

Beacon Rise Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109133
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	324908
Inspection dates	24–25 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Chris Grove

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)	426
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	57
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Paulley
Headteacher	Christopher Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	29 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hanham Road Kingswood Bristol BS15 8NU
Telephone number	01454 867232
Fax number	01454 867232

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This above average sized primary school includes Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is also below average. The school is an Investor in People, has Healthy School status and holds the Activemark award. A new headteacher was appointed from April 2007, following an extended period of interim leadership.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Beacon Rise Primary is a satisfactory school. It also has good features. It has a welcoming atmosphere and has developed a positive, inclusive ethos for learning. The new headteacher enjoys the confidence of parents, pupils, staff and governors. A good team spirit among staff has been developed and parents praise the new leadership. One, for instance, wrote that the headteacher 'has lots of new ideas and loads of enthusiasm which is reflected throughout the school'; others wrote of their children's happiness and developing confidence at school and of the very good relationships with the teaching and support staff.

Parents also rightly remark on the good quality of care for pupils. This leads to pupils' good personal development. The trusting relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils, are an important element in their enjoyment of school. The curriculum is satisfactory, and pupils particularly enjoy the good range of extra-curricular and after-school clubs that is available. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school and their attentiveness in lessons are consistently good.

Although standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 are above average, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average. As a result of a recent focus on mathematics, standards in this subject are starting to rise. However, as yet standards in reading and writing are not high enough, considering pupils' skills on entry to Year 1. Although tracking information shows that pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good progress in Years 3 to 6, the information also indicates that rates of progress vary from year to year between subjects and between year groups. As a result, progress in this key stage is satisfactory rather than good.

The uneven rates of pupils' progress result from inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Tasks are not always matched appropriately to the range of pupils' needs. Staff know their pupils well, and pastoral support is good, but the use of academic guidance is satisfactory. A tracking system is in place, which provides accurate information about pupils' attainment and identifies those pupils who need further support. However, this information is not used well enough to ensure all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Teaching and learning are satisfactory.

The headteacher is well supported by the senior leadership team. The partnerships with other organisations, including schools and local authority support services, are good. Self-evaluation, although accurate, has not been rigorous enough to raise standards in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 and improve pupils' progress across the school. Nevertheless, the school has successfully made improvements in some areas. For instance, the leadership has promoted all aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being, which are consistently good. Weaknesses in mathematics have been accurately diagnosed, and are being effectively addressed. These improvements indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents speak highly of the good provision. They note the good level of care provided by the staff, and the warm, friendly atmosphere in which their children quickly feel safe and confident. The teaching has important strengths, including planning, relationships, colourful resources and enticing activities, which ensure children achieve well and enter Year 1 with knowledge

and skills that are slightly above average. This represents good achievement, as the majority of children enter the Nursery with skills that are similar to those of most children at the age of three.

Children's personal development and well-being are good. This is because the skilled staff ensure that children become increasingly independent and confident learners, who behave well, feel safe and quickly acquire good personal hygiene routines. Staff value every child. A very good partnership with parents has been established through home visits and highly effective induction procedures. Parents are treated as equal partners in their children's learning and development. Outdoor learning is planned effectively. Children enjoy daily outside activities where they happily take part in exciting tasks such as constructing a dark pool for the Loch Ness monster.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leader is relatively new to the role, and has begun to track children's progress. Given a full-time teaching commitment and a management role in another key stage, however, it is hard for the leader to model best practice. Nevertheless, the experienced EYFS team conduct good daily observations and assessments of children's progress and successfully identify the next steps in their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

-
- Raise standards in Key Stage 1, especially in reading and writing.
- Ensure that pupils make more consistent progress in their learning by improving the use of assessment information.
- Improve the rigour of self-evaluation in order to identify quickly any weaknesses in outcomes and provision.

