

Beech Street Community Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 105906 |
| Local Authority | Salford |
| Inspection number | 308977 |
| Inspection dates | 19–20 May 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Stephen Wall |

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 | 200 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Dave Russell |
| Headteacher | Mrs P Carr |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18 October 2004 |
| School address | Beech Street Winton Eccles Manchester M30 8GB |
| Telephone number | 0161 7891553 |
| Fax number | 0161 9211623 |

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Age group | 3–11 |
| Inspection dates | 19–20 May 2008 |
| Inspection number | 308977 |

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school situated in an urban area of challenging social and economic circumstances as seen in the well above average proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage although the number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is growing, as is the number who speak English as an additional language. Above average numbers of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The number with a statement of special educational need, however, is very low. The school has gained the following awards: Investors in People; Healthy Schools; Eco schools; Basic Skills Quality Mark; and Activemark.

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. It has an outstanding Foundation Stage in which children make very rapid progress because the school focuses intensely on making sure the children overcome the significant barriers to learning, which most have on entry to the Nursery. The flying start they get off to in the Foundation Stage prepares pupils well for learning in Key Stages 1 and 2. As they move up through the school, pupils make good progress because the quality of teaching is good. Parents are supportive of the school and value how well it cares for and supports their children. 'My children love going to school. I am happy as a parent because I know they are well cared for and are doing well' was a typical comment. Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in tackling the issues identified. The Foundation Stage especially has improved in leaps and bounds. The school has a good capacity to improve further and provides good value for money. This is because the headteacher makes sure there is a sharp focus on identifying areas for improvement and tackling them rigorously.

From their very low starting points, pupils make good progress overall as they move up through the school. Standards, by the end of Year 6, are broadly average, which represents good progress for these pupils. These older pupils achieve especially well in reading and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are broadly average, but not in mathematics because too few pupils attain the higher levels.

Pupils' good progress and achievement is brought about by consistently good teaching, which challenges pupils to be active learners and think for themselves. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in English, in Years 3 to 6, is not as high as it should be because their writing skills are not sufficiently developed. The good curriculum feeds the pupils' interests and engages them actively in their learning wherever possible. Inconsistencies in the quality of marking and the uneven use of pupils' targets mean, however, that they are not always as aware as they should be of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. So too is the quality of care, guidance and support the school provides. Pupils' enjoyment of school is outstanding. Smiling faces and the sound of relaxed, happy children are the norm. Their understanding and adoption of healthy lifestyles is outstanding. For example, the pupils run their own, very popular, healthy snack bar at breaktimes and the school council has provided a wealth of playground equipment which pupils make full and energetic use of. The pupils behave well and considerately. Older ones take a pride in helping younger pupils stay safe and cared for around school. Above all, the school helps pupils develop into mature and confident young people ready to take full advantage of the next stages of their education.

