at all times.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Capper Lead Inspector