

Belton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120114
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	327201
Inspection date	14 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Frances Gillam

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	70
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Rowland
Headteacher	Robert McDermott
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Sadlers Wells Belton Loughborough LE12 9TS

Age group	4–10
Inspection date	14 January 2009
Inspection number	327201

Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the effectiveness of strategies to promote pupils' writing skills across the curriculum and the impact of the action to improve learning, especially for the more able
- the influence of leadership and management in driving improvements, particularly in reading and writing
- the effectiveness of the school's identification of and response to variations in the performance of different groups, with a particular focus on boys in Years 1 to 3.

Evidence was gathered from:

- discussions with the headteacher, governors, pupils and staff
- visits to classrooms and observations of teaching
- scrutiny of pupils' work
- observation of other aspects of the school day such as break and lunchtimes
- analysis of parents' questionnaires and school documentation, in particular data on pupils' progress and school development planning.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors 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

Almost all pupils who attend this small school are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are taught in a class with pupils in Year 1. The percentage of pupils who need extra help with their learning is broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Belton Primary is a good school. Pupils flourish and achieve well in its warm and welcoming environment. Pupils soon grow in confidence and make outstanding progress in their personal development and well-being. One parent's comment summed up the views of many: 'The school has created a positive, friendly and professional approach to learning, which has enabled our child to fly with their education.' Parents are right to have confidence that the school will care very well for their children. Safeguarding procedures are robust and staff ensure that pupils know how to keep safe and stay healthy. Pupils act very sensibly in and around the school and with due attention to the welfare of others. These are key reasons why pupils declare they feel safe and free from harm. In addition, pupils are confident that there is always someone on the staff that they can go to with any worries or concerns. Pupils appreciate the help and advice staff give them. They feel their efforts are valued and this helps to establish strong and positive relationships. The pupils' excellent behaviour and the school's strong Christian values underpin the calm and well-ordered atmosphere in classes. Pupils feel that staff deal with any problems promptly and fairly. This outstanding level of care, guidance and support is a key reason why the pupils' attendance is good, why they achieve well and why they enjoy coming to school.

Outstanding teaching in the EYFS, and good teaching in the rest of the school, enable pupils to make good progress in their work and to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 5. Teachers pay careful attention to planning activities that are well matched to most pupils' individual needs. Their strong promotion of a love for reading and the excellent support of parents in helping their children to read at home are essential components of the pupils' outstanding achievements in this area. Senior leaders acknowledge there is scope to increase parental involvement in developing further pupils' writing skills. Standards in writing are not as high as in reading. The school has been working hard to improve writing standards to the same high level as those in reading, especially for the more able, but with mixed success. This is because teachers miss some good opportunities, not only for the more able but also for other pupils to use and develop their writing skills in different subjects. In addition, sometimes pupils do not have enough time to discuss and share their ideas to help them formulate what they want to write. Learning support assistants play an important role in supporting the small number of pupils who need extra help with their learning. Their well-timed interventions and sensitive support enable these pupils to play a full part in lessons and to make good progress in their learning. Many pupils comment positively on their involvement in recycling schemes and the opportunities they have to run stalls at the school fairs. These activities give pupils a good understanding of the world of work. Together with the pupils' strong personal attributes and confidence in literacy and numeracy, they prepare them well for the future.

Good self-evaluation processes provide governors and staff with a clear idea of the school's effectiveness. This enables senior leaders to identify accurately the correct priorities to drive improvements and set challenging targets. The action the school takes is usually successful. Standards remain high and pupils continue to do very well in reading. Pupils' understanding of cultures and faiths different from their own has improved. The link they have with a school in Kenya is widening their horizons and giving them a good sense of their place in the global community. These features show that leadership and management are good and that the school has a good capacity to improve further. However, senior leaders recognise that the systems for tracking pupils' progress do not always identify differences in the progress of boys and girls well enough. This means that pupils do not always get the support that would help them to

make best progress. This is particularly the case for the boys in writing and for the girls in mathematics.

The good curriculum is enhanced by a broad range of activities outside lessons, including residential visits, clubs and visitors into school. These features help to promote aspects of pupils' personal development very well and support their learning in a number of subjects. Pupils clearly understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They use this understanding very well to make sensible choices about what they eat and the way they live their lives. Participation rates in sporting events are high because pupils thoroughly enjoy physical activity and recognise the importance of exercise in keeping fit.

Pupils have a keen sense of the difference between right and wrong and show this in the way they treat each other and in the high levels of care, kindness and compassion that they have for others. Pupils make a good contribution to the community. They take part in church and local community events such as the Harvest Festival and May Day celebrations. These activities build strong links with the church and people living locally. Organising charitable events such as a coffee morning for the Macmillan Cancer Trust gives pupils a strong understanding of how they can help others less fortunate than they are.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children's attainment on entry to the Reception Year is broadly as expected for four-year-olds. From this starting point, children do very well and reach above average standards by the time they move into Year 1. Adults support the children's welfare and learning very well; they are sensitive to the children's needs but at the same time set out clearly their high expectations for good behaviour and hard work. As a result, children behave extremely well. They are settled and happy and build warm and purposeful relationships with each other and their teachers. The classroom, in and out of doors, is bright and attractive and activities are lively and stimulating. These features encourage the children to probe and investigate and to raise questions about what they are learning. Adults provide very good models for the children to copy and this goes a long way towards preparing children for the next stage in their education. For example, in one lesson children listened carefully to the way their teacher asked questions and then had a go themselves. The teacher's careful and well-focused feedback enabled the children to improve their questioning skills. This raised the children's sense of achievement and increased their confidence. Well-directed leadership and excellent coordination of the EYFS provision provide staff with clear guidance on how to get the best from children. Staff understand fully and make very good use of policies, assessment procedures and record keeping to provide high quality provision for the children in their care.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils are given better opportunities to develop their writing skills across the curriculum and to share their ideas and talk about what they are going to write.
- Check more carefully how well different groups of pupils are doing so that any in danger of falling behind are identified quickly and swift action is taken.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

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/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	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?	1

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 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	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**

15 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Belton Church of England Primary School, Loughborough LE12 9TS

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking with you, visiting some of your lessons and hearing about all the exciting things you do.

You have a good school. The people in charge and your teachers do a good job of helping you to learn. This enables you to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 5 and to make good progress in your work.

Here are some of the things we found were especially good about your school.

- You are excellent readers.
- Children in the Reception Year get off to a flying start and do very well in their first year at school.
- You have a very good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy.
- You are very good at looking out for others and at keeping yourselves safe and free from harm.
- You know how important it is to have respect for other people's views and beliefs. You show this in the way you listen to what others have to say and in your kind and friendly ways.
- Your behaviour is extremely good and you are keen to help those less fortunate than you are.
- You are very well cared for and you say you feel safe and very happy in school.

We have asked the people in charge and your teachers to work together on two things.

- To make sure you have better opportunities to use and develop your writing skills in all subjects and to share your ideas and talk about what you are going to write.
- To check more carefully how well all of you are doing so that none of you falls behind in your learning.

Keep up the good work!

Yours faithfully

Fran Gillam

Lead inspector