



Belmont CofE (Controlled) Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114227
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279337
Inspection dates 29 March 2006 to 30 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Geoffrey Cooper

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Buckinghamshire Road Belmont
School category	Voluntary controlled		Durham, County Durham DH1 2QP
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 384 4178
Number on roll	162	Fax number	0191 384 0806
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Patrick Holroyd
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Alison Keddie

Age group 7 to 11	Inspection dates 29 March 2006 - 30 March 2006	Inspection number 279337
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves an area of economic and social advantage with relatively few pupils entitled to a free school meal. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. In most years they enter school with above average overall standards. The school is host to the local authority's sensory unit and it admits a relatively high proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need, including pupils with visual impairment. Almost all pupils come from a white British background, although two pupils have English as a new language.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which gives good value for money. This matches the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. The needs of all learners are successfully met. The school has improved well since it was previously inspected and shows that it has the capacity to improve further.

Good leadership and management create an ethos that matches the aims and aspirations of its Christian foundation. A concerted determination among staff maintains good achievement both in the progress pupils make academically and in their personal development. The school ensures that pupils enjoy equality of opportunity; for example, pupils with visual impairment have full access to the school's rich curriculum.

Pupils enjoy school, they feel safe and their behaviour is exemplary. The teaching is good and enables the pupils to learn effectively and make good overall progress. Standards are usually well above average but the results of the Year 6 national tests dipped in 2005. Basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are above average. The curriculum is stimulating and there is a high level of care and support.

The teachers' methods of marking and target setting are inconsistent across the school. A weakness identified by the school in pupils' writing has led to the adoption of a new strategy for improvement. Pupils' personal development is good overall but there is scope for the further development of the multi-cultural aspects of the curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Maintain the momentum of current initiatives to improve pupils' skills further in writing.
- Implement a consistent approach to marking and target-setting.
- Prepare pupils more fully for life in a diverse society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good overall and standards are above average. Pupils generally join the school with above average standards although the 2005 Year 6 class included an unusually large number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The results of national tests for Year 6 are usually well above average but fell in 2005 in English, mathematics and science, but particularly in English. At the school's request, a number of English test papers were re-marked, resulting in a higher proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level. This reassessment put the school's overall results much closer to its usual good performance. Nevertheless, the school has correctly identified standards of writing as a matter for improvement. The inspection of lessons and pupils' work confirms the school's own view that pupils generally make good progress. Pupils' basic skills of English, mathematics, and ICT support their learning

effectively in other subjects. Pupils' progress in ICT, which was a key issue for improvement at the time of the last inspection, has improved substantially.

All groups of pupils make similarly good progress. Pupils with visual impairment are very well integrated and supported, which enables them to keep up with their peers. Other pupils with learning difficulties also make good progress.

The school's very challenging targets are usually met or exceeded although this was not the case in 2005. However, the school believes that the current Year 6 class on course to meet their demanding targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good overall although there is room for pupils' understanding of life in a diverse society to be developed further. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite, friendly and relate well to each other and to adults. They act on their own initiative and older pupils have, for example, produced a book entitled Games for Buddies to help playground buddies carry out their responsibilities.

Pupils' enjoyment of school life is very strong, as exemplified by consistently good attendance. Pupils conduct themselves safely when moving around school and at breaktimes. They understand the importance of a healthy diet and physical activity. They contribute to the community through charity fund-raising. By working hard and developing collaborative skills and basic skills of literacy and numeracy, they are preparing themselves well for their future economic well-being. The school council makes a meaningful contribution to decision making through its discussions. Pupils know that their views count.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are consistently good and sometimes outstanding. This is strongly indicated by the quality of work seen in pupils' books and the work on display. Learners are very actively engaged in their learning. They know what they are expected to learn and display the positive attitudes of persistence and concentration that make them effective learners. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and prepare interesting activities that stimulate and motivate them. Tasks are accurately prepared to take account of learners' prior attainment.

Work is generally well marked. The marking gives effective feedback to pupils that acknowledges effort and gives an understanding of what needs to be done to improve. However, the methods used are inconsistent and marking and target setting vary considerably between classes.

Good support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This is a particularly strong feature of the progress made by pupils with visual impairment who are given very good opportunities to learn as effectively as their peers.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets statutory requirements. It includes a modern foreign language. The school has identified and is tackling a relative weakness in writing.

Thorough planning takes into account the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in the same class. A strong emphasis on the development of skills ensures that pupils think and reflect about what they are learning. Well-developed social and personal skills give a strong impetus to practical work in mathematics and science, which has a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Provision for personal, social and health education is very effective in developing the pupils' all-round personal skills. The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Pupils approve of the curriculum but would like to use the library more and to have an extended, residential educational experience. However, the pupils benefit from many after-school activities and a broad range of visits and visitors. There is scope for the school to develop a broader multicultural dimension to the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. A good range of policies and efficient procedures ensure that pupils are well cared for and safe. Risk assessments and checks on those working in the school are thorough. Recent training has ensured that child protection procedures are up to date. Staff know pupils well and monitor their personal and academic progress effectively. Assessment procedures quickly identify underachievement and trigger supportive intervention. Tests results are analysed accurately and the information is used effectively to modify what is taught.

Pupils' personal development is very effectively supported by clear guidance and the consistent approach of all staff; this reflects the school's caring and positive ethos. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very effectively supported with expert help and special teaching materials. Pupils with learning difficulties have good support from the adults who help them identify their targets but these are not always expressed in language that the pupils can understand.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and better than school's evaluation which was coloured by the lower than usual national test results for 2005. The school's evaluations of its effectiveness are very self-critical but have led very successfully to improvements.

The very clear sense of educational direction established by the headteacher and effective management strategies have resulted in good teaching and learning, an effective curriculum and a high level of academic and personal care. As a result, pupils achieve well and rapidly mature into responsible and independent learners.

The strengths of the school put it in a good position to improve further, building well on the good improvement made since the previous inspection. The good strategies put in place to improve on the 2005 results are already taking effect. Leaders at all levels are leading the school forward. The governance of the school is good. Governors ensure good financial management, monitor the school's performance, and set demanding targets for Year 6 pupils to achieve. The school consults pupils and takes account of the aspirations of parents. It works well with all appropriate outside bodies.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

Mrs Alison Keddie

Belmont CofE (Controlled) Junior School

Buckinghamshire Road

Belmont

Durham

County Durham

DH1 2QP

29 March 2006

Dear Children

Mrs Lock and I thoroughly enjoyed our recent visit. Thank you for all the interesting conversations, your courtