

Bean Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118266
Local Authority	kent
Inspection number	339177
Inspection dates	19–20 November 2009
Reporting inspector	John Mason

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	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Bonner
Headteacher	Laura Herbert
Date of previous school inspection	9 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, dropped into other lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, local authority partners, groups of pupils and some parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of policies, governors' minutes, the school's development plan, curricular planning and 45 parental questionnaires.

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

- pupils' current attainment and rates of progress and learning
- the school's capacity to sustain improvement in the light of its initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum
- the extent to which pupils' personal development and pastoral support are strengths of the school.

Information about the school

Bean Primary School is smaller than the average primary school. It mainly serves the communities of Bean and Darenth, including a settled travellers' community. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is declining and is below average. The proportion of minority ethnic pupils, including the proportion not having English as their first language, is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.

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

Bean Primary School provides a satisfactory education. For children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the quality of provision is good. Although some classes have suffered from a rapid turn around of teachers, staffing has become more stable in the past three years and the headteacher, appointed two years ago, has been able to build a clear vision to drive improvement which the whole staff now ambitiously share. As a result, the school is able to build on its established reputation for good pastoral care and is focusing successfully on improving teaching, progress and the level of enjoyment which pupils show in their learning.

The standards pupils' reach by the end of Year 6 are average. Pupils enter the Reception class with skills below those expected for their age, but make good progress to reach broadly average standards by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory. However, improved tracking of pupils' progress is helping teachers to plan much better for different groups to achieve well. Consequently, almost all pupils who attended the school for the whole of Key Stage 2 made the nationally expected two levels of progress during that time and an improving picture of progress is now evident in most classes. Nonetheless, in some classes, some pupils still do not have a clear picture of what they can achieve and how to do it. The quality of pupils' writing has improved due to the concerted efforts of all staff. Standards in mathematics are rising least rapidly.

As part of its good curriculum, the school is using project work increasingly effectively to make learning more interesting and enjoyable. It also provides a framework for teachers to become more creative in their teaching and is facilitating marked improvement in pupils' writing. However, opportunities to develop mathematical skills in this wider context are less well advanced. The curriculum promotes well pupils' awareness of different cultures and social diversity, with particular focus on travellers and other minority groups represented in the school. As a result, pupils show respect for one another's traditions and achievements. Their good behaviour in class has a positive impact on their learning and enjoyment of school.

Teaching is characterised by well paced, varied activities and good relationships which help pupils enjoy their learning. It is improving rapidly, but is satisfactory overall rather than good as it is not yet securely good across the school. Most teachers plan to meet the learning needs of different pupils effectively, but they do not always give those who work slowly adequate time to complete work nor ensure that greater challenge is provided for those pupils who work quickly and accurately.

Practice in eliciting ongoing feedback about how well pupils understand what they are

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taught is improving but still variable, as is the quality of marking, which does not consistently indicate the next steps pupils need to take to improve their learning.

The good care, guidance and support for pupils ensures they feel very safe at school, secure in the knowledge that adults will promptly address any concerns. Pupils have plenty of good quality opportunities to take part in sports and know well how to keep themselves healthy. The school has effective structures and good links with external agencies to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with specific language needs. The active and supportive governing body help reinforce good systems to encourage greater parental involvement in the life of the school. However, despite much positive work to engage the parents and carers of a small minority of pupils who are persistently absent, attendance overall is barely average. The headteacher and senior staff have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Increasingly pupils are meeting challenging targets in their performance. These aspects indicate the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards by providing greater opportunity to consolidate core skills, especially in mathematics, in the wider curriculum.
- Ensure teaching is consistently good and brings about good progress by: providing those pupils who work slowly adequate time to complete work, while providing greater challenge for those who work quickly and accurately to aspire to the higher grades consolidating the use of tracking and target setting so that pupils in all classes have a clear notion of what they can achieve and how to do it indicating more precisely the next steps pupils need to take to improve their learning by gauging more closely what pupils are learning in lessons and giving more detailed feedback in written work.
- Raise attendance to at least the national average by reducing substantially the persistent absence of a small minority of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

While broadly average when pupils enter Year 1, weaknesses pertain in aspects of literacy and mathematical calculation and few pupils do well for their age and attain Level 3 in reading, writing or mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1. Year 6 pupils use good, joined-up handwriting, which helps them to express themselves with growing confidence, for example, when imagining what it was like to be persecuted in war. They are catching up well, overcoming deficiencies in their application of mathematical skills. Results in the 2009 national texts indicated a good level of consistency in standards in all core subjects with an improving trend over the three years since the previous inspection. Most pupils who attend the school for the whole of Key Stage 2 make at least the expected two levels of progress. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress. Pupils with low attendance rates do not

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make as much progress as they should.

Pupils feel safe in school. They are supportive of one another and the house system helps pupils in different year groups to interact well. The active school council and the responsibilities taken on by older pupils, for example, leading play for younger pupils, reinforces the pupils' sense of community. As a result, they all share with pride the successes of school teams in competitive events and individual's achievements in school. Most pupils are keen to take exercise and have a good understanding of healthy eating. They engage well in charitable appeals, often with enterprising projects, and respond well to the growing provision in the curriculum to help them understand about citizenship and the traditions of people of less familiar cultures. They have a good sense of right and wrong. They sing with conviction in assembly and reflect well on their own faith and the faiths of others.