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

The overall improvement in Key Stage 1 performance in 2008 was mainly due to better mathematics results. This is attributable to the good impact of school's focus on mathematics in the last year. However, standards in reading and writing are not high enough. At the end of Key Stage 2, test results in English, mathematics and science have generally been above average. Following a dip to average in 2006, standards improved in 2007, and improved further in 2008. Although the Year 6 group of pupils in 2008 made good progress from the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' rates of progress across Key Stage 2 are not consistent. In this key stage also, progress in mathematics has been better and more consistent than in reading and writing, because of the school's stronger focus on this subject. The pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same satisfactory progress as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance has improved to above average. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, but their understanding of life in multicultural Britain is less well developed. The good personal, social and health education

programme contributes to pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour. Pupils feel safe and are confident to approach school staff with any worries. They have a good understanding of healthy eating and lifestyles, and are proud of the Healthy Schools Award. They speak positively about the many opportunities to take exercise, including the after-school sports. The school council plays an active part in the school, and members speak with pride about their role in purchasing new equipment to enhance playtimes. Regular fund raising events enable pupils to make positive contributions to many charities and the wider community. Older pupils take on responsibilities eagerly. For example, some support younger children at playtimes and others act as school prefects. These responsibilities, and pupils' above average standards in basic skills, prepare them well for economic well-being in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

A strong feature is the consistently good relationships with pupils, including good use of praise to provide encouragement. Other strengths include well-devised activities to involve all pupils, such as pairing pupils to share their ideas, and the effective use of the interactive whiteboards. Teaching assistants provide good support, ensuring that all pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are included well in lessons. Although lessons are planned carefully, insufficient use of available assessment information means that tasks are not always matched closely enough to the full range of pupils' needs. As a result, teaching is not consistently challenging for all pupils. However, teachers mostly set a good pace for learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The strong emphasis on developing pupils' personal and social skills promotes a good work ethic. Curriculum planning is satisfactory, but to date it has had more impact on improving the curriculum for mathematics than for reading and writing. The school is currently conducting a review to provide a more creative approach to learning. This is in the early stages, and links across subjects are developing satisfactorily. There is a strong commitment to sport and physical education and this is well supported through regular visits by coaches, leading to high standards in sports. Links to other European schools have been made through involvement in the Comenius project. This also involves teaching French throughout the school. Learning is extended well through a good range of extra-curricular activities, including residential experiences and a wide range of clubs and visits. These have a positive effect on pupils' interest in school and strengthen links with the local community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The personal, social and health education programme is effective, and helps to ensure good pastoral care. Strong links with outside agencies provide vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities with appropriate support. The Inclusion Leader ensures that teaching assistants meet the needs of individual pupils well, and give them good support. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are rigorously followed. Individual targets and guidance from marking help pupils to know how well they are progressing. Although the school has

recently extended its systems to track pupils' progress, it is not always using this information well enough to provide support where slow rates of progress are identified.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school met or exceeded most of its challenging academic and attendance targets in 2008. Through its good relationships with parents, local organisations and other schools, and through its developing international connections, the school is contributing well to the promotion of community cohesion. Leaders have taken appropriate action to improve standards and progress in mathematics. However, self-evaluation is not rigorous enough as there are still inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and the use of assessment information to ensure all pupils make good progress. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. Governors provided effective continuity during the period of interim leadership. They demonstrate a readiness to play the role of 'critical friend' and offer a satisfactory level of challenge in identifying the implications of data analysis and the school's self-evaluation.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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?	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

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	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Beacon Rise Primary School, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 8NU

We would like to thank all of you and your teachers for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes. Beacon Rise Primary is a satisfactory school and a happy place for children. Many of your parents wrote to us about how you enjoy school and about the good aspects of your school. There are positive things to say about your school. These are the most important ones.

- Your whole school has a happy atmosphere about it.
- Your behaviour in lessons and around school is good.
- You have very good relationships with each other, and with the teachers and other adults. They take good care of you.
- Almost all your parents are pleased with the school.
- Your personal development is good.
- The children in the Nursery and Reception achieve well.
- You reach good standards and make satisfactory progress in your learning.
- The teaching in your school is always at least satisfactory, and sometimes good.
- The teachers have planned a satisfactory curriculum, which interests you.
- Your school has good relationships with your parents, other schools and the people they ask to come in to help you.
- Your headteacher and other leaders have worked hard to improve the school and the teaching. We know there have been improvements, but some other things need to be better still. The school now needs to:
 - raise the standards of reading and writing in Key Stage 1
 - ensure that you make more consistent progress in your learning by improving the use of information about how well you are doing
 - Make sure that the checking up that your school leaders do quickly identifies any weaknesses in standards and progress and in what they provide for you.

You can help too by continuing to work hard and taking advantage of the improvements that your teachers will be making. We really enjoyed our time in your school. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Chris Grove Lead inspector