

Belmont Cheveley Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114139
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	311499
Inspection dates	11–12 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Mary Sewell

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	168
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Whittaker
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Williams
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2004
School address	Scardale Way Belmont Durham County Durham DH1 2TX
Telephone number	0191 3869494
Fax number	0191 3869494

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Belmont Cheveley Park Primary School is a smaller than average school which serves the community of central Durham. The school has a separate Language Resource Base (LRB) which caters for twenty pupils. All pupils in the base have a statement of special educational needs. This means that one in every seven children attending the school has a statement and nearly one in three children are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds or those who take free school meals is lower than average. Currently there are three pupils whose first language is not English. The school has a Healthy Schools Award and Sports Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Belmont Cheveley Park is a welcoming school which provides pupils with a satisfactory education.

The headteacher is deeply committed to the well-being of the pupils and is passionate about ensuring that they develop well as individuals. The pupils are well behaved, friendly young people who are eager to learn. They enjoy school and are keen to take up responsibilities especially as playground buddies or as school councillors. They say they know how to stay healthy and safe and that their views are listened to. The school values the views of pupils, parents and stakeholders and acts effectively on their suggestions. Parents are positive about the school. Their comments included, 'my children are extremely happy'. Both pupils and parents value the wide range of extra clubs and activities.

Children start school with a wide range of skills and abilities and by the end of Year 6 have made satisfactory progress to achieve average standards. These standards reflect satisfactory achievement from their starting points. However the pupils' rate of progress varies as they move through the school. They make excellent progress in the Foundation Stage but this progress slows down in Key Stage 1 and is erratic throughout Key Stage 2. This is because of inconsistencies in teaching. Some teachers are not using the pupil's previous work to plan challenging and effective lessons. In some classes inaccurate marking leads to inappropriate learning targets being set which results in pupils being insufficiently challenged. Pupils supported by the Language Resource Base (LRB) make good progress throughout their school career because they are very closely monitored and their work is closely matched to their learning needs. The integration of pupils from the LRB into the main school curriculum is excellent. It results in the pupils sharing a full experience of school which is securely underpinned by close supervision from the unit staff.

Some of the inconsistencies in teaching have not been identified because the school's monitoring systems are not fully embedded. As a result, leaders and managers at all levels have limited information on what aspects need improvement to raise achievement and standards. Although individual teachers know their pupils well, the school is not sharing a corporate view for improvement. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the time of the last inspection.

The governors are supportive and realistic and recognise that although the school has developed well since the last inspection there is still a need for further improvement. The school has the capacity to do this with the necessary training and support. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. This phase is very well led by an enthusiastic and energetic teacher who motivates and inspires the children with confidence. Children join the Foundation Stage with skills and abilities which are broadly typical for their age. The language, communication and personal skills of many of the children are, however, lower than expected. Children who benefit from the LRB are fully integrated into the Reception class. All children experience an outstanding curriculum.

Children settle quickly into the school routines, enjoy learning and make excellent progress. By the end of Reception most children achieve or exceed the goals set nationally for their

learning. Children from the LRB make similar progress, in some cases from very low starting points and achieve very well. Progress in writing, communication and personal development is particularly good.

Planning, assessment and record keeping are all outstanding. It is the coordinators attention to detail which ensures that individual learners' needs are well met and as a result children develop high levels of independence. Support staff are very well trained and this ensures a high quality learning experience. Children get along well together, behave well and are prepared to take responsibility. They are keen to explain their work, try out new ideas and especially enjoy the writing activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement by improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Maintain a rigorous and accurate assessment process. Ensure all staff mark effectively and use assessment information to plan lessons which challenge and motivate all pupils.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels by regularly observing and evaluating the work of the school and setting clear direction for school improvement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted Inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Attainment on entry is broadly average. This is a complex picture because there are a number of children who have been identified as having speech and language difficulties who need the extra support of the LRB and may join school at anytime following referral. These pupils experience difficulties which sometimes affect their ability to communicate and socialise at a level expected at the start of Reception.

There are also a significant number of higher attaining children who start school already demonstrating skill levels in advance of their years. Progress is excellent in the Foundation Stage and by the time children leave the Reception class they have skills broadly in line with national expectations. Progress is slower in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2 pupils achieve standards which are average in mathematics and English.

Overall, progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory but erratic. By the time pupils leave Year 6 standards are average. In the 2007 national tests results in mathematics dipped behind English and science. The school has taken immediate action to improve the teaching of mathematics. Currently pupils are making satisfactory progress and are on line to achieve their targets.

Pupils from the LRB make good progress and attain standards in line with or above those predicted from their prior attainment. There are however a significant number of middle attaining pupils who failed to fulfil their full potential in the 2007 tests. The school was quick to recognise that this was due to gaps in understanding from previous teaching and has taken effective steps to change the teaching responsibilities of some staff. Pupils who have English as an additional language are making satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children develop quickly from Reception into friendly, talkative pupils who clearly love school. This enjoyment of school continues because they feel safe, are given opportunities to take responsibility and feel they are listened to. The school council are preparing to manage their first budget and have already made changes, for example, the refurbishment of the junior toilets. Attendance is satisfactory and behaviour is good around the school and in lessons which are stimulating and interesting. In lessons in which they do not take an active part pupils' concentration lapses and behaviour becomes restless. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their opportunities to take part in mini enterprises or fundraising activities such as the Mayor's Appeal. They know about the school's healthy eating regime which has been welcomed by the majority of parents but is felt to be too strict by others. They are keen to take up the additional opportunities in sport especially working with a professional football coach.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but is very inconsistent and ranges from outstanding to only satisfactory. When teaching is good pupils are challenged and expectations are high because their learning activities are tailored to their individual needs. These teachers use previous assessments to plan effective lessons. The use of the school's tracking system is inconsistent and results in lessons in which expectations are pitched too low and little learning takes place.

In the better lessons the purpose of the learning is made clear to the pupils at the beginning and is revisited at the end to check pupils' understanding. In a Year 6 numeracy lesson, for example, pupils had opportunities to learn independently and gained confidence in problem solving.

Some staff lack confidence in their ability to judge standards. As a result, marking, although thorough, is occasionally inaccurate and leads to inappropriate learning targets. The use of teaching assistants to support learning is inconsistent. It is highly effective in the Foundation Stage and LRB where children make vast gains but is weaker where small numbers of pupils are taught outside the main classroom and have little opportunity of learning from each other. Good practice was observed in the LRB where teachers sensitively matched work specifically to pupils' individual needs. Pupils are given high quality feedback, gain confidence and self-esteem and make rapid progress.

Good progress has been made in the use of ICT in the last two years but it is still patchy, which means standards in some groups are still not high enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving. All pupils are very positive about their education because of the range of extra opportunities offered to them. They enjoy playing musical instruments, learning French and taking part in a range of additional sporting activities. A

number of initiatives to support pupils who are underachieving and those with learning difficulties are working well and are helping to raise achievement. Some of the most able pupils are learning mathematics at a level usually taught in secondary schools. Pupils in the LRB are included in as much of the curriculum as they are able to manage. This is done by pupils joining main stream classes or by teachers liaising with planning to cover the same curriculum content.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

All the arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are in place as are all necessary checks to assess risk and ensure pupils' health and safety meet requirements. The school has a caring and supportive environment which meets the needs of all pupils. The use of a pupil tracking system has improved significantly during the last two years but the use of this data is still not effectively informing lesson planning.

Although students are aware of their targets, these are not always directly related to their individual learning needs. Some pupils appreciate the regular testing, saying for example, 'I like getting assessments, because they are hard', but there is little evidence to suggest that these tests are raising achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Much has been done since the last inspection, especially in the last two years, to refocus the school on raising achievement. Considerable improvements have been made in ICT and mathematics and standards are rising in both. The headteacher is aware that raising achievement is a priority but the systems and strategies in place to do this are not yet sufficiently embedded. The observation of teaching and learning is insufficiently developed to monitor the work of the school rigorously. As a result, some of the recent initiatives are being interpreted in various ways. Two examples of this are the way in which lessons are planned and work marked. The headteacher understands the strengths and areas for development but these are not always recorded or transmitted to all staff effectively enough to ensure a clear and corporate view of school development.

The school has good support from the governing body; who are well informed and act as challenging and critical friends. They know what the school needs to do to improve and are quick to confirm how far the school has developed in the last two years. They understand that the school has needed a huge range of initiatives to bring its work up to standard. In this respect the school has been well supported by the Local Authority. The management of the LRB is good and every effort is made to link their work with the mainstream.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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
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	3
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?	3
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?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	3
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

13 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Belmont Cheveley Park Primary School, Durham, DH1 2TX

It was lovely to visit your school this week. Mrs McGrane and I were delighted to see you all looking so smart in your uniforms. You made us very welcome and we were very impressed how keen you were to talk to us about your work in school. You told us that you felt safe and that if anyone was silly in your playground the 'buddies sorted things out' for you. It was clear to us that you enjoyed all the extra activities provided for you in the clubs and that you knew that to stay healthy you needed to take exercise as well as eat the right kinds of foods.

We found that you made satisfactory progress in your learning but this was faster in some classes than others because not all of your lessons were equally challenging. We also thought that some of you were not aware of what you needed to do to improve your work and we have asked your school to ensure that you understand your learning targets.

We have also asked the school to look closely at what you are doing in your classrooms, just as we did, so that they can see what things you are good at doing and which things you need further help with. This is because we think that you are capable of some harder work which will help you learn even faster.

I loved your Christmas concert and was very sorry I could not stay for longer. Your parents told me they were delighted with your performance.

We wish you all the very best for your future

Mary Sewell

Lead inspector