

Belmont Primary School

Belmont Street, Swadlincote, DE11 8JZ

Inspection dates 13–14 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well, especially in Reception and in Key Stage 2. Attainment has risen in all year groups and the wide variations in pupils' progress, noted at the previous inspection, have been substantially reduced.
- Nearly all teaching is good. Teachers' use of assessment has improved and most work is set at the right level for pupils. Teachers use interesting resources and themes to plan lessons which pupils enjoy. Skilled guidance, for example, through marking, supports pupils' learning well.
- Training has been used very effectively to raise staff's accountability for pupils' achievement and to improve the quality of teaching.
- Pupils get on well with each other. They benefit from mutually respectful relationships with staff. They behave well. They feel safe and know how to steer clear of unnecessary risks. Their cultural development, including their citizenship qualities, is particularly well promoted.
- Staff provide a high standard of pastoral care and work very effectively with pupils who have barriers to learning. Pupils feel valued. Attendance has risen to above average.
- The better ways in which leaders and governors now check on how well the school and its pupils are performing have been fundamental to the school's improved overall effectiveness.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. A few inconsistencies hold back pupils' achievement.
- Support programmes in Key Stage 1 have not had a full impact on raising pupils' achievement.
- Targets for Key Stage 1 pupils need to be higher to sustain and accelerate further younger pupils' progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 28 lessons taught by 21 teachers and/or teaching assistants. Two of these lessons were observed together with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Samples of pupils' work in English were analysed. An inspector listened to some Year 2 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with school staff, a group of pupils, governors and a school improvement adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 42 questionnaires completed by staff and the 37 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' responses to the school's own surveys were considered.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the work in pupils' books; monitoring records; the school's own data on pupils' progress; minutes of governing body meetings; and policies, procedures and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Derek Aitken, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Catherine Beeks

Additional Inspector

Marian Driver

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Belmont is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are White British.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides extra government funding for certain groups of pupils, including those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of these pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes.
- The school uses alternative provision (lessons that take place regularly away from the school site) for a very few pupils at Kirk Hallam Pupil Referral Unit.
- There have been considerable staff changes since the previous inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that:
 - teachers provide better opportunities for pupils to be involved in lively class discussions to enhance their independence, and speaking and thinking skills
 - teachers set work in every lesson which is matched to pupils' abilities and provides them with challenging opportunities to apply their knowledge and extend their learning.
- Further improve pupils' achievement in Key Stage1 by making sure that:
 - additional programmes to support pupils' learning are fully established in the school's work
 - leaders set higher targets for pupils to achieve by the end of Year 2.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The levels of skills and knowledge of most children on entry to Reception are below those typically expected for their age. Children's achievement has risen in the last three years and in 2012 they started Year 1 with slightly above-average attainment. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has been average, but this year a larger proportion of Year 2 pupils are working above age-related expectations.
- In Key Stage 2 pupils do particularly well. The proportions of pupils who are working at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics are above average in each year group. By Year 6, as is the case this year, pupils' attainment is sometimes well above average. In recent years pupils have achieved better in mathematics than in English, but this imbalance has now been reduced.
- Pupils acquire over time a secure grounding in phonics (the sounds that letters make). Year 2 pupils read fluently with good pace, expression and clarity and apply phonic strategies properly to correct mistakes. Year 6 pupils' written work demonstrates an accurate use of compound sentences and more advanced forms of punctuation when they construct eye-witness accounts or persuasive, balanced arguments.
- Pupils are benefiting from regular, well-planned opportunities in a range of subjects, including history and design technology, to practise and extend their writing skills. Pupils' ability to carry out investigations and solve complex mathematical problems has improved since the previous inspection. This is helping a few talented writers and mathematicians to aim at Level 6 in the Year 6 national tests.
- Sharper use of assessment has enabled staff to identify quickly pupils who need extra help with their learning. These programmes are less firmly established in Key Stage 1, but are starting to improve younger pupils' progress. Disabled pupils and those pupils with special educational needs achieve well. A few of these pupils make outstanding progress.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve as well as their class-mates, especially at National Curriculum Level 4. Their attainment at this level in the 2012 national tests exceeded that of their class-mates and was considerably higher than that of similar pupils in other schools.

The quality of teaching is good

- Nearly all teaching is good and there are a few lessons with outstanding features when teachers make expert use of questioning to keep all pupils alert, practise new ideas and promote lively discussions.
- Teachers explain clearly what pupils are expected to learn and refer regularly to pupils' 'steps to success' to guide their learning. This 'road-map' enables pupils to work securely because they can judge how well they are carrying out tasks and decide for themselves on their next steps.
- Reception children enjoy practising their phonics knowledge when describing Chinese dragons and most can discriminate between 'nonsense' words and real words. Year 1 pupils understand the features of effective punctuation through miming Kung Fu actions. Teachers plan wide-ranging activities, including paired reading and book reviews, to develop pupils' reading skills. Pupils benefit from frequent opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in graph work in

science and history.

