

Beeston Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107946
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	309544
Inspection dates	12–13 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Ronald Cohen

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	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Francis
Headteacher	Mr Chris Lees
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2003
School address	Town Street Leeds West Yorkshire LS11 8PN
Telephone number	0113 2716978
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Beeston Primary is a larger than average sized primary school on a split site in south Leeds. Almost 90% of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school serves a mixed community that includes an area of significant social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a little below average. The school holds a range of awards, including Investors in People, Activemark Gold and Level 2 Healthy Schools. The headteacher took up post in September 2007.

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, in which pupils make good progress both academically and socially. Parents rate the school highly and appreciate the good level of care given to their children, saying they are always happy to go to school. The school has a very warm and caring atmosphere. Pupils enjoy good relationships with the staff and say they like their teachers and the way they help them to learn. Pupils, consequently, have positive attitudes to learning and achieve well. Pupils arrive at school with skills which are lower, or much lower, than average. By the time they leave school, they reach above average standards in English and average standards in mathematics. Standards in science, however, are below average. The school is aware of this and has set appropriate strategies to raise standards. Overall, pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. There are several reasons for this.

First, good quality teaching ensures good learning. In the best lessons, teachers regularly assess pupils to find out what they already know and can do and use this information particularly skilfully to make sure that the curriculum is matched closely to their varying learning needs. This ensures that activities and tasks given to pupils of all abilities consistently challenge them to reach higher learning targets. These effective practices, however, are not always adopted consistently in all classes and lessons. The more able pupils could sometimes achieve more than they do.

Second, pupils enjoy learning. This is because the curriculum includes a good range of enriching experiences, both in lessons and beyond the normal school day. This is one of the reasons why pupils talk with such enthusiasm about school life.

Furthermore, pupils' good personal development, along with their good academic progress, is why they are so well placed to succeed at secondary school and to become responsible young adults of the future. Pupils' growing confidence and maturity are seen in the wide range of responsibilities that they eagerly undertake. They behave extremely well and are especially respectful and polite towards adults and one another.

A key factor in the school's success is the effective leadership of the headteacher. Making sure that every child is nurtured in a very caring and supportive environment so that they can reach their full potential, is never off his agenda. Staff are extremely committed and supportive. They play a crucial part in the school's continued success.

The school has an accurate view of its own effectiveness and provides good value for money. Governors provide good support and challenge. Finances are well managed. This, along with the effective steps taken to promote improvement since the previous inspection, demonstrates that the school has a good capacity to improve in the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children begin school with reduced communication skills. Their achievement is good because teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good and in some aspects, such as the development of social skills, they are outstanding and meet children's needs well. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and especially in their social and linguistic development. Parents say they are very happy about this.

Children soon learn to have fun together, care for each other and begin to look after themselves. They respond particularly well to the high quality teaching that motivates and engages them in learning, for example, how to match letters to sounds. The school works hard to ensure children's health and safety and staff have created an exciting environment for learning, despite the limitations of an ageing nursery building. New leadership has rejuvenated the arrangements for assessment, monitoring, tracking and setting targets for children. This is minimising effectively the impact of the split site on the overall effectiveness of a smooth transition through the Foundation Stage.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science.
- Develop strategies to help the more able pupils to attain their best possible levels.
- Replicate the best features of teaching throughout the school by, for example, using tracking data more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's good progress in the rich, well organised Foundation Stage environment means that the majority enter Year 1 with skills that are only just below those expected for their age. This progress is built on well in Key Stage 1, resulting in broadly average standards by the end of Year 2, although mathematics is the weakest area of pupils' development and is slightly below national averages. By the end of Year 6, standards are average overall. However, there are differences in individual subjects. The unvalidated figures for 2007 show very good progress in English, where standards are above average. Good progress in mathematics results in pupils attaining average standards. However, standards in science remain below average. Nonetheless, from a below average starting point when they enter school, pupils' overall standards when they leave represent good achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because the support they are given meets their needs effectively.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school successfully promotes pupils' good personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents comment that their children 'enjoy every day' and 'even want to go to school at weekends'. Despite this, attendance is only average because a number of families are still taking their children out of school for holidays in term time.