Good leadership and management underpin the school's success. Day-to-day procedures and routines are strong so that pupils feel secure and know what is expected of them. The buildings are cared for very well. They provide a nurturing environment in which children enjoy work and play immensely. The headteacher provides good and energetic leadership. She is ably supported by other senior leaders and managers. There is a strong sense of teamwork. Governors know the school well, want it to succeed and ask pertinent questions that hold the school to account for its overall effectiveness.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. From very low starting points, children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning because of the highly skilled teaching they receive and the excellent range of activities which promote their learning and confidence. Highly effective assessment procedures make sure that children's individual needs are identified and that their progress is accurately checked. Thus, the majority reach the expected goals by the end of Reception. Good induction procedures ensure children settle quickly and happily into school. Relationships are strong and children are very well cared for in a supportive and stimulating learning environment. Children grow rapidly in confidence and independence due to caring staff and skilled adult support. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good because they enjoy the exciting activities that really engage their interest. The highly stimulating outdoor provision enhances children's learning. Children treat each other kindly and enjoy taking responsibility and participating in group activities. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are highly effective. The coordinator has a clear view about strengths and areas for development and has taken decisive action to make improvements. Relationships with parents are good. The courses in literacy and numeracy for parents of children in the Foundation Stage are well attended and help parents become actively involved in their children's work at school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards for higher attaining pupils in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and writing in Key Stage 2.
- Use targets and marking more effectively so that pupils know more clearly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In Key Stages 1 and 2 good teaching enables pupils to make good progress as they move up through the school. By the end of Year 2 the average standards pupils attain in reading and writing are not matched by those in mathematics where too few pupils attain the higher levels in national assessments. Overall average standards are maintained as pupils move up through Key Stage 2. In the 2007 national tests at the end of Year 6, all pupils attained the expected level in English. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in English was much lower than in mathematics. The school has rightly identified that pupils' weaker literacy skills, especially in writing, are acting as a barrier to more pupils attaining the higher levels in English. The school is tackling this robustly by introducing booster classes and 'big writing', for example. The school regularly meets its demanding targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. It is obvious from pupils' demeanour and from what they say that they love being at school. 'I think the school day should be longer' and 'I love this school. I'm going to miss everything about it when I leave this summer' are typical opinions. The school has worked hard and successfully to improve attendance levels, which are now average and would be higher but for an outbreak of chickenpox earlier this year.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They enjoy raising funds to support children in hospital and supporting a school in Zambia. They know right from wrong and show good understanding of the need to respect other cultures. The school council has brought about improvements to play facilities, healthy eating and anti-bullying. The way pupils relate to adults and each other is good. They enjoy taking responsibilities like becoming play-leaders, for example. They are prepared well for the next stage in their schooling because they have very positive attitudes and good levels of basic skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It ranges from satisfactory to outstanding, but most lessons are good. Strong relationships and well established classroom procedures ensure that behaviour is good. Teaching assistants work effectively to support lower attaining pupils so that they make good progress in line with the other pupils. Where teaching is good or better, teachers build into their lessons a wide variety of activities to keep pupils engaged in their learning. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to pose challenging questions which make the pupils think for themselves. Teachers involve pupils actively whenever possible. The use of paired work, for example, talking partners, is used skilfully to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and increases their confidence as learners. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently to add variety and clarity to tasks. In the few lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers do not make clear enough what the pupils are expected to do. This results in confusion in the pupils' minds and the pace of learning drops significantly. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. The quality of their comments, however, is inconsistent in making clear to pupils how they could improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum concentrates effectively on literacy, numeracy and ICT so that pupils have good levels of basic skills. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. It helps prepare children to become responsible and concerned young people by the time they leave. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is effective in supporting them to achieve well. The school has begun improving the provision for gifted and talented children by the introduction of booster classes, for example. Children learn a great deal from visiting authors, artists and celebratory events like World Book Day. Effective partnership with outside agencies such as expert coaches and the local Education Action Zone provide a wealth of opportunities for enrichment in sports and arts. A wide range of educational visits, activity holidays and visitors broadens the pupils' understanding of the world and boosts their levels of self-confidence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. This is a very inclusive school in which each child is known and valued as an individual. Pupils say they feel safe in school. They willingly approach adults with any problems and are confident that swift action will be taken in response. Robust procedures for child protection and safeguarding are in place. Healthy lifestyle choices are very

well promoted through health related projects and the use of external agencies like the Life Bus. Good arrangements for induction and transition help children get off to a smooth start and move seamlessly to the next stage of their education. Effective links have been forged with outside agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families. Pupils care for each other well. A good example is the use of Year 5 pupils as play-leaders. Effective systems for checking on and supporting pupils' academic progress are in place. However, the school is not using individual pupils' targets as effectively as it could to make clear to pupils how well they doing and where they could improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher's strong and energetic leadership inspires good levels of teamwork and gives the school a clear vision and sense of purpose. Thorough procedures for self-evaluation take account of a wide range of stakeholders' opinions including those of parents and pupils. As a result, the school knows what it does well and where it could improve. Priorities are identified in the good quality school development plan. The quality of teaching and learning are monitored regularly. Outcomes are used to identify professional development needs. Subject coordinators know what is expected of them. They monitor pupils' books, report annually to governors and produce comprehensive subject development plans. Opportunities for them to carry out classroom observations in their subject areas are, however, too few. Leaders and managers work hard to reach out to the local community. Governors are knowledgeable and supportive. They seek and receive good quality information to enable them to judge the effectiveness of the school and to ask pertinent questions to hold the school effectively to account.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

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? | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 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 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| How well 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 the 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? | 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 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 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 |
| 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

Thank you for your warm welcome when we came to inspect your school not long ago. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you. What you told us helped us reach our judgements about your school.

You will be pleased to know that we think you go to a good school. The Foundation Stage is outstanding and gets the youngest children off to an excellent start. You told us how much you enjoy school and we could see that in the way you behave and in the positive way you joined in lessons. Your teachers are providing you with good, interesting lessons. Because of this and your hard work you make good progress as you move up through the school. Your headteacher and all the adults working with you take very good care of you and help you do well. However, more of you could attain higher levels in mathematics at the end of Year 2 and in English at the end of Year 6.

In order to make your school even better we are asking it to do the following things:

- help more of you to attain the higher levels in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 and in writing by the end of Key Stage 2
- help you understand better how well you are doing and how you could improve by making better use of marking and targets.

We are confident that you will continue to enjoy school and work hard so that it goes from strength to strength in the coming years.