

Beechwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107920
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	336976
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Kath Halifax

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 of pupils on the school roll	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tom Clarke
Headteacher	Mr Simon Hilton
Date of previous school inspection	25 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 14 different teachers. Further time was spent looking at pupils' records of achievement, work books, and information about pupils' progress. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff, and other professionals, and looked at the school's review of its work, the current development plan, minutes of governors' meetings, and documentation to ensure pupils are safe. The responses to 40 parental questionnaires were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- action taken to ensure that the attainment of the more able pupils at Key Stage 1 in mathematics and writing matches that in reading
- action taken to ensure all pupils in Key Stage 2 make at least the expected progress in mathematics by Year 6
- action taken to narrow the gap between reading and writing by the end of Year 6
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in driving school improvement given the recent changes to leadership.

Information about the school

This large primary school serves an area where a high percentage of families are in low paid jobs or not in paid employment. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Most pupils are of White British background. A small proportion is of mixed race. The number of pupils from Eastern Europe is increasing. Almost all of these pupils arrive speaking little or no English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. Far more pupils than usual are in the care of the local authority. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award. The headteacher has been in post two terms and was previously deputy headteacher in the school.

At the time of the inspection, over three quarters of Year 6 pupils had already transferred to their secondary school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good and rapidly improving school that provides good value for money. Since the last inspection, the school has built upon its strengths with the result that pupils' attainment has improved year-on-year. The latest results in national tests were the school's best ever. Pupils' achievement is good. Their rate of progress has increased because of good teaching and an exciting curriculum. Pupils especially enjoy the different themes they study, and the opportunity to follow their interests in each topic. Having entered school with attainment well below that typical for their age, their attainment in English, mathematics and science is broadly average by the end of Year 6. As a consequence of well-planned programmes and high quality teaching of writing, the gap between standards in reading and writing is narrowing. Most exceed the expected rate of progress in English, mathematics and science. While pupils enjoy information and communication technology (ICT), their attainment in this subject is not as high as in other aspects of their learning.

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children in the nursery thoroughly enjoy the freedom of moving in and out of the Magic Garden. Children in the Reception classes also have an outdoor area, but it is not used to full advantage. Planning for this age group is conscientious and all children have opportunities to take the initiative in their learning, but teachers' plans do not always take account of the knowledge and skills children will acquire in their chosen area.

Through daily routines and an extensive programme for personal education, all pupils make good gains in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the procedures for safeguarding are outstanding. They receive exceptional care, guidance and support. Considerable work to widen pupils' horizons is reaping tremendous benefits and enables pupils to make an outstanding contribution to the local, national and global communities.

Pupils and staff thrive under the far-sighted leadership of the headteacher. He and the acting deputy headteacher have successfully created a school that embraces all learners. Pupils, including those who have failed in other schools, blossom. The determined and imaginative work of the leadership team and governors has improved both the education and provided a quality outdoor environment. Self-evaluation is accurate and detailed. The monitoring of lessons is raising attainment. The school has proved itself well since the last inspection. Leaders know where they are going and how to get there, giving them good capacity to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise attainment in ICT by;
 - carrying out a check on staff skills and providing training to fill the gaps
 - ensuring pupils use programmes that are similar to those in common use
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use ICT, to support learning in other subjects.
- Improve planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure it identifies:
 - the knowledge and skills to be acquired when children are choosing their own activities
 - how the outdoor area for children in the Reception class will provide for all the six areas of learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Children relish their time in school, saying it is, 'somewhere very special'. They are confident learners, eager to demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired and keen to show inspectors how they have met the targets on their colourful 'learning mats'. Though a considerable number have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including a history of social, emotional and behavioural needs, they respond exceptionally well to the values of the school. Pupils show respect for, and care for, each other. They take pride in all they do both in and out of lessons and have a mature understanding of the consequence of their actions. Attendance is broadly average. Despite rigorous actions taken by the school and local authority, a few pupils are persistent absentees.

While there have been differences in the attainment of particular groups of pupils and between subjects in the past, these are being eradicated through personal programmes for each pupil. Providing intensive support at Key Stage 1 is paying dividends in the proportion of pupils achieving the levels expected for their age, and in ensuring that the more able pupils achieve equally well in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result of rigorous programmes in Year 3, pupils are on track to attain above the levels expected. In Key Stage 2, a myriad of opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge means pupils are on course to attain as well in mathematics as they do in English.

Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of their learning and for life out of school. They have a good understanding of keeping safe and healthy. They contribute in numerous ways to the community, undertaking responsibilities such as play leaders conscientiously. Pupils are justifiably proud of the work that is going on to improve the school grounds, including planting trees. They make generous donations to a variety of charities, including raising funds for a water supply for one of their link schools in Nicaragua. Through initiatives such as 'Spirit Alive', Year 6 pupils work cooperatively as a team, communicating effectively and working to a tight budget. All pupils have tremendous confidence and self-belief, commenting, 'I can do anything I set my mind to.'