Pupils' self-esteem and confidence flourish in the happy, welcoming ethos of the school. Relationships are positive and pupils' behaviour is generally good. Pupils make a strong contribution to their school and wider community. They are enthusiastic participants in school productions. The school council is particularly effective in driving new initiatives forward and can point to improved school playground arrangements such as the ZoneParc as originating from their ideas. Pupils know what contributes to a safe, healthy lifestyle and enjoy the daily Wake Up, Shake Up exercise routines in class. They are making increasingly healthy choices in eating, influenced by the nutritious meals and fresh fruit and vegetables on offer in school. Pupils leave school with good social skills and positive attitudes to learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding but is good overall, ensuring that pupils learn well. Teachers create an effective learning environment in which pupils thrive. Clear expectations are set and good relationships give pupils the confidence to contribute to lessons, particularly when answering questions and giving opinions. They take great care with the presentation of their work. Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to ensuring pupils' progress, by effectively supporting individuals and groups. In all classes, teachers place a strong emphasis on developing the basic skills of speaking and listening. In the best lessons, pupils' learning is central to the planned activities and they are challenged to think logically. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, children were investigating, discussing and predicting the possible effects of adding bulbs to electrical circuits. However, this process of pupils actively learning is not universally established in all lessons. Work is carefully planned, but is not always matched accurately enough to stretch fully the most able pupils. When marking work, teachers' comments praise pupils, but they do not always make it clear how well pupils are doing and what they need to do in order to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum effectively motivates and stimulates pupils. The school's recent focus on promoting writing across the curriculum has been successful in developing the quality of pupils' work in English, whilst accelerating their progress. The school is aware that science provision needs development. It has begun to address this through a greater use of investigative science throughout the school, a focus on knowledge and understanding of the world in the Foundation Stage, and a science club for the more able girls in Year 6. These initiatives are beginning to impact on pupils' progress in science, though they are in the early stages of development.

Pupils make regular visits to places of interest in the local community, including a Sikh temple. Older pupils take part in residential visits to an activity centre. Pupils have access to a wide range of musical opportunities, including choir, instrumental tuition and participation in performances. A wide range of sporting and arts based extra-curricular activities, including a quilting and crocheting club, are popular and well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's good care, guidance and support for pupils contribute significantly to their good achievement and personal development. A happy, caring atmosphere around the school nurtures the will to succeed and creates a secure environment where new pupils quickly settle to learn. Parents appreciate the way the whole staff team works together well to ensure pupils' well-being. The breakfast club provides a good start to the school day and is enhanced by the very able support of a rota of pupils. Pupils say they feel safe and valued and that their views and worries are listened to. They share, with their parents, concerns about some aspects of the school grounds and the school is seeking to resolve these.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are especially well supported by the school, which acts both alone and alongside outside health professionals and therapists. Arrangements

for child protection, health and safety and safeguarding meet current requirements. The school recognises the need to update some of its training and procedures in this field. Good systems are in place to track and monitor each pupil's progress. However, not all class teachers are accustomed yet to making effective use of the data gathered to plan challenging targets for different groups of pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The newly appointed headteacher has built well on the school's previous successes. He augments these with his own style and vision which ensure good management and successful leadership. Ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior and middle managers, he sets clear direction for the work of the school. They make a strong team, which enjoys the support and the cooperation of the whole staff. There is a sharp focus on improving pupils' learning, progress and the standards they attain. This is set alongside the firm commitment to ensuring the highest levels of care and personal development. The tracking information about pupils' progress is good. However, this is not yet used sufficiently in classrooms to pinpoint where or how pupils' learning and progress could be better.

The headteacher's assessment of the school's provision, as set out in the school's self-evaluation documents, reflects his good knowledge and understanding of his school. Governance is good. Governors ask the right questions to hold the school to account for its performance and check regularly for themselves how well it is doing. Monitoring and evaluation are thorough and rigorous. Any dips in performance are quickly identified and action taken to remedy them. The school is aware of the need to use links with the local community, particularly linking with other local schools, to enhance successfully the learning opportunities presented to pupils.

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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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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

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

Inspection of Beeston Primary School, Leeds, LS11 8PN

As you know, three inspectors came to visit your school recently. I am writing to thank you for making us feel so welcome. We enjoyed talking with you. Particular thanks go to those of you who gave up your time to talk to us during your lunch break.

You are fortunate to go to such a good school that makes sure you leave able to read, write and do your mathematics well. That is not all. We were very impressed by how well you present your work, by your behaviour and how helpful you are to one another. You try hard in your lessons and this is not surprising as your teachers also work very hard and teach you such interesting things in exciting ways. You told us that the school looks after you very well and we agree with you. In fact, you are cared for so well that many of your parents wrote me notes to comment on it.

The school is run very well. The staff and governors plan carefully to improve it. We have asked them now to think about how to help you do as well in science as you do in English. We have also asked them to make sure that those of you who sometimes find work a little bit too easy are encouraged to do more difficult things. The teachers in your school have got very good information which shows them how well each of you is doing. We have asked them to use this information to make sure that each of you continually works at your very best level. It may be hard at first, but it will be worthwhile in the long run.

Please thank your parents for kindly sending in the questionnaires and letters. These helped us to understand how well they think of the school.