

Belgrave St Peter's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120186
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	339625
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Miller

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neville Mays
Headteacher	Beth Walker
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The majority of time was spent observing teaching and learning. Fourteen lessons were observed and inspectors visited classes at other times to evaluate the school's provision. They undertook other general observations including assemblies and displays of the pupils' work. Inspectors held meetings with the local authority, governors, staff and the school council, as well as meeting parents and carers at the start of each school day. They looked at documentation including policies, school development planning and self-evaluation, monitoring files, curriculum and safeguarding documents. They examined governors' minutes, the headteacher's reports to the governing body, local authority reports on the school and information provided for parents and carers. Inspectors received and analysed questionnaires from 45 parents or carers, 102 pupils and 15 members of staff.

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

- the work the school is doing to improve pupils' attainment in mathematics by the end of Year 2 and in English by the end of Year 6
- the provision the school is making for those pupils who find difficulty with their learning, and those who may be more able, gifted and/or talented
- the school's initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning through the use of assessment
- the school's strategies to strengthen and develop the quality of leadership, management and governance at all levels throughout the school.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school, serving a diverse community within its local parish and surrounding area. Over recent years, the school has suffered a lack of continuity in staffing with several permanent and temporary headteachers. Very few teachers have been at the school for longer than two years; there are currently some temporary staff and Year 1 and 2 classes have both had three different teachers since September 2009. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and a local authority environment award.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to raising pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2, and to some aspects of leadership, management and governance.

Since taking up her post in September 2009, the new headteacher has shown very effective leadership and management skills. She has quickly earned the trust and respect of pupils, staff, parents, governors and the local authority alike. In her hard work to get to know the school, she has identified a number of key weaknesses and aspects requiring improvement, some of which have been resolved quickly. Policies that were previously missing or outdated are now in place. Other weaknesses require longer-term solutions. Weak governance has led to an unsatisfactory staffing structure, and delay in appointing a leadership team to support the new headteacher in her work. However, with the help of the local authority, plans are now in place for a new staffing structure from April 2010. Partnership and monitoring systems have been agreed to begin in February 2010 to enable the headteacher to train and support a new senior and middle leadership team. Although the impact of these positive moves has yet to be seen, the headteacher's leadership is already creating a more open and professional approach to self-evaluation, including that by governors.

A key weakness is the inadequate progress made by pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils reach broadly average standards by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. However in 2009, attainment for pupils without a special educational need and/or disability fell to below the national average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. School assessment data and pupils' current work show that this decline is being halted gradually in Year 1, where pupils are now making satisfactory progress. However, Year 2 pupils have not been able to make up lost ground; only half are on track to make sufficient progress to reach the expected levels in reading, fewer in writing and none in mathematics. This situation has arisen because of a legacy of inadequate teaching in Key Stage 1. The school's capacity to secure satisfactory improvement, with the teachers currently at the school, is shown by the fact that Year 3 pupils are now making much improved progress. School data shows other year groups in Key Stage 2 are making the expected rate of progress towards their age related targets, although this is hindered by below average attendance, particularly due to pupils taking holidays in term time.

New and effective systems for assessing pupils' progress have been in place since

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September 2009, but are still in the process of refinement. Staff are able to identify more precisely where pupils require additional support with their learning. However, the use of assessment in lessons is at an early stage of development. Teachers' use of questioning to check pupils' depth of learning and extent of understanding varies across the school. An effective new marking policy has been put in place by the headteacher, but is not applied consistently by all staff. Pupils rely too much on teachers for guidance and there are sometimes limited opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in working independently. The school development plan correctly identifies the need to appoint a teacher with specific responsibility to ensure suitable challenge for all pupils, including those who are more able, gifted and/or talented.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in Years 1 and 2, and improve pupils' learning and rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics through:
 - the establishment of a permanent team of Key Stage 1 teachers
 - enabling pupils to work more independently
 - ensuring improved support for pupils, which is evaluated routinely to measure its success and effectiveness.
- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching across the school, and improve the quality of pupils' learning by:
 - ensuring consistently high quality marking across all subjects in line with the school's new marking policy
 - developing the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress
 - planning lessons to take more account of pupils' prior attainment
 - providing lessons that interest and challenge all pupils, including those who are more able, gifted and/or talented
 - questioning and challenging pupils to think more clearly about their learning and to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Ensure that by April 2010 the headteacher, governors and local authority implement their plans to restructure the school's staffing in order that appointments are made, and the new structure is in place for the summer term.
- Ensure the governing body improves its involvement and impact by:
 - becoming more involved in school self-evaluation and improvement planning
 - auditing governors' skills and undertaking training to address areas of weakness.
- Work with pupils, parents, carers and the education welfare officer to reduce unauthorised absence and improve attendance.

