

Beever Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105627
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	308897
Inspection dates	11–12 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Bardon

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	235
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	5
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Nicky Carter
Headteacher	Mr Greg Oates
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	13 June 2005
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Moorby Street Oldham Gtr Manchester OL1 3QU
Telephone number	0161 7708351
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school serves a disadvantaged area a short distance from the town centre. While the majority of pupils are White British, about a quarter are from a range of minority ethnic heritages, including Caribbean, African and Asian. A little over one in eight of all the pupils are at an early stage in learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, although very few of these pupils have a statement for their special educational need. The number of pupils who join or leave the school part way through their primary education is high. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is made up of a Children's Centre, a Nursery and a Reception class. A before and after school club, which is managed by Children's Centre staff, is available to pupils. The school has achieved the Platinum Toothkind award from the Primary Care Trust and the Healthy School award.

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 which has made substantial improvement since it was last inspected. In particular, standards have risen and throughout the school pupils achieve well. Determined and clearly focused leadership and management give the school a strong sense of purpose and provide pupils with the confidence and will to succeed. Social disadvantage is regarded as a challenge rather than a barrier to learning and staff rigorously pursue ways of engaging pupils and their families in all that education has to offer. Pupils enjoy school immensely, with Year 6 pupils unanimous in their view that it deserved '10 out of 10'. Parents are equally positive, with 'I could not ask for a better school' and 'I feel my child is doing really well' typical of the comments they make.

From the EYFS onwards, pupils are taught well and as a result make good progress as they move through the school. From a very low starting point on entry, pupils gain knowledge and skills at a good pace. While standards are below the national average by the end of Year 6 this represents good achievement, particularly when the high number of pupils who join the school part way through their primary education is taken into account. English is taught well and pupils gain much from the new lessons in writing that were introduced a short while ago. The teaching of mathematics is inconsistent, good in some lessons, but much less effective in others. This results in pupils making uneven progress in mathematics as they move through the school.

Pupils make good progress in their personal development. Relationships are very positive and pupils feel safe in an atmosphere that is pleasant and calm. Most pupils behave well, listen carefully to what their teachers are telling them and try hard with their work. Levels of concentration in lessons are generally high and pupils follow teacher's instructions closely. Pupils from different home and cultural backgrounds get on very well together. Attendance is satisfactory and steadily improving. Pupils recognise the importance of sensible eating and regular exercise and do their very best to follow a healthy lifestyle. Most pupils show a strong sense of social responsibility. They readily help around school and are proud of the contribution they are able to make through the school council. Most pupils acquire a good range of personal and academic skills which provide a solid foundation for future learning and life.

Lesson organisation and classroom management are good. Using the well structured and lively curriculum which closely matches pupils' needs, teachers plan interesting tasks which engage and motivate. By showing them how to assess their own work, teachers increase pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to focus on next to continue to improve. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for pupils, particularly those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or limited English. This, along with the other very effective support they receive, ensures that they make good progress. The quality of care the school provides for pupils is exemplary. Staff are extremely vigilant, identify the needs of each pupil very carefully and provide highly effective support and guidance for all aspects of their development.

The school is managed well, something that is recognised and appreciated by parents. The headteacher provides strong leadership based on a clear understanding of where the school is now, where it has come from and where it is going in the future. The school's development plans are well conceived and provide a secure platform for future improvement. However, the criteria used to measure how successful initiatives have been are often too broad which limits their usefulness as a management tool. The opportunities provided by the recently opened

Children's Centre are being utilised very effectively. Governors carry out their statutory responsibilities conscientiously, supporting the school and holding it to account in equal measure.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Many children enter EYFS with skills and knowledge that are very low for their age. The school's provision for EYFS children combines seamlessly with that in the Children's Centre. Following a very comprehensive induction programme, children soon settle into a well organised and exciting environment. This, combined with good teaching, which employs very effective systems of assessing and activity planning, enables children to make good progress, particularly in their personal development and in communication, language and literacy. Despite the significant gains children make while in EYFS, a significant proportion have well below average skills at the end of Reception. Children are extremely well behaved. They are encouraged to show kindness and to make the right choice and when they do so, they are praised and rewarded, which further boosts their self-esteem. School and Children's Centre staff provide a wide range of interesting activities both in and out of doors. These strike a good balance between those that are led by adults and those the children choose themselves. Welfare requirements are conscientiously met and children are cared for extremely well. Leadership and management are effective and have been responsible for securing good improvements since the school and the centre were last inspected. Some developments, including the establishment of a close working partnership between school and Children's Centre staff, are relatively new and have yet to impact fully on the quality of provision. Additionally, the provision in the before and after school club does not yet focus clearly enough upon the learning and development needs of the children in the EYFS.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that in all mathematics lessons pupils are taught well and are able to make good progress.
- Sharpen the school development plan to include clear criteria for success into all initiatives.
- Ensure that provision in the before and after school club focuses clearly upon the learning and development needs of the children in the EYFS.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Despite the substantial gains they make in EYFS, pupils' attainment on entry to Year 1 is often well below average. In response to the good teaching they receive, pupils make good progress and achieve well in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils attain much better than at the time of the last inspection, particularly in reading and writing, although standards in mathematics are slower to rise. There has been a similar improvement in Key Stage 2, although standards are below average due in no small part to the substantial number of pupils who join the school in Years 3 to 6, often with low levels of attainment. Pupils who benefit from spending the whole of Key Stage 2 at the school make substantial gains in their knowledge and skills, although progress in mathematics is uneven because teaching and learning are inconsistent. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress towards the targets set for their learning. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages, including those who are relatively new to speaking

