

Belle Vue Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112228
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337873
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Brian Dower

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 of pupils on the school roll	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Evans
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed 12 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and two governors and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including pupils' books and files, monitoring and assessment records, minutes of governors' meetings, forward planning, and curriculum and lesson plans. The 204 questionnaire returns from parents and carers were analysed, together with 12 from staff.

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

- pupils' current progress and the level of their basic skills
- the use of assessments and improvement targets to support pupils in their learning
- safeguarding arrangements to ensure pupils' well-being and the quality of the care, guidance and support they receive
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels to bring about improvements in pupils' personal and academic development.

Information about the school

Belle Vue School was formed in September 2008 from the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools. It is much larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Very few join or leave the school part-way through their primary education. The school holds a number of awards, including the Healthy Schools, Activemark and Artsmark awards and the Early Years Kite Mark.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Overall, attainment is average. Progress and achievement are satisfactory across the key stages and for all groups, including for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose prior attainment is high. In the Reception classes children make good progress and achieve well, some exceptionally so.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. They eat healthily and take plenty of exercise. The older pupils take on responsibilities, helping to care for the younger ones. The school council is active in contributing to developments; it has created 'calm' areas for those who want to sit quietly at playtime and has worked with an outside agency on improving the school grounds. Behaviour is good. Pupils say, and the school's records show, that bullying is rare. When it does occur it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Attendance rates are average and punctuality to school and lessons is good.

Pastoral care is good. Adults work hard to give every pupil the means to learn and develop in a supportive and stimulating environment. Classroom displays celebrate pupils' work and prompts for learning abound. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. There have been significant recent improvements, for example in the use of structured learning activities to meet the needs of all ability levels. Very good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) for teaching, enabling pupils to be more independent in their learning. There remain inconsistencies in the use of time, the rigour of teachers' questioning and the approach to tackling the weak listening skills of a small minority of pupils. The curriculum is good because it is structured to meet the needs of all.

Leadership and management at all levels are good. This has driven the better progress and the rise in attainment, and accounts for the school's good capacity to improve further. There are extensive and effective links with outside agencies and partner institutions to promote pupils' learning and well-being. Self-evaluation is accurate and development planning is good. There is a clear understanding of how well pupils are doing because of accurate assessments and better monitoring and tracking. Governors are supportive in their approach and challenging in the questions they ask.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - quickening the pace of learning through a more efficient use of time
 - developing the range and rigour of teachers' questioning skills

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- ensuring that there is a planned and consistent approach to developing pupils' listening skills.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

There was a dip in performance at the end of Year 6 in 2009, when attainment was below average. This past underachievement has been reversed because effective procedures for monitoring and support have been put in place. Pupils' progress has quickened, their attainment is rising and standards are at expected levels. The pace of learning of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities has also increased. As a result, this is an improving school. Pupils enjoy their learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They reflect on their relationships with others and the world around them, including the intangible. They know right from wrong and they show kindness to each other. They have a good understanding of society's cultural diversity. Pupils have good social and speaking skills, showing confidence when they talk about their work to the whole class or to visitors. Most have good listening skills but a small minority find it difficult to concentrate for any length of time on what others are saying. Pupils work well together, suggesting how each other's work could be improved. Literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory. ICT skills are well developed for learning, research and the presentation of work. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage in their education. The quality of their art work is good and interesting and colourful displays around the school contribute to its warm and welcoming atmosphere. Pupils' understanding of their country's history and place in the world good for their age. They are aware of global issues and contribute to protecting the environment.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2

