

Belvidere Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123437
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	314597
Inspection date	14 November 2007
Reporting inspector	John Eadie

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	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Holyland
Headteacher	D P Hopkins
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2004
School address	Tenbury Drive Telford Estate Shrewsbury SY2 5YB
Telephone number	01743 365211
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the progress pupils make through the school; whether standards at Key Stage 1 are high enough; the difference in performance between boys and girls; the effectiveness of assessment in helping pupils improve their work; and the monitoring role of governors. Evidence was gathered from discussions with leaders, managers, pupils, staff and parents; visits to all classes; observation of other aspects of the school day such as break and lunchtime; and analysis of parents' questionnaires and school documentation, in particular, data on pupils' progress. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Belvidere Primary School is an average-sized town school. Most pupils come from the estate that surrounds the school, where there are some areas of economic disadvantage. Virtually all pupils are White British and speak English at home. There are very close links with the private nursery that rents accommodation from the school and also provides pre- and after-school care.

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 and manages to 'create a relaxed learning environment but maintain professionalism and standards', as a parent typically said. It has many strengths, the key one being good leadership and management. The headteacher provides clear direction and is determined that any developments are sustainable and in the best interest of the pupils. There is good teamwork evident among all staff and governors and all play their part in the evaluation of how effective the school is. This is particularly noticeable in staff involvement in a very thorough plan of monitoring the effectiveness of pupils' learning and other aspects of the school's work. This has enabled an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development to be established. Governors share in the monitoring process and know the school, though their role is not so well formalised. Although leaders gather a good range of data on pupils' progress, it is not always analysed effectively to indicate, for example, particular strengths and weaknesses in subjects. Good links have been established, particularly with the on-site nursery and with parents, who say they feel welcome in the school and that 'the school acts promptly when there is a problem.' The links with the nursery are especially beneficial in helping children settle in quickly when they start in Reception.

Children start school with levels of skills and knowledge below those expected. Despite making good progress in their time in Reception because of good provision, many have not reached the expected levels by the time they start in Year 1 as the majority only spend two terms in Reception. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, they have reached average standards. Good progress continues through Years 3 to 6 and pupils leave having reached above-average standards. Standards in science are particularly good, with nearly three quarters of the pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in the national tests in 2007. However, in English and mathematics, too few pupils reach the higher levels, both in Year 2 and in Year 6. Challenging targets are set for pupils' progress from year to year and most attain these targets. Girls perform better than boys in English throughout the school, but leaders have recognised this and put in place a number of good strategies to raise boys' standards. These are beginning to have an impact in boys' increased engagement; as one boy put it, 'Writing stories is fun.'

A further noteworthy strength of the school is pupils' good personal development. This is brought about by the excellent pastoral care provided. A number of parents commented on this, saying such things as, 'This is an extremely caring school, both for the children and for their families.' The environment created is friendly and pupils thoroughly enjoy school, which is obvious in the happy but orderly rush to get in at the start of the day. The pupils respond to these levels of care by being extremely considerate of the needs of each other. There is a very low incidence of accidents in the playground, which is an indication that pupils are adopting safe practices exceptionally well.

Pupils' adoption of a healthy lifestyle is good in their involvement in the good range of sporting and other activities. Although they know about healthy eating, a number bring crisps and unhealthy snack bars for break times. The school council is discussing how they can help promote healthy snacks. They, and the class councils, are playing a valuable role in decision making in the school. For example, the school council has taken responsibility for organising the upgrading of the toilets, including the design and receiving contracts. As a parent said, 'My child thinks the school council is great as his ideas are taken into account.' This involvement, along with their development of independence and good acquisition of basic skills, is preparing them well

for their future. However, pupils are insufficiently aware of the multicultural nature of the society in which they are growing up.

The major reason for pupils' good progress and achievement through the school is good teaching. There are a number of strengths in classroom practice. For instance, teachers plan well for the full range of abilities in their classes, although there are times when more-able pupils do not move on to really challenging work quickly enough. There are a good number of other adults, who support pupils' learning well, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Parents also appreciate the work of these adults. One parent said, 'Wonderful teaching assistants support teachers fully.' Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards and other technology to interest and enthuse pupils. They also generally use question-and-answer sessions and paired discussions well to reinforce pupils' learning. This is not always the case and there are sometimes opportunities missed to engage pupils in this way.

The school has worked hard to improve systems of academic support and guidance since the last inspection. Regular checks are made on pupils' achievement, and those of all abilities who could be doing better are targeted to get them back on track. A great deal of work has also been done to raise standards in reading, particularly for boys, and this has been effective in much-improved progress through the school in reading. Standards in writing are not improving as quickly, as although targets are set to show pupils what they need to learn next, pupils have too many at a time and so are not clear about their next steps in learning. There are no such targets for mathematics so pupils do not know how to raise their standards.

The following comment, typical of many made by parents, sums up the school accurately and very well: 'The school is a happy environment where children feel safe and are able to develop exceptionally as individuals. Children are motivated and always keen to get to school, often excited by the challenges of the day.' With the progress that has been made since the last inspection and the determination not to stand still and be complacent, the school is well placed to continue on its upward path.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The close links with the adjacent nursery mean that the Reception teacher is not working in isolation. She meets regularly with the nursery staff and they often plan together. The school has two intakes each year, a few children joining in September, who are taught with the younger Year 1 children. The remainder start in the Reception class in January, which means that many only have two terms in Reception. While they start with standards below expectations, they make good progress in two terms before they join Year 1, but are still below expected standards. The older children, who join in September, are provided for well. Those who are ready work with Year 1 children and this extends their learning well. The teacher for the Reception class manages the provision well and has put in place a good system of checking on children's progress. However, she does not analyse the results of these assessments to see which aspects of learning are relatively weaker.

What the school should do to improve further

- Set precise short-term targets for pupils in writing and mathematics so that they know exactly what they need to learn next to improve their work.
- Ensure that more-able pupils quickly move on to more challenging work in order to increase the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in English and mathematics.

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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	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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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

15 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Belvidere Primary School, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY2 5YB

Thank you so much for welcoming me to your school when I visited. I was very interested to hear all you had to tell me about your school and how much you enjoy it. I am not surprised you enjoy it so much as it is a good school.

I think these are the best things about your school.

- You are very aware of how to play safely and there are far fewer accidents than one usually finds in schools.
- You are making good progress because teaching is good.
- The standards you reach by the time you leave are higher than those usually found, particularly in science, where many of you reach Level 5.
- Your headteacher and staff have good plans to make sure that the school continues to improve.
- You are developing well into sensible young citizens. Your good work on the class councils and the school council help in this.
- All adults take very good care of you.

I have suggested to your headteacher and staff that the following things could help you reach even higher standards.

- Although you have targets for improving your writing, there are too many of them for you to know exactly which ones you should be aiming at to improve your work. There are also no targets for you in maths.
- Too few of you reach Level 3 in Year 2 and Level 5 in Year 6 in English and maths. This is because, too often, those of you who are capable do not move on to really difficult work quickly enough.

You can help by making sure that you know how to improve your work and perhaps telling teachers when you are finding the work too easy. Keep up the good work!

Yours sincerely

John Eadie Lead inspector

15 November 2007



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John Eadie
Lead inspector