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
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers set clear expectations of work and behaviour in lessons. Pupils respond well and develop good attitudes to learning. Relationships in class are good. The

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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whole-school focus on improving handwriting has been well embraced, giving pupils confidence in expressing themselves and pride in their presentation. Much improved tracking of pupils' progress, based on regular assessments in reading, writing and mathematics ensure teachers usually tailor their teaching to pupils' abilities and understanding. Nonetheless, there is some variation in the quality of this practice. Those pupils who work more slowly are too often not given sufficient time to complete work, while the more able are not consistently stretched to reach their full potential. Pupils have effective targets agreed through good consultation, but the marking of written work does not give sufficient indication of the next steps pupils need to take to improve their work. Experienced teaching assistants provide well-targeted support for those pupils who have additional learning needs.

The good curriculum has broad coverage of core and foundation subjects with an effective focus on developing pupils' awareness of community understanding. For example, aspects of travellers' culture are well embedded and pupils' different backgrounds are celebrated. Building on successful collaborations with the Royal Opera House outreach team, where pupils have linked artistic and enterprise skills together very successfully to widen their horizons, topic work linking different disciplines is now good. Often different year groups follow the same theme in friendly competition. Pupils have plenty of opportunity to use computers and new technology safely. A good range of popular clubs enhances the curriculum, especially in competitive sports, dance and drama.

Good pastoral care is enhanced by good parental liaison, which includes a dedicated assistant and on-site provision to help parents and carers become more involved in supporting their children's learning. Planning to help pupils to settle into the routines of school and to move smoothly on to secondary schools is good. Any emerging concerns of individuals or groups of pupils are promptly identified and addressed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and their provision is carefully monitored so that they have full access to the curriculum while also receiving individual or group support.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear vision for raising the quality of teaching and learning in the school. She is ably supported by senior staff in realising this vision. By empowering all

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teachers to track pupils' progress carefully and to adapt their planning to address any underperformance, teachers have become much more accountable for raising standards. Growing rigour in the monitoring and teaching and a range of other strategies, such as joint moderation of pupils' work, is also raising the stakes and ensuring that whole-school initiatives, such as the improvement of writing, are successful. The school evaluates its strengths and weaknesses well, and the development plan, while lacking clear timings for action, identifies clearly how standards can be raised. Good schemes which impact on curricular planning are in place to promote equality of opportunity and community cohesion. All safeguarding regulations and duties are met. There are close links with external agencies, parents and carers to ensure the well-being of any pupils who need additional support. Despite the extensive support of the school and other agencies, attendance remains barely average because of a small minority of persistent non-attenders. The committed governing body supports the school very well in many active ways. Training is helping to develop their greater critical awareness, but governors do not yet determine the strategic direction of the school.

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	3
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	3
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

Children join the Reception Class with standards below those expected for their age and make good progress to enter Year 1 with standards which are broadly average. Reading skills, writing, linking sounds to letters and calculation are areas of particular weakness on entry and are still relatively weak when children start Year 1. Children make particularly good progress in their personal and physical development, responding well

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to the caring environment provided by the teacher and two support assistants. Children collaborate well, taking turns and sharing equipment. Ongoing assessment is used well to plan activities which take account of pupils' needs and the good balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning ensures that children enjoy their learning. Children move freely between the indoor and outdoor learning environment, but opportunities are missed to link robustly skills and learning outdoors. For example, although children enjoy their physical exercise on tricycles, they do not develop secure awareness of road safety at the same time. The well managed provision makes good links with parents and carers, the home and local nurseries to help children settle quickly. Individual needs are promptly identified and support from the school is good.

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

Most parents and carers who responded to the survey are happy with the education their children receive. A minority expressed concerns about behaviour, but almost all said their children enjoyed school and felt safe. Any concern pertaining to the leadership of the school was largely linked to the perception that the headteacher could be more visible around the school. Some parents and carers expressed concern about traffic and the lack of street lighting outside the school. While not the responsibility of the school, unlit kerb stones do present a potential risk to pupils coming back from after-school clubs in the winter and pupils do need to take special care. Another concern expressed where the school has only limited influence, is in the length of time it takes for processing applications for very young pupils to obtain a full statement of special educational need.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bean 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 186 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	62	16	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	62	13	29	0	0	2	4
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	47	17	38	3	7	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	38	18	40	6	13	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	17	38	21	47	1	2	2	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	47	18	40	7	13	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	51	18	40	1	2	2	4
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)	16	36	18	40	5	11	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	42	20	44	4	9	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	33	19	42	6	9	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	29	22	49	4	9	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	19	42	18	40	6	13	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	53	16	36	7	3	1	2

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.



23 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bean Primary School, Kent DA2 8AW

Thank you for the friendly welcome we received when the team of inspectors recently visited your school. We very much enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work and reading your questionnaires. Please also thank your parents who also took the time to complete questionnaires.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. You enjoy your learning. You feel safe. You like all the activities which help you stay fit and healthy. You mostly behave very well and this helps you to concentrate well in lessons. You show interest in each other and respect people of different backgrounds to your own. Many of you take on responsibilities by helping others, some by getting involved in the school council, others by leading play activities and most of you in raising money for charities. You appreciate the good care, guidance and support which your teachers and other adults in the school provide.

Although the standards of your work are broadly average and your progress is satisfactory, you have made much improvement in the quality of your writing. This is helping you to make the most of the topics you like so much which make links in your learning. To help you reach make good progress and reach above average standards, we have asked the school to improve the quality and consistency of teaching by:

- giving all of you time to complete work
- giving more challenging tasks to those of you who work fast and accurately
- helping you to know better how to improve, for example, by explaining what you need to do next when your work is marked.

We also think you can improve key skills, especially in mathematics, by using them more widely in all subjects and topics. Then, as you know, some pupils are frequently absent, which helps neither them nor others to progress as well as they could. So we would also like the school to help more of these pupils to attend more regularly.

With best wishes for the future.

John Mason

Lead Inspector

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