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By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, their attainment is average overall. In 2009 standards in English were below average. This was because of weaknesses in pupils' writing. The school has subsequently changed its teaching methods and put in place additional support programmes which are having a positive impact. The small number of pupils who find learning difficult made satisfactory progress from their individual starting points. Outcomes are unsatisfactory overall because a large group of pupils in Key Stage 1 have made insufficient progress in their learning. Across the school, inspectors observed pupils interacting well with each other, particularly when working in focussed discussion pairs. Learning was good when lessons were planned to meet the individual needs of a wide range of pupils according to ability. Such a lesson was seen in a Year 5 and 6 mathematics set where pupils classified and described the properties of shapes. Where learning and progress are satisfactory, teachers plan more generally rather than for individuals or small groups of pupils.

Although pupils say they enjoy school, attendance is below average for most year groups. This affects their learning and future well-being. In contrast, there are strengths in pupils' practice of many aspects of health, including sensible eating and participating in exercise. Older pupils say that behaviour in lessons and around the school has improved and that teachers challenge poor behaviour and sort out any problems. Pupils say that they feel safe within the school and have an awareness of potential risks outside and in the wider world. There is a positive sense of community, and pupils from different backgrounds mix well. Most pupils enjoy learning, and respond well to their teachers. However, younger pupils who have made insufficient progress in the past, have difficulty undertaking tasks by themselves in lessons. They are over-reliant on their teachers because their independent learning skills are under-developed.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	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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The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	4
	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

No unsatisfactory or outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection. Where good teaching takes place, particularly with the older pupils, there is a real buzz in the classroom. However, because most teaching is planned for broad groups of pupils and targets, it does not always challenge or extend some more capable pupils. Resources are used well to support learning. Displays of pupils' work show these are valued by both staff and pupils.

The school is now looking to develop further its curriculum in order to focus more on linking and using important subject skills and knowledge across the range of National Curriculum subjects. There are sound opportunities for pupils to reflect on broader moral, social and cultural issues through personal, social, health and citizenship lessons. There is a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, and participation rates are good.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory. However, the files and records maintained by the special educational needs coordinator are not always systematic or easily accessible. Classroom and small group support for pupils with additional needs is catered for effectively by an active group of teaching assistants. Pastoral support systems are sound, and working relationships between pupils and adults are good. Vulnerable pupils are supported well, and the school liaises actively with a range of support agencies.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

As the school has yet to establish a senior leadership team, responsibility rests largely on the headteacher, who is rising very well to the challenge. Her monitoring of teaching and learning provides an accurate view of the capabilities of the staff. She has instigated

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support and mentoring programmes to improve the quality of teaching. Relatively few teachers have been at the school for any length of time; current middle leaders, who are also the subject leaders, are comparatively inexperienced, and are still developing their skills. Most are unpractised in lesson observations, although they do now carry out satisfactorily the monitoring of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Discussions with the key subject leaders shows they are committed to school improvement and rising to the challenge of developing assessment and self-evaluation skills. There is a sound commitment to inclusion, and improved tracking systems are ensuring pertinent information about pupils, which is starting to help raise standards. Partnership links to support pupils who find learning more difficult are well-established, helping them to make satisfactory progress. The headteacher has also forged links with another local school to help with staff development. Parents appreciate the ease of contact with the school, and the changes taking place. Middle leaders see exciting possibilities for the school, under the direction of the headteacher. There is an appreciation of the need to create a strong senior and middle leadership team with the skills to ensure secure monitoring, evaluation and lines of accountability by leaders at all levels.

