

Beaconside Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116768
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	358025
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Martin Pye

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Marks
Headteacher	Paul Freear
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 19 lessons and observed eight teachers and two student teachers. The inspectors held discussions with members of the governing body, the headteacher, senior leaders and other staff, a group of pupils, and parents and carers. They looked at a range of information, including documentation relating to self-evaluation, school development and safeguarding, data showing progress made by pupils and samples of their work. Questionnaires returned by 94 parents and carers, 97 pupils and 14 members of staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What is the quality, and consistency, of teaching and learning across the school?
- How effective is the use of assessment information in informing teachers' planning and assisting learning in lessons, especially for the more-able pupils?
- What has been the impact of actions taken by school leaders and managers to improve pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics?
- What steps has the school taken to increase pupils' awareness of the wider world?
- How effective is the governing body in bringing challenge and support to the work of the school?

Information about the school

Beaconside Primary is smaller in size than most primary schools. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and the proportion whose first language is believed not to be English is very low. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special needs, is above average. This is because the school offers a specially resourced provision for special educational needs. There are currently eight pupils with autism registered at the specialist base and they attend lessons in the main school whenever possible. There is a school-based nursery and a pre-school nursery on site. The pre-school provision is not managed by the governing body and is, therefore, 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Beaconside Primary is a good and improving school where pupils' achievements are valued and success is celebrated. Good teaching and an exciting curriculum provide many opportunities for pupils to try new things and discover the enjoyment of learning. Consequently, most pupils behave well, work hard and make good progress.

The wide variety of activities and events organised by the school help to create a strong sense of community. Links with other organisations, coupled with the strong emphasis on outdoor and environmental education, enriches learning and promotes responsible attitudes. This means that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils' personal development is good and a caring ethos ensures that all pupils, especially those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, are well looked after, and feel safe. Pupils do their best to adopt a healthy lifestyle and make a good contribution to school and community life. A few national and international links are developing and this is starting to provide pupils with a greater awareness of the wider world. The many positive comments received from parents, carers and pupils are indicative of the high level of confidence that they have in the school, with one parent saying, 'I am delighted with the care, attention, education and activities at Beaconside Primary.'

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes, where they progress well in all areas of learning because the teaching is good. The majority of teaching in other classes is also good. This means that most pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, attain standards in English and mathematics that are above average. Improvements to the tracking and assessment of pupils' progress mean that teachers are able to plan lessons that build effectively on prior learning. Assessment information is used well in lessons to adjust teaching and to monitor progress. Nevertheless, different classes use different systems. This inconsistent approach across the school means that the quality of feedback given to pupils about how they can improve their work is variable. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. This is because, while they receive some good support in lessons, planning to support learning for pupils in the specialist resource base is not always sharply focused enough on their specific academic needs.

The headteacher's enthusiastic drive to make the school better has been instrumental in bringing about the many improvements since the last inspection. He has created a climate of high expectation and a sense of shared purpose is now emerging. The school has experienced some staff absence recently and the roles of some key leaders are currently being reviewed. This is helping to establish clearly defined roles and responsibilities and bring greater accountability for leadership at all levels. As a result, teamwork has been strengthened and pupil progress is accelerating. Given the positive outcomes for pupils

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and the impact of strategies to improve teaching and learning, the school's capacity for future improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rate of progress and the quality of learning for all pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities by:
 - making sure work is always purposeful and well targeted to meet pupils' clearly defined learning needs
 - making sure that records and plans are kept up to date and sharply focused on specific learning objectives.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are well cared for at Beaconside School and the large majority of pupils make good progress. Consequently, by the time they reach the end of Year 6, their attainment in English and mathematics is above average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons and steps taken to support pupils' emotional and physical needs are effective. However, planning and activities, particularly for pupils in the specialist resource base, are not always sharply focused enough on their learning needs. This means that they do not always make as much progress as they could in every session.

Pupils behave well and are keen to do their best. Their enjoyment of learning can be clearly seen when they are involved in activities that build upon their first-hand experience. The weekly 'Creative Afternoons' provide many opportunities for pupils to cooperate and apply their basic skills as they participate in active and exciting activities. This helps to boost their confidence and prepare them for their future economic well-being. Pupils are usually punctual although attendance rates have recently declined and are now average.

Pupils are aware of the importance of a healthy diet and of taking plenty of exercise. This is reflected in their keen involvement in the many sporting and physical activities organised by the school, including street dance and gardening. Older pupils speak confidently about the measures taken by the school to keep them safe and can talk about their duty to look after others. They show a good understanding of right and wrong and take an interest in other people's feelings and beliefs. Pupils make a good contribution to school life, taking on roles such as 'tour guides' or serving as members of the school council. Involvement in community events and the strong emphasis on environmental education help to develop pupils' sense of social and environmental responsibility.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Most teaching is good. The best lessons involve enjoyable, purposeful activities that allow pupils to work together and apply their skills in order to solve problems. In a well-planned mathematics lesson, for example, pupils had to multiply numbers and think strategically as they played a number game. This required them to collaborate, pose questions and make decisions. Skilful teacher questioning challenged them to explain their thinking and reflect on their learning. Consequently, pupils made excellent progress.

Work in books is marked regularly and the school has detailed information about pupils' attainment and progress. However, while teachers make good use of assessment information in order to plan lessons and set targets, different classes use different systems when assessing pupils' work and progress. This means that the quality of feedback given to pupils about how they can improve their work is inconsistent.

The curriculum is a strength of the school. Meaningful links between subjects make learning more interesting and enjoyable for pupils and provide opportunities for them to use and apply their skills. During the inspection, an outstanding theatre workshop inspired pupils to create an entertaining and informative piece of historical drama.

Pupils enjoy the Forest School sessions and talk with enthusiasm about educational trips and extra activities that enrich their learning. A strong link with the local high school increases the range of experiences on offer to older pupils. The lunchtime and after-school clubs cater to a wide range of interests and are well attended.

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The school has good arrangements in place to ensure that all pupils are well cared for. Staff know the pupils well and encourage them to look after themselves and each other. A particular feature of the school's work is its caring commitment to supporting pupils who face particular difficulties or challenges in their lives. These pupils receive good care and support at Beaconside.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection, school leaders and managers have done more to monitor the quality of teaching. In addition, they have improved the curriculum and the systems for tracking the progress and attainment of pupils. As a result, standards have risen. The energetic headteacher has high expectations and is introducing innovations that are raising standards. Together with governors and staff, he has created a shared vision for school improvement. The roles of other leaders in the school are currently being reviewed in order to secure an even greater accountability for pupil outcomes. There is convincing evidence that this strengthening of leadership at all levels will help to drive standards up even further and support the shared ambition to become an outstanding school.

Governors support the school effectively and bring an informed level of challenge and support to their role. The work of committees is particularly effective in monitoring aspects of the school's work and performance. The school is a cohesive and inclusive community. Local links are strong although pupils' understanding of how others live in different parts of the country, and in other countries, is limited.

School staff make sure that all pupils are treated fairly and have equal access to the wide range of activities on offer. Effective partnerships with other schools and agencies support pupils' learning and welfare. Parents and carers are kept well informed about events and activities through newsletters, curriculum meetings and a colourful website. Established risk assessment systems, underpinned by the high quality care and attention given to pupils, mean that all safeguarding regulations are met.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter nursery with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for children of a similar age. The strong induction procedures and caring staff help children to settle quickly into the daily routines and they are soon making good progress. This is because the Early Years Foundation Stage team has created an exciting learning environment and there are effective systems for monitoring and tracking children's achievements. Well planned activities mean that children are able to make choices and this helps them to develop independence. Both the indoor and outdoor provision successfully support children's development across all areas of learning. The excellent Forest School provision provides children with plenty of opportunity to explore, investigate and cooperate as they work together to make decisions and solve problems. There is a balance between adult-directed and child-initiated learning and all sessions are imaginative and lively. Adults work well together and give children plenty of calm encouragement and praise. As a result, children are happy, enjoy their learning and relationships are good. The adults in charge of the Early Years Foundation Stage have a good understanding of the welfare requirements and ensure that the children are well cared for. Risk assessments are robust and safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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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

Almost half of all parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is higher than the response rate in most schools. The vast majority of those who responded, or who talked to the inspectors, expressed very positive views about the school. Parents and carers particularly praised the leadership of the headteacher, the interesting curriculum and extra-curricular activities, the attention to individuals and the high quality care provided by the school. The inspection found evidence that supports these positive views.

A very small number of parents and carers raised individual concerns in their written comments. These included concerns about the academic needs of their children; inconsistencies in approach to the management of pupils; playground supervision and communication with parents. The inspection found that the large majority of pupils make good progress although some pupils with specific needs do not always make as much progress as they could. The inspection judged pupils' behaviour, engagement with parents, and levels of supervision to be good. The inspection recognised that there is some variance in the way different teachers respond to pupils' work in class.

A few parents and carers commented about traffic congestion at the beginning and end of the school day, and the implication of this for pupils' safety. The inspectors agree that more could be done to minimise the risk of harm and that it would be for the school, parents and carers to work together in order to develop workable solutions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beaconside Primary and Nursery 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 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 190 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	54	37	39	4	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	52	55	42	45	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	39	41	50	53	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	45	42	45	5	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	41	44	50	53	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	36	51	54	4	4	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	44	50	53	2	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)	41	44	46	49	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	41	49	52	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	35	52	55	6	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	23	62	66	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	48	45	48	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	52	43	46	2	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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



10 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Beaconside Primary and Nursery School, Birmingham, B45 9DX

Thank you for your welcome when I inspected your school with two other inspectors. We very much enjoyed our visit. Thank you for telling us about your work and all the other things you do at school.

Beaconside Primary is a good school and your headteacher and staff know how to improve it in the future.

During our visit, we were impressed by the many exciting activities and events that happen at your school. You are taught and looked after well and this means that most of you make good progress in lessons and feel safe. We noticed that you really enjoy your learning when you are able to work together, make decisions and solve problems. This helps you to grow in confidence and develop independence.

We noticed that your teachers always mark your work and tell you how well you are doing. However, different teachers mark your work in different ways. This means that you are not always sure about the best way to improve your work in the future. We have asked your teachers to agree on the best way to mark and assess your work.

We have also asked your teachers to make sure that activities for all pupils are always very well planned in order to meet their needs. This will help all of you to make good progress in all lessons.

You can help the school by continuing to do your best in lessons, behaving well and attending regularly.

Thank you again and my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Pye

Lead inspector

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