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have a good command of most of the subjects they teach and are successful in matching activities to individual pupils' preferred style of learning. Planning for lessons is detailed, and is clear about the knowledge and skills each pupil will acquire. Adults have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of the work they produce. Consequently, lessons are purposeful with pupils producing high quality work. Even the youngest pupils are encouraged to question and reason, for example, when trying to determine the shape hidden in the 'thinking box'. Skilled support assistants contribute considerably to pupils' learning in individual and group work, but their time is not always utilised well in the introduction to lessons. Very good systems are in place to keep a check on pupils' progress. Marking provides excellent guidance for the next steps in learning. In addition, pupils' understanding of how well they have done and how to improve their work is demonstrated in their proficient 'green pen' editing.

An impressive feature of the curriculum is the way the school ensures each pupil receives a personalised programme matched to his or her need. The focus on the key subjects of English, mathematics and science is evidenced in pupils' raised attainment.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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However, the variation in teacher knowledge, and resources that are not compatible with home computers, mean pupils do not achieve as well in ICT as in other subjects. Pupils are full of enthusiasm for the changes in the curriculum. They say how much they enjoy following their interests. For example, when studying the Ancient Greeks, some pupils researched fashion, while others chose food or sport. Since the last inspection a concerted effort has been made to provide pupils with experiences of life beyond their locality. As a result pupils now speak confidently about, for example, buildings of national importance following their visit to London, and of how the bustling city of Leeds compares to their estate.

Care, guidance and support are of the highest quality. A well-established team, including the resourceful parental support worker and capable learning mentor, ensure the high quality is maintained. Very effective links with a range of health professionals and agencies support pupils and families, particularly those who are experiencing challenging circumstances. Pupils who are new to the country receive equally good support and say they soon feel at home and that they are helped to understand not just a new language but the traditions of the British culture.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders are clear and determined in their pursuit of excellence and have the skill and enthusiasm to achieve it. The headteacher has already made perceptible changes in his short time in post and is accelerating the rate of school improvement. Through innovative ideas, leaders have enhanced what is taught and how it is taught. Robust systems track pupils' progress and are used effectively to identify and provide for pupils who need additional support, or for those who have a gift or talent.

Governance is good. Governors provide practical support as well as holding the school to account, for example, in improving the grounds. At the time of the inspection, excellent policies and procedures were in place to ensure all adults have an in-depth understanding of safeguarding pupils. Leaders have set the bar high, so procedures to identify, monitor and support vulnerable pupils and their families are exemplary. The school is a cohesive, harmonious, outward looking community. The link and exchange of teachers and letters with a school in Ghana has been a revelation to pupils, though links with a UK school of pupils from different social backgrounds are at an early stage.

Leaders work hard to promote equality of opportunity and celebrate diversity. The style

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of teaching is wide-ranging and brings out individual pupils' strengths. Leaders have successfully remedied disparities in attainment between different groups and are closing the gap between subjects. Links with parents and carers are much improved since the previous inspection. There has been a considerable increase in the number of parents attending consultation evenings and special events such as Black History Week. Leaders are now endeavouring to increase the numbers attending workshops.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress and achieve well because of the good provision. As a result of the caring, nurturing environment, children make the most gains in their personal development. They enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, forming good relationships and playing well together. They especially enjoy their activities in the nursery's 'Magic Garden'. Though children in the Reception classes have opportunity to use the Nursery garden, most of their outdoor activities take place in a smaller area. While some of the activities mirror the indoor provision, plans are basic and opportunities are missed to ensure that the outdoor play supports all six areas of learning. Teaching is good and is especially successful in enabling children to recognise new sounds. Children's progress in other areas, however, is sometimes uneven, especially in writing and in calculation. Leadership is good. All the required policies are in place and children's welfare is paramount.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Though a very small minority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, their responses are favourable. They are positive about the school and their child's education. Parents and carers are especially pleased with the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the range of clubs available to pupils and the improved communications. Inspection findings agree with the views of parents and carers. Two parents expressed individual concerns. These were looked into and were already being followed up.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beechwood Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 373 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	63	15	37	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	44	21	51	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	34	26	63	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	44	23	56	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	51	20	49	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	44	21	51	2	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	41	24	59	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	20	49	21	51	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	41	24	59	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	39	24	59	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	34	25	61	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	44	21	51	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	51	20	49	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Beechwood Primary School, Leeds, LS14 6QB

First, may I say what a delightful time my colleagues and I had when we visited your school. Thank you for talking to us and for showing us your work. We especially enjoyed hearing all about your visits, your achievements and seeing the Magic Garden. It was very clear from our chats and the questionnaire replies we received from you and your parents and carers that you enjoy school, and think that you are safe and well cared for. Your school provides you with a good education. Good teaching allows you to make good progress. You receive outstanding care and support. As well as working hard, you have a very positive attitude to everything the school offers. You enjoy lessons, clubs, especially the street dance and cheer leading, and visits out of school. You are well behaved. All this is happening because you have good leaders.

Here are some areas that would make your school more successful:

- your achievement is good in most subjects, we would like it to be so in ICT
- the planning for children in the Nursery and Reception Classes needs to be clearer about what children will achieve in their 'choosing' activities, and when playing outside in the Reception classes.

We know you will do all you can to help your teachers and wish you every success in your future, especially with your garden!

Yours sincerely

Mrs Katharine Halifax

Lead inspector

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