

Beaumont Leys School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120281
Local Authority	Leicester
Inspection number	339664
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Davinder Dosanjh HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1050
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Veronica Bolsover
Headteacher	Mrs Liz Logie
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 31 teachers, visiting 32 lessons and observing one assembly. Four of the lessons were observed jointly with the senior leaders. Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, groups of students, governors and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at performance data, the whole school and faculty improvement plans, students' work, numerous policies and school documents. Completed questionnaires from 125 parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- the progress made by students in mathematics
- how well teaching challenges individual students and helps them make good progress in lessons.
- the rigour of self-evaluation at all levels of leadership and management to monitor and improve its performance.
- the impact of the school's specialist science status on the students' experiences and outcomes.

Information about the school

The school serves an area to the north-west of the city centre that has high levels of deprivation. Students come from a wide range of different backgrounds. Most are White British, although the proportion from other ethnic backgrounds is above average, with those from Indian heritage forming the largest minority. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. The number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average.

The school was awarded specialist science status in September 2005. It has achieved several awards including the Artsmark Gold and Anti-Bullying Community award. It has Healthy Schools Status and Careermark. The school moved into a new building in April 2009. It has gained national recognition as Building Schools for the Future School of the Year and for the overarching Grand Prix Excellence 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Beaumont Leys is a good school. It has many notable strengths, and aspects of its work are outstanding. Under the strong leadership of the headteacher and very able senior leaders the school has successfully managed a move into an impressive new building since the last inspection. This has had a positive impact on the school ethos and behaviour and has transformed the school environment. Leaders and managers of the school have secured a trend of improvement by ensuring appropriate strategies are in place to tackle weaknesses. The impact of these is most evident in improved attendance, declining exclusions and the high percentage of students who go on to education, employment or training after school. Students' attainment has been rising over time, although there is some subject variability. Current Year 11 students are on track to meet or exceed targets and school data shows substantial improvement compared with previous GCSE examination results in English and mathematics and science. Accurate self-evaluation by the school's leaders and the success of intervention strategies indicate that the school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

The following are the particular strengths of the school:

It has an inclusive ethos and is a harmonious community where behaviour is good and students are very proud of their school.

The way the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination is outstanding.

Outstanding care, guidance and support demonstrate that students are well known to staff. The school's commitment to the welfare of its students is very evident and it provides a high level of support for all students.

Students' contribution to the community is exceptional, with many giving their time to a wide range of projects in the school and elsewhere; for example, older students provide a science club for primary school pupils.

The curriculum is outstanding in the flexibility of its design and in the way it is tailored to suit the very specific needs of some individuals and groups. There are a wide range of excellent curriculum experiences which ensure students are well prepared for the future.

The school's leaders, managers and staff are deeply committed to the school and relentless in their desire to continuously improve.

Students enjoy school, feel safe and are well prepared for the next stages of their education or employment.

The school works exceptionally well with its partners and external agencies to support

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any vulnerable students and to extend opportunities for all students.

Students make good progress in lessons and examination courses because the quality of teaching and learning is good.

Aspects of the school's work that are less effective include:

A minority of satisfactory teaching where not all teaching activities stretch and challenge students of all abilities sufficiently. Although students know their target grades, the feedback teachers give on students' work does not always give sufficient guidance on how they can improve.

The late arrival at lessons of a minority of students.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching and learning which is good or outstanding by:
 - ensuring marking consistently identifies how students can improve and reach the next level or grade
 - improving the use of question and answer techniques, so that teachers effectively check what students know and ensure they are challenged to apply what they have learnt
 - getting students to talk more at length in lessons
 - ensuring all teachers have high expectations of students
 - sharing best practice across the school
- Improve the punctuality of a minority of students to lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment is average and broadly in line with national benchmarks. For the oldest students, results over time in GCSE subjects have been broadly in line with national benchmarks, but with some slight variations across subjects. Attainment shows improvement over time. Current attainment, based on school data, for example GCSE examinations, module tests and moderated coursework, shows improvement from 2009. Students make at least good progress relative to their starting points, and in the past three years there has been a consistent trend of improvement. Many students enter the school with weak literacy skills. There are successful literacy intervention programmes to bridge the gaps and over time these students have caught up, with many exceeding national benchmarks. There is some variability between subjects, with vocational subjects performing particularly well, along with religious education and English. Progress in science and mathematics has been slightly slower but current school data shows that significant improvement is expected in 2010. There is no significant variation in progress between groups of students, for example, minority ethnic groups, gender groups, or students of different abilities such as the gifted and talented or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school is highly inclusive, offering alternative methods of achieving in the curriculum, based on effective assessments,

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highly effective interventions and intelligent deployment of support staff. In lessons, students are keen to do well, apply themselves and usually work at a good pace. They seek to produce their best work and are usually interested and enthusiastic about their learning in a range of subjects. However, in lessons where learning is no better than satisfactory, students seldom talk at length when questioned. Most groups of students make at least good progress with nothing observed that was inadequate.

Students have a clear understanding of safety issues and know what to do in response to risks. They attribute this to the work that has been done in their Learning for Life lessons and this is reflected in the Anti-Bullying Community award the school recently received. Students feel incidents of bullying are rare and recorded incidents have declined. They acknowledge that staff will take swift action if they have any concerns. Students behave well in lessons. In many cases this makes a strong contribution to learning. Corridors, playing fields and the dining room on the whole, are safe and calm and students know how to conduct themselves. Exclusions, both permanent and temporary, have shown a significant decline due to the range of strategies adopted.