English, achieve well. Although there are year-to-year variations, boys and girls maintain similar rates of progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development has some outstanding features. These include their enjoyment of school. Pupils refer to interesting lessons, helpful teachers and being with their friends. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show respect for others and have a strong sense of right and wrong. There is little bullying or other aggressive behaviour, although a few older pupils are occasionally over-boisterous at playtime. Behaviour in classrooms is good and lessons are seldom disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles, knowing the value of healthy eating, exercise, rest and cleanliness. Although attendance is generally satisfactory and absence rates have been falling, levels are still a little below the national average. Pupils take on responsibilities readily and make a positive contribution to the school and wider communities. Older pupils gain workplace skills through involvement in various projects, such as a 'business challenge,' which has helped their understanding of money management. These experiences, coupled with good achievement and positive attitudes to school, mean they are prepared well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Most lessons are planned well and provide pupils with interesting opportunities to learn. As a result, there is a calm working atmosphere and pupils' behaviour is managed with a minimum of fuss. The teaching of writing has improved of late. Pupils are enjoying the clear and well structured methods they are learning and gaining much from them. The teaching of mathematics has not undergone the same development and is inconsistent. In some lessons, the work provided is pitched well and reflects pupils differing abilities, but in others there is insufficient challenge and pupils' progress slows. Teachers make their expectations very clear and pupils respond well by concentrating hard and trying their best to meet the targets they have been set. While most lessons move along at a good rate, very occasionally the pace is too slow. In contrast, there are outstanding lessons in which high expectations and very well structured activities generate a fast pace of learning. The work for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is matched carefully to their needs. This and the effective guidance pupils receive from skilled teaching assistants ensure they are included fully in lessons and make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Recent well managed and thoughtfully executed improvements have helped ensure that the curriculum closely matches pupils' needs. Pupils are provided with a wide range of experiences which promote their interests well. Good attention is paid to the development of pupils' literacy and information and communication technology skills, but provision for numeracy is not as well developed. The curriculum is monitored carefully to ensure that all pupils are benefiting equally. For example, staff select topics and resources carefully so that they catch boys' interests as well as engaging the girls. There are increasing links between subjects, making lessons more enjoyable and successfully encouraging pupils to get involved. Using a well planned programme,

which includes specialist visitors, the school effectively promotes pupils' personal development and that they become increasingly aware of how to be responsible citizens. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities and regular visits to places of educational interest enrich their experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school responds extremely well to pupils' diverse and often complex needs with extensive and carefully planned support. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, including child protection meet requirements and a very close watch is kept on those who may be vulnerable. Pupils feel safe and secure, happy in the knowledge that there is always someone to turn to if they have any problems. Staff with particular responsibilities for pastoral care make a major contribution to pupils' well being. The strong links that are forged with various outside agencies give pupils and their families access to wide range of additional help. Procedures for promoting good attendance are extremely rigorous and there has been a marked rise in pupils' attendance since the last inspection. The skilled support they receive helps pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress. Similarly the needs of pupils at an early stage of learning English are met very well. Systems for measuring and tracking pupils' academic progress are comprehensive and robust. They provide detailed information which is used very effectively to promote pupils' learning and to identify those who need additional help.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff provides the school with the drive to succeed in the face of many challenges. A rigorously implemented programme of development has resulted in good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are achieving much better and standards are continuing to rise. Confidence in the school has increased and the demand for places has grown. Regular checks provide senior staff and governors with an accurate picture of how well the school is doing and what needs to be addressed next. The school's capacity for future improvement is good. Targets for improvement are clear and comprehensive, but the criteria for success lack sharpness and clarity, reducing the efficiency of evaluation and review. Through the inclusive atmosphere it promotes and its many links, mainly local but with some further afield, the school promotes community cohesion well. The opening of the Children's Centre has been managed well and in a relatively short time it has started to make a major contribution to the local community. Governors are well informed and play a full and active part in the life of the school.

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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 learners' needs?	2
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?	1

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	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for the very friendly greeting you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently which made us feel comfortable and welcome. We thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do and special thanks go to those who talked with us about the school.

Beever is a good school and I understand fully why you enjoy it so much. The school has a very pleasant atmosphere because everyone gets along well and your behaviour is good. When we visited lessons we were impressed by how carefully you listen and how hard you concentrate. You take your responsibilities seriously and the school council has helped make the school even better for everyone. The school plays an important part in the community and we know you are learning how to be good citizens. You can be very proud of the way you grow into sensible and caring young people.

You make good progress because you are well taught and work hard. Teachers provide you with lots of interesting things to do. It is clear that you are finding the new ways of learning writing skills, such as 'Big Writing', very helpful and the quality of your writing is coming along nicely. Lessons in mathematics are not always as effective and this is something we have asked the school to look at. You can help to improve your mathematics by learning as many number facts as you can, trying hard to work things out in your head whenever possible and always checking your answers carefully. We recognised that you are starting to measure how well you have done for yourselves and to decide what you need to work on next. This is an important skill to learn and something you will find very useful throughout your lives.

Staff take extremely good care of you and it was nice to hear that you feel looked after and safe. The school is managed well and keeps on getting better and better. To help this to continue we have suggested that the school's plans for improvement need to have targets that are a little sharper and clearer. We have also asked the school to make sure that the under-5s have better opportunities for learning when they attend the before and after school clubs. Thank you once again for a very enjoyable two days and best wishes for the future.