The governing body accept that they have not been effective in the past. Consequently, they have started a programme of training to help them fulfil their roles better, challenge the school more effectively, and visit more often to help to get to know the school and its needs. Health and safety procedures have been improved since the headteacher's appointment. Major assessments have now been carried out; some improvements are pending minor building work. While safeguarding is satisfactory, the school recognises the need for continued monitoring and review of procedures. The governor for child protection has received relevant training and provides reports for the governing body. The school has carried out an audit of its contribution to community cohesion, and is implementing its action plan. However, it has yet to evaluate its impact on pupils' involvement and understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage base provides a welcoming and interesting open plan environment for children from both Nursery and Reception classes. They benefit well from contact with teaching and support staff. Resources are used well, but the outside environment has no playground markings or safety surfaces to allow larger climbing equipment to be used. Nevertheless, there are good opportunities for creative and imaginative play, and healthy exercise. Children make some good progress in most areas of learning from below expectations on entry to the Nursery group to broadly meeting expectations by the time they leave the Reception group. However, this is a mixed picture. While some aspects, such as linking sounds and letters and using number for counting are above expectations, children's knowledge and understanding of the world, writing and creative development are below. Pupils use language satisfactorily when working directly with adults but their speaking and listening skills when working or playing together are less well developed. Assessment is sound and based on regular observations of children. Although these are linked specifically to broad areas of learning, they do not always specify clearly enough the stage or level of development. 'Learning Journey' journals have been introduced for the Nursery children, providing a good record of their progress, but these have yet to be introduced in Reception. Effective staff communication, and transfer of information, enables smooth transition into Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A broadly average percentage of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. The very large majority of these are supportive of the school, and agree that their children enjoy school. All felt their children were safe in school. A few felt that pupils were not as well prepared for the future as they would wish, or that the school dealt well enough with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors agree that there are aspects of pupils' outcomes which do not prepare them sufficiently for their future well-being.

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However, some parents and carers do not always support the school sufficiently well by ensuring their children attend school regularly. Inspectors find that behaviour is satisfactory, and that the school's approach to managing unacceptable behaviour is effective.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Belgrave St Peter's Church of England 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 232 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	53	19	42	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	51	22	49	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	40	26	58	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	33	29	64	0	0	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	18	40	25	56	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	40	26	58	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	31	29	64	1	2	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)	12	27	26	58	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	38	27	60	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	27	28	62	5	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	27	30	67	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	38	25	56	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	44	24	53	1	2	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 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.



27 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Belgrave St Peter's CofE Primary School, Leicester, LE4 5PG

We would like to thank you all for welcoming us so warmly into your school. You were very friendly, and some of you asked us a great number of questions. We enjoyed talking with you and listening to your views. You played an important part in helping us to understand your school. From the questionnaires you filled in, most of you think your new headteacher is doing a good job. You find your teachers helpful and confirm you feel safe in school. You wrote that adults at the school listen to you, and you can trust them. We agree with you. You clearly enjoy healthy exercise, the opportunities for sport and other activities such as street dancing. You tell us that you enjoy school, but some of you do not attend regularly enough, and your learning suffers. We encourage you all to make every effort come to school each day.

While most of you make satisfactory progress, some of you in Key Stage 1 have not made as much progress as we expect. We have agreed a plan of action with your teachers to help you to learn better, to provide you with more challenge and give you more confidence to work on your own. Your teachers will do this by changing and developing some of the ways they plan their work, mark and assess your work, and ask you questions in class. In about six months, another inspector will pay you a visit to see how you are all getting on. You will also find your school governors visiting you more often to keep watch on your progress, and some teachers from other schools who will be working alongside your own staff and headteacher. As you sang so well in assembly, please remember that as 'One more step along the world I go', 'Keep me travelling the ways I should.'

With all best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Miller

Lead inspector

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