

The Berkeley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111122
Local Authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	356867
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Shirley Herring

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	305
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Simon Bartholomew
Headteacher	Mrs Janine Stainsby-Cope
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 12 teachers in 16 lessons. They held meetings with pupils, staff and governors and met parents and carers informally in the playground before school. They observed the school's work, and looked at reports and reviews from the local authority, the school development plan, school policies, records of pupils' progress, 58 completed questionnaires from parents and carers and also confidential questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

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

- Whether boys in Key Stage 1 are achieving well enough in writing.
- Whether more-able pupils are being sufficiently challenged.
- Whether the consistency in the quality of teaching is improving.
- The extent to which the new senior leadership team is developing an agreed and cohesive approach to taking the school forward.
- The extent to which provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.

Information about the school

Almost all of the pupils in this larger than average primary school are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion that are known to be eligible for free school meals. A deputy headteacher, the Key Stage 1 coordinator and the literacy coordinator all took up post at the start of this term. The Chair of the Governing Body has been in post for almost a year. The number on roll has fallen since the last inspection.

Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes, with some year groups taught in ability groups for literacy and numeracy. The on-site, independent pre-school provision is inspected separately.

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

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school that is emerging from a period of significant change in staffing and in the leadership team. A new senior leadership team is now in place and already it is working closely together to identify areas for development and to plan improvements. Attainment is broadly average at the end of Year 6 and pupils make satisfactory progress. There are considerable variations from year to year in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics. Standards are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1, although the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in writing and mathematics has been significantly below average for the past two years. More-able pupils throughout the school do not always achieve as well as they can because there is no consistent approach to using information from assessments to plan suitably challenging work to meet different needs.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and several examples of good teaching were observed during the inspection. Teaching and learning is most effective when the pace of lessons is brisk and teachers make good use of questions to encourage pupils to think. In the satisfactory lessons, expectations of behaviour are not high enough. Pupils chatter when they should be listening and this wastes time and limits learning.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Activities are suitably practical, but as in the rest of the school, assessment information is not used systematically to plan work to meet the needs of different children.

Parents and carers agree that pupils enjoy school and that they feel safe and secure. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory but there are limited opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of life in a culturally diverse society.

The headteacher has taken effective steps to guide the school through a period of significant change. The school has worked closely with local authority consultants, and their advice and guidance have helped to promote improvements in teaching. The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive and accurate in almost all respects. However, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage to be satisfactory rather than good. The new leadership team is already working together well and with a strong determination to tackle the areas for improvement. Its members also provide models of good teaching within the school. The purchase of new resources has led to an improvement in an identified weakness in boys' reading in Key Stage 1. Given recent improvements the school shows a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- By July 2011, enhance the quality of learning through improving behaviour throughout the school, by:
 - developing a consistent approach to behaviour management with a clear system of sanctions and rewards which is understood and acted upon by all teachers and pupils
 - having high expectations for pupils to listen, to follow instructions and to work independently.
- By July 2011, improve progress throughout the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, and particularly for more-able pupils, by:
 - developing an agreed system for assessing pupils' progress
 - using the information to plan suitable work for different groups, but especially the more able
 - developing a consistent approach to marking so that pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- Better prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse society.
- Approximately 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

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

Pupils say they enjoy school, particularly when working with others. When lessons move at a fast pace, pupils participate well and learning is good. In a number of lessons, however, pupils chatter to each other and do not listen carefully to instructions and this limits their progress.

Attainment is broadly average by the time pupils leave Year 6. As pupils enter the school with skills that are similar to what could be expected for their age, their overall progress is satisfactory. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in statutory assessments varies considerably from year to year, between subjects and between boys and girls. For example, the provisional results in the 2010 Year 6 national tests showed more boys attained the higher level in mathematics than girls, while the reverse was true in English. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive satisfactory support which enables them to achieve satisfactorily, as do pupils overall.

Pupils say they feel safe because the school is secure and they are confident that there is an adult they could talk to if they had a problem. Rare instances of bullying are dealt with swiftly. Behaviour is satisfactory overall and pupils play cooperatively together in the playground. However, in some classes there is a habit of children chattering and fidgeting when they should be listening or getting on with their work.

Pupils understand how to keep healthy and say they enjoy school lunches, which now include more fruit and salads. This is supported well by parents and carers as regards the contents of packed lunch boxes. They enjoy many physical activities in lessons and after school.

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Pupils' contribution to the school community is growing, for example, through an active school council. However, contribution to the wider community is limited.

Satisfactory attendance, sound basic skills and good links with the high school, provide pupils with a satisfactory preparation for their future.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, though there is a comparative weakness in pupils' understanding of the multicultural make-up of modern British society.

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

How effective is the provision?

Where teaching is good, it is characterised by high expectations for pupils to behave well and to participate fully. In one good lesson, pupils responded well to the teacher's remark, 'If you don't join in you don't learn!' Where teaching is less effective, the pace of lessons is slower and work is not always well matched to meet individual needs, particularly of the more able. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they make good use of practical resources to help pupils to understand. Marking quality is inconsistent and does not always give pupils sufficient guidance about what they need

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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to do to improve. In some lessons, teachers made good use of ongoing assessments to identify and quickly address pupils' misconceptions.