The Food Ambassadors' programme run by Year 11 students has been instrumental in changing some of the younger students' eating habits. Although other students are able to accurately discuss the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, their actions and decisions are not always changed by this understanding. Students' contribution to the community is outstanding, through such activities as fund raising for charities and a regeneration project with Leicester City Council. Many opportunities are provided for the students to get involved and contribute to the decisions made about life in school. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is enhanced by specific and personal, social and health education lessons with visits to religious centres. The school strongly encourages students to be responsible citizens and help each other: there are many examples of the school promoting voluntary work for the benefit of others, as in the sponsoring of children's education in Malawi and raising money for Leprosy.

The school has worked hard to raise attendance; as a result it has improved over the last three years and is now above the national average. Persistent absences have also reduced significantly to below the national average. Students are well equipped for their future lives through the extensive range of enterprise and work-related opportunities. The development and application of a range of personal skills and qualities are evident in lessons.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The majority of teaching is good. In the best practice seen, teachers use a variety of strategies to engage students so they are actively involved in their learning. They also set high expectations and use high quality questioning techniques to really make students think carefully and apply what they have learnt. These high expectations and fine-tuned questioning are less evident in satisfactory lessons. Behaviour is well managed in the classroom and students work well both independently and cooperatively. There are excellent examples of peer assessment, such as students offering detailed advice about answers provided by other students. Teaching is usually suitably engaging and interesting with very effective use made of new technologies. The school is becoming more effective in assessing standards of attainment, and the majority of students understand the level of their current work.

The school curriculum is outstanding and follows an innovative design which has been further modified to meet the needs of all students. It provides memorable experiences with a wide range of opportunities for students to further their learning. The school has its own Extended Services Co-ordinator and offers a range of activities, before and after school, during weekends and school holidays. Students' participation rates are high and several clubs are run by the students themselves. The curriculum has a strong vocational content and is supported by a range of what the school calls 'Learning Learning Days' which develop students' creativity and wider key skills. A range of strategies are used to "take students outside their comfort zones" and build confidence. Examples of this include the Green Environment Day and the Celebrating African History Day. Science specialist status has benefited students with a residential trip, joint art and

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science projects and an exciting annual science week.

Support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is of a very high quality and this is reflected in their progress which compares well to all other students. Regular and effective links with a very wide range of agencies complements the school's interventions in meeting the needs of all of its students and sustaining their learning and development. The pastoral team provides a wide range of support both for tutors and learners. All new Year 7 students are successfully integrated through an extremely comprehensive transition programme. There are numerous examples of outstanding practice where the most vulnerable have been helped and continue to be helped in overcoming significant barriers in their learning.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong, passionate and highly effective leadership, not only in successfully managing the new build but also in dealing with a number of complex staffing issues. She is well supported by a team of very effective senior leaders. Together they have led improvements in achievement, and the personal development and well-being of students. Staff morale is high, and there is a shared vision for raising aspirations, standards and improving teaching. Target setting is realistic and challenging. Middle leaders have clear lines of accountability and play a key role in monitoring and evaluating their subject areas. The school is working hard to reduce variability between subjects and to ensure that best practice is routinely shared across subjects. The school accurately judges the quality of teaching and learning. Senior and middle leaders are clear about the priorities for teaching and learning for their subjects and for the whole school.

Governors are supportive of the school. The governing body discharges statutory duties effectively, and understands the school's strengths and weaknesses. It has carried out an audit of its own strengths and weaknesses too, and is well placed to drive improvement and challenge performance. The school takes the views of parents' very seriously and responds to individual concerns. Bespoke evenings to improve engagement with parents have proved very positive. Procedures for safeguarding are extremely thorough and risk assessment systems are well developed.

The effectiveness with which the school promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination is outstanding. The performance and experience of different groups of

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students shows little significant difference. The school ethos promotes an understanding of students' differences and offers them a wide range of diverse experiences. The school's policies and practices have made it more inclusive over time, with a significant reduction in racist incidents, bullying and exclusions. The good community cohesion extends beyond the school and the local community. There is considerable involvement with other local schools and organisations, in particular a Muslim academy, with which social and sporting links are strong.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	2

Views of parents and carers

Although only a small number of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, a vast majority are very supportive of the school. In particular, almost all recognise how much their children enjoy school, and believe the school keeps their child safe.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beaumont Leys 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 125 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1050 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	80	64	43	34	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	73	58	49	39	3	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	62	50	60	48	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	71	57	52	42	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	74	59	50	40	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	55	44	62	50	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	40	62	50	10	8	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)	63	50	56	45	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	71	57	52	42	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	42	67	54	5	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	41	59	47	8	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	73	58	49	39	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	87	70	38	30	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.



Dear Students

Inspection of Beaumont Leys School, Leicester, LE4 0FL

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome at your school. We all enjoyed talking with you and you helped us to find out about the school. You are rightly proud of your school, and the building is extremely impressive. The school provides you with a good quality of education overall and in some areas is outstanding.

You receive outstanding care, guidance and support and staff know you very well. Everyone is helped to belong and the vulnerable are very well supported.

The way the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination is outstanding.

Your contribution to the community is exceptional, with many of you helping on a wide range of projects in the school and elsewhere.

The curriculum is outstanding, it is flexible and tailored to suit the very specific needs of some individuals and groups. You are given a wide range of excellent experiences, partly through some outstanding partnerships with other groups and institutions.

The school's leaders, managers and staff are very committed to improving the school and work together very effectively.

You behave well, and you told us you enjoy school and feel safe.

You make good progress because the quality of teaching and learning is good.

We have asked the school to make the following improvements.

To increase the number of lessons where teaching is good or outstanding.

Improve the way teachers use questions in lessons and get you to talk at length, to really challenge you.

Help a small minority of you to arrive more punctually to lessons.

We wish you all the very best in your studies and every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Davinder Dosanjh

Her Majesty's Inspector

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