- In most lessons teachers choose interesting, imaginative resources and themes. For example, in an enjoyable Year 2 lesson, staff conjured up vivid images of Florence Nightingale's work in the Crimean War. Pupils, using spider-grams, organised key information and their own ideas in writing very successfully.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs learn well, because staff's very effective questioning furthers their understanding. This was shown, for example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, where these pupils calculated number sentences, worked out division sums and accurately expressed remainders as a decimal.
- In a few lessons teachers do not match work to pupils' abilities and some groups spend too long in copying activities rather than extending and applying their knowledge in suitably challenging tasks.
- In some lessons teachers direct pupils' learning too much and do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in class discussion. This dampens pupils' enthusiasm and prevents them from developing their thinking and speaking skills fully.
- Teachers use marking and, in Key Stage 2, pupils' levels and targets well. Their written comments provide pupils with clear guidance and pupils act on this advice to edit and improve their work. Older pupils are keenly aware of the levels they are working towards and what they need to do to achieve them.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Reception children are happy and secure in the well-organised Reception classrooms. They take turns well and enjoy their lessons, especially when they have opportunities to learn actively. They cooperate well with each other and staff. Throughout the school, pupils trust the adults with whom they work and comply quickly with their requests. They state that bullying is not accepted and are unaware of pupils making fun of differences.
 - Pupils are adamant that their learning is rarely disturbed by inappropriate behaviour. No disruptive or 'off-task' behaviour was observed during the inspection. Staff give equal time to pupils of different abilities. Consequently, all groups feel equally valued and supported and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning, even when working unaided. On a few occasions, while remaining attentive, pupils contribute little when they are less engaged by the teachers' methods or questioning.
 - Pupils behave well in public areas. They feel safe in school because of site security procedures and know how to stay safe through e-safety, road safety and 'stranger danger' training.
 - Pupils know what it means to be a good citizen because the school ensures they engage with communities at home and abroad. Pupils proudly watched a BBC news recording of their efforts the day before the inspection in the town's Pancake Day race. Other pupils regularly act as ambassadors for the school at local community events. The school's established links with schools in Kenya and Bangladesh widen pupils' cultural horizons. Specialist teaching in Spanish equips pupils with useful language skills for the future.
 - The school works exceptionally well with pupils who find it hard to manage their own behaviour.
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Procedures are rigorous and thoroughly documented so that all staff are entirely clear about their responsibilities. Pupils who attend alternative provision are closely monitored by the learning mentor. Records clearly show that these pupils, as well as pupils in the nurture group, make good gains in handling their emotions, building relationships and self-esteem, and in improving their achievement.

- The rise over the last three years in rates of pupils' attendance to above-average levels has contributed to their improved achievement.

The leadership and management are good

- Priority areas identified at the previous inspection have been tackled with considerable determination and skill by leaders. While maintaining the school's reputation for high standards of pastoral care, they have successfully concentrated on eliminating wide variations in pupils' rates of progress and raising their overall achievement.
 - Checks on staff's work and pupils' progress are timely and rigorous. The strength of the school's systems has enabled it to overcome significant changes in staffing. Clear, regularly-reviewed targets for teachers to improve the effectiveness of their work have raised expectations for pupils' achievement, the development of teaching and leadership expertise. These targets are linked closely to priorities, which are sharply outlined in the whole-school development plan and provide staff with clear direction.
 - Training opportunities have been followed up enthusiastically by staff and used successfully to help staff improve their skills, for example, in lesson planning, using assessment and working with 'at-risk' pupils. Joint planning activities have built up purposeful teamwork and supported greater consistency in the application of teaching methods and policies, for example, for marking.
 - A comprehensive tracking system is now established and enables leaders to keep a close eye on how well individual pupils and groups are doing. Leaders are using this information with increasing assurance to direct resources, guide teaching and pinpoint pupils who need extra support. This is helping to narrow gaps in the achievement of different groups and speed up pupils' progress, especially in Key Stage 2, where extra help is more established and has been refined in response to staff's findings.
 - Targets for pupils' performance in Year 6 are suitably challenging, but they are more modest in Key Stage 1, where they do not fully reflect improvements in Reception children's achievement and pupils' increasing rates of progress in Key Stage 1.
 - The extra funding the school receives for the pupil premium has been allocated carefully and the school can show clear evidence of impact on raising the attainment of this group of pupils. Gaps are closing although a few remain.
 - Many elements in lessons and the wider curriculum are imaginative, provide exciting experiences for pupils and fostering well their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This contributes considerably to their good achievement. Discrimination is not tolerated, actions are taken with the needs of individual pupils uppermost and equal opportunities are promoted well.
 - The local authority worked well with the school to improve teaching after the previous inspection. As the school has demonstrated an increasing capacity to direct improvement
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unaided, support from the local authority has reduced. More recently, the school has made very effective use of external consultancy to monitor quality and improve teaching further.

- Statutory requirements for safeguarding are met.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance has improved and is now good. Governors know how well the school is doing. They receive information from all school leaders and have an accurate grasp of the school's strengths and key priorities. Governors monitor teaching and learning effectively, ensure pupils' progress is discussed at every meeting of the governing body and can pinpoint where further improvements need to be made to raise pupils' achievement. They allocate resources wisely to improve outcomes for pupils and visit lessons to observe the impact of this work. They work closely with senior leaders to tackle any underperformance. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and are aware of how it is being improved. They ensure a clear link between pay increase and effective performance.
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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	112974
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	401330

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	409
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Ault
Headteacher	Sue Walker
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2009
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