The curriculum is generally broad and balanced. A more thematic approach has been introduced to link learning in different subjects, although this is at an early stage of development. Clear planning is now in place for literacy and numeracy, with a common format to avoid repetition of topics and to ensure progress. The needs of individual pupils are beginning to be better addressed. Provision for the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory and interventions to support their needs are now timetabled. Provision for the most-able pupils is less structured. The good links with the local high school have helped to strengthen science teaching. Provision in art is good and the school has been awarded an Artsmark. There is a good range of additional activities, including a residential visit, to enhance pupils' learning and their personal development.

Pastoral care is effective. The needs of the pupils whose circumstances have made them most vulnerable have been identified and suitable provision is in place to enable them to make satisfactory progress. There are systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress, although these are not yet embedded and so it is too soon to judge their impact. There are good systems for introducing children to school and for helping pupils to make the transition to secondary education. As a matter of urgency, the school is developing a whole-school behaviour policy to guide pupils, so that the low-level disruptive behaviour does not have a detrimental impact on learning.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The school is emerging from a period of significant change in staffing and management. During this time the headteacher has taken difficult decisions to take the school forward. She has been effectively supported by the local authority. For example, the considerable help provided by consultants has contributed well to improvements in the quality of teaching. A new senior leadership team is in place and is already identifying what needs to be done to bring about improvements, with the development of comprehensive strategies to improve behaviour and assessment at the forefront. Morale is good and staff say they are looking forward to working together to take the school forward.

Governance is satisfactory. The new Chair of the Governing Body is a regular presence in school and challenges and supports the leadership team to improve the school's

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performance and its provision. Governors are aware of their responsibilities and all the recommended procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place.

Regular newsletters are sent home and a new system of emailing and texting has been introduced to keep parents and carers informed. However, some say they would like to be told about significant changes at an earlier stage, where possible. While most are happy with their child's progress, some would like more specific information on the standards they are achieving.

There are good links with a range of partners to support learning. Local authority professionals provide a valuable source of guidance and support to bring about improvements. There are good links with the on-site, pre-school nursery and with the high school. Local businesses are sponsoring the new house system to promote pupils' ability to work in teams.

The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. The school analyses the data for different groups to address any lack of progress. Boys' reading in Key Stage 1 was identified as an area of weakness and this has now been addressed through the purchase of new resources. However, the more-able pupils are not always suitably challenged.

There are some activities in school to promote community cohesion, for example, there are theme days about foods from different countries and visitors such as African drummers. However, the school is not reaching out to other communities to promote an understanding of different ethnic, religious or social groups.

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
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

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Children enter the Reception classes with a range of skills that are overall typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress and most reach the level expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Children enjoy learning and are happy to take part in a range of activities and cooperate with each other. However, at this early stage, many find it difficult to listen or sustain concentration in a larger group. Children are beginning to understand the benefits of foods, such as fruits, and are taught how to handle simple tools, such as scissors, safely.

Teachers plan a suitable range of practical activities, indoors and outside, though these are not always linked together effectively to maximise learning. There are satisfactory systems for assessing children's progress, although the information is not yet used routinely to provide suitable challenge for individual children.

There are good links with the independent pre-school to help children to settle quickly. All the recommended systems for safeguarding children are in place. Systems for assessing and tracking children's progress more systematically are now being used, but they are not yet embedded and so it is too soon to judge their impact.

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

Inspectors agree with the vast majority of parents and carers who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire, or spoke informally with inspectors who said their children enjoy school and the school keeps them safe. Several parents and carers expressed concerns about changes in management and staffing over the recent past. Inspectors acknowledge this but found a more stable situation currently. The school is now taking steps to address parents' and carers' perceptions that their views are not taken in to account.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Berkeley 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 305 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	59	20	34	1	2	2	3
The school keeps my child safe	28	48	29	50	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	24	31	53	11	19	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	33	22	38	10	17	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	16	28	29	50	8	14	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	31	23	40	14	24	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	43	28	48	3	5	1	2
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)	15	26	27	47	9	16	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	36	25	43	8	14	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	19	35	60	8	14	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	28	19	33	15	26	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	14	24	23	40	12	21	4	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	40	21	36	8	14	3	5

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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.



18 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Berkeley Primary School, Crewe, CW2 6RU

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed joining you in lessons and talking to you in groups. We think The Berkeley is a satisfactory school which means that some things about it are good and some things could be improved.

You and your parents and carers say that you enjoy school and that you feel safe and secure. We were pleased to see you making such healthy choices at lunchtime. I know that you have several new teachers this term and they are really looking forward to working at The Berkeley. Many of your lessons are interesting and help you to learn. You can play your part by making sure you listen carefully to what you have to do and get on with your work, as I know many of you already do. You make satisfactory progress during your time in school and most of you are working at the level expected for your age by the time you are in Year 6.

To help you to learn even more quickly I have asked the school to:

- make sure that you all hear and understand what you have to do in lessons and that you can get on with your work
- plan work that challenges those of you who find some things a little easier to understand and make sure that you all know what you need to do to improve
- help you to understand more about people from different areas and from different cultures and beliefs.

Best wishes to you all. I hope Year 5 and Year 6 enjoyed their residential visit.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Herring

Lead inspector

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