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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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Improvements to teaching have contributed to the faster rate of progress and to the rise in standards. This is evident in the effective way assessments are used to support pupils in their learning, giving them clear and accurate guidance on how well they are doing and what they must do to improve. Teachers' marking is consistently good and at times excellent. The teaching seen during the inspection was mostly good and outstanding practice was observed. All teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils. Working relationships are good and pupils say that teachers give generously of their time to help them overcome difficulties. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and others' work and they do this well. The result is that the rate of progress is now satisfactory. There remain inconsistencies in teaching. The pace of learning sometimes flags because too much time is given to the teacher's explanation and to a particular learning activity. Questioning is not always used rigorously to get pupils to explain the 'how' and 'why' of their answers and to justify their views and ideas. This lack of urgency and lack of challenge means that pupils are not always stretched. There is not a consistent approach to developing pupils' listening skills and, as a result, a small minority of pupils find it difficult to sustain concentration for extended periods.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Enrichment activities are extensive and the take-up is high for the wide and interesting range of extra-curricular provision. The quality of the care, guidance and support pupils receive is good, contributing significantly to their good personal development and their improving progress. Timely and appropriate guidance aids transition between key stages and prepares pupils well for the move to secondary school. As a result, they leave Year 6 confident and self-reliant and excited about the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders, managers and governors have high expectations of pupils and have driven the improved progress and rise in attainment. The headteacher provides strong leadership through her understanding of how to galvanise and unite support for change after the amalgamation. Her strategic planning for the future is exceptional. She is well supported by able senior staff who are effective at monitoring the implementation of agreed policies and procedures and improving provision. This has resulted in the use of challenging performance targets and accurate assessments to support pupils' learning. Governors know the school well because they monitor performance closely. They support, encourage and challenge. Governors and staff have a good understanding of the religious, ethnic and social characteristics of the community they serve. They are successful in giving every boy and girl an equal chance through effective strategies to tackle barriers to learning or to eliminate discrimination. As a result, they have created a calm and harmonious place in which to work. Their contribution to community cohesion is good. There are good links with parents and carers to support their children's learning and with outside agencies to support specific groups and individuals. Safeguarding procedures are effective. Safe working is evident in daily routines and risk assessments are carried out when appropriate. Health and safety audits are undertaken on a regular basis. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Children's overall development when they join the Reception class is below the expected level for their age. This is particularly apparent in their communication and mathematical skills and their emotional development. They settle quickly and soon feel happy and secure because of outstanding induction and excellent care and support. They make exceptional progress in their social skills as they learn to share and work together. Children keep themselves and others safe through their excellent behaviour and growing awareness of the needs and feelings of others. They practise good hygiene routines, for example washing their hands before eating a snack. There are close links with parents and carers to enable them to support their children's learning. Teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled at fostering children's ability to see, listen and speak, and to recognise numbers and shapes and create simple patterns. They make excellent use of open-ended questions to help children explain and extend their thinking. The learning environment is vibrant with colour and shape, displays that capture the children's interest and a wide range of resources to stimulate learning. Assessment and classroom records of children's learning are thorough and accurate, showing good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas, apart from writing, where progress is satisfactory. A few children exceed the expected levels for their age. Plans are well advanced to improve outdoor provision, broadening opportunities for children to make choices about their own learning and to explore and investigate for themselves.

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

Parents and carers are supportive of the school and recognise the progress their children make academically and in their personal development. The few concerns raised related to individual problems and did not reveal any pattern of dissatisfaction.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Belle Vue 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 204 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 410 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	115	56	84	41	4	2	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	136	67	66	32	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	88	43	98	48	15	7	3	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	93	46	93	46	15	7	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	108	53	84	41	6	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	86	42	99	49	14	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	105	51	90	44	8	4	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)	95	47	88	43	5	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	95	47	95	47	10	5	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	91	45	92	45	18	9	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	72	35	104	51	22	11	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	91	45	98	48	8	4	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	111	54	83	41	8	4	1	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



22 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Belle Vue Primary School, Carlisle, CA2 7PT

Thank you for the warm welcome we received during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed the two days we spent with you and only wish we had had more time to see all the interesting things you do.

We judged that yours is a satisfactory and improving school. The rate of progress you are making in your work is getting quicker and standards are rising. You have the personal qualities to be successful at school and in later life. For example, you can work independently and find things out for yourselves and you talk confidently about your work to the whole class and to visitors.

You behave well. You told us how much you enjoy the trips away and listening to the many speakers who visit your school. You like your teachers and the teaching assistants because they are always there for you and they give you the help and guidance you need.

There are always things to do to make a school better. We have asked that:

¿ teachers' questions make you think hard about why you have come up with an answer or view

¿ the pace of learning is always brisk by making better use of lesson time

¿ more is done to help a small minority of pupils who find it difficult to listen for any length of time.

Thank you again for the help you gave us. You made a valuable contribution to the inspection. Our best wishes to you for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Brian Dower

Lead Inspector

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