

Beulah Junior School

Beulah Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon, CR7 8JF

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Leaders have not been effective in ensuring that teaching is consistently good in reading and mathematics to enable all pupils to reach their full potential.
- Adults do not have sufficient skills in teaching reading to enable some pupils to read confidently and fluently quickly enough.
- Pupils lack accuracy and speed with calculation and this slows down their progress in mathematics lessons.
- Marking does not give pupils clear guidance as to what they can do to improve their work.
- Initiatives to raise standards are not clearly enough linked to pupil outcomes and so leaders do not know if they are working.
- Behaviour in the playground at break times is boisterous which leads to some incidents of bad behaviour.
- The governing body is not using the information it has to provide sufficient challenge or to be more involved in how improvements could be made.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and her deputy are totally committed to school improvement. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and individual teachers.
- Writing is well taught and, by the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress and reach national standards of attainment. They are confident writers.
- Professional development for teachers is good and is resulting in significant improvements in learning in many areas of the school.
- Pupils make good progress in science and enjoy the practical and investigative approaches that are used to teach them.
- The school is successful in reaching out to its parent community and involving them in the school's work.
- Pupils feel safe, enjoy school and attendance is above average. They are welcoming and enjoy good relationships with adults. They respect each other's cultures and beliefs.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, of which two were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and watched an assembly. They also looked at pupils' books with senior leaders and observed other aspects of the school's work.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and school staff. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 took the inspectors around the school and spoke about their learning and well-being. The inspectors spoke to pupils about their reading and listened to them read. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 10 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to parents and carers at the school gate. Inspectors reviewed 10 questionnaire responses from staff.
- A number of documents were looked at, including the school's own data relating to pupils' achievement in 2011/12 and attainment on entry into Year 3, the school's self-evaluation summary and school development plan, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, policy documents and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martin Marsh, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Grace Marriott	Additional Inspector
Matthew Klimke	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Beulah Junior School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Over half of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) which is well above average.
- The proportions of pupils supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are higher than found nationally.
- A larger proportion of pupils than average are from minority ethnic backgrounds and at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Over half of the pupils come from families from Black Caribbean or Black African backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- When the school last had a full inspection, the current headteacher had been in post for five weeks. Since then a new deputy headteacher has been appointed and some experienced leaders have left the school. The school's current senior leadership team is relatively new and the school also has a new Chair of the Governing Body. There are a significant number of changes in the teaching staff, with three newly qualified teachers starting the school in September 2012.
- The school had a science subject survey inspection by Ofsted in May 2011 which judged achievement, teaching, curriculum and leadership and management of science as good. In December 2011, an Ofsted monitoring visit judged progress against areas for development at the last inspection and the capacity to improve as both satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - setting time limits for pupils to complete their work so that they work more quickly
 - directing pupils who have mastered skills to more challenging tasks
 - providing more guidance to pupils as to what they have to do to improve their work
 - ensuring pupils work well on their own and do not lose concentration and distract others in lessons.
- Quicken the progress in reading and mathematics by:
 - providing training for teachers to enable them to systematically teach pupils their letters and the sounds they make (phonics) so pupils can make faster progress and learn to read more confidently
 - improving pupils' ability to calculate quickly and accurately both in their heads and on paper.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure school initiatives are linked to clear outcomes for pupils so that leaders, including governors, can check more carefully and routinely if they are working well enough
 - ensuring governors make more effective use of data to determine how well pupils' progress is linked to the quality of teaching.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by ensuring pupils follow school rules at playtimes and lunchtimes to reduce incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils enter the school with standards of attainment that are below those expected nationally. There is a significant proportion of pupils coming into Year 3 with low standards of reading and writing and with poor calculation skills.
- Over the last three years pupils have been leaving the school with low standards of English and mathematics. Although most pupils have made average progress it has not been good enough to enable pupils to close the gap in attainment. However, progress of pupils currently in the school is faster because teaching has improved, their progress is checked much more closely and pupils who are falling behind are given more help.
- Progress in reading and mathematics is slower than in writing. Pupils who are not able to read well are not given systematic support with learning to read and pupils are not taught to calculate quickly enough either in their heads or on paper.
- The school uses a variety of interventions for pupils who are falling behind, but these are not routinely checked to see if they are raising attainment quickly enough. The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium and those with special educational needs is similar to other pupils at the school. Good support in class enables disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to participate fully in lessons.
- Progress in writing is good and pupils reach national expectations from low starting points. Pupils are confident writers and are happy writing in a variety of styles. The curriculum is matched to their interests, and events such as writing weeks and poetry competitions are motivating them to write.
- Pupils make good progress and attain in line with expectations in science because there is a strong focus on practical activities and investigative approaches in lessons.
- Pupils from Black Caribbean and Black African backgrounds and pupils who speak English as an additional language attain standards broadly in line with similar pupils nationally and their progress is in line with other pupils at the school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is improving across the school, but is still not consistently good often enough. There are classes where the pace of teaching is too slow and pupils are not encouraged to work quickly enough or move on to harder work soon enough, particularly the middle ability pupils. Sometimes pupils have to listen for too long and they lose concentration. However, there were many lessons in which learning was good, and inspectors saw no inadequate lessons.
- Teaching of reading is not systematic. Adults, teachers and teaching assistants do not understand well enough how pupils learn to read and, although they stimulate pupils' interest in reading, pupils are not regularly supported with breaking words down into their sounds and reading the word correctly. This hinders the progress in reading of those pupils who are not yet confident readers and results in many incorrect spellings in their writing.
- Progress in mathematics is not good because pupils are not taught how to calculate quickly enough. Subsequently, when they are working on activities that involve problem solving and applying their skills, they are slowed down by the inability to calculate often quite simple calculations.
- Marking does not give enough guidance to pupils as to what they have to do to improve their work. Work is well corrected and pupils now know if they have achieved the learning that was intended in lessons. Some marking allows pupils to make a response, for example by asking them an additional question, but this is not consistent practice.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Teachers are enthusiastic and plan well. Questioning is good. Pupils listen and engage in lessons and are benefiting from the frequent opportunities they are given to talk about their learning to each other. This helps them to clarify

their ideas before they write them.

- Other adults are used well. They are fully involved in all parts of the lesson and are a significant factor in enabling all the pupils in the class to make similar progress. More able pupils are routinely given additional adult support to challenge and accelerate their progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- In some lessons, when pupils are working independently they lose concentration and this slows down learning. It also interrupts the learning for any group or individuals working with the adult because the off-task behaviour has to be tackled.
- Pupils are boisterous outside. The pupils told the inspectors that behaviour is better in lessons than it is on the playground at break times and the inspectors agree with this.
- Some pupils have difficulty managing their own behaviour but they are given good support to help them with this. Pupils' behaviour is managed well. There is a strong adult presence at the start of the school day and during break times. Pupils told inspectors about some bullying and poor behaviour, but they said they felt safe because they know who to turn to and any incidents are dealt with quickly.
- Pupil play leaders enjoy their role in 'looking after' fellow pupils who might be unhappy at break times. There are very few racist incidents because pupils are taught to value and respect each other's differences. The good personal, health and social education programme helps pupils to understand how to be safe both inside and outside of school, for example in relation to use of the internet and cyber bullying.
- Pupils are welcoming and very keen to talk to inspectors about their work and their school. They enjoy coming to school, their attendance is above average and they are typically punctual.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, school leaders have been slow to put in place measures to improve teaching that would enable pupils to make good progress and close the gap in attainment in reading and mathematics. This has been partly due to turbulence in both leadership and staffing and the inexperience of the senior leaders. In the last year the improvements in teaching and the resulting higher rates of progress in many classes, particularly in Years 5 and Year 6, are narrowing the gap in attainment.
- Initiatives to raise standards in reading and mathematics are not clearly linked to their impact on pupils' achievement. As a result, leaders are unable to measure regularly enough if the initiatives are working. The improvements in writing linked to a whole school drive to increase the amount of time pupils spend sharing their ideas with each other in lessons has been very effective and resulted in improvements in teaching of all subjects.
- The headteacher and her deputy are passionate in their commitment to the school and the community it serves. They have built a team of leaders who are fully supportive of what they are doing.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school. It has worked well to develop the leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, who are now much more able to move the school forward without its support. The local authority has had a significant impact in helping the school bring about improvements in the teaching and learning of writing. It has supported leaders with checking on the quality of teaching through joint observations and school reviews and developing the leadership skills of subject leaders.
- All the teachers know what they need to do to improve their teaching. This is because of the excellent appraisal system that the school has introduced linked to the new Teachers' Standards. Teachers' professional development is closely linked to their areas for development.
- The school's curriculum is continually evolving to meet the changing needs of the pupils and the

work it has done to design activities that challenge the more able pupils, enabling them to make better progress. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Teachers take opportunities to promote equal opportunities and the cultures and beliefs of all the pupils are celebrated and valued.

- The school has been very successful in engaging its parent community. The school provides regular and well attended coffee mornings which are used to assist parents in helping their children at home and to explain how they are taught at school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors are not challenging the school enough. They are highly supportive and committed and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but as yet have little say in its strategic direction. They have an accurate view that the school requires improvement but believe that the quality of teaching is better than it currently is. They know about the new appraisal system for teachers and how this is more rigorous and more closely linked to pay progression which has not been the case in the past. They are aware as to how the school is using the pupil premium funding to provide extra adults and provide more intervention for pupils falling behind, but do not know how all pupils in this group are benefiting. Governors are very aware that they need to improve as a governing body and are fully committed to training and development, both from the school's leadership and the local authority governor services. The governing body gives good support to the school in meeting safeguarding responsibilities, particularly regarding the safety of pupils and the appointment of staff.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	101712
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	400498

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wendy Pusey
Headteacher	Vivienne Luniak
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 May 2010
Telephone number	020 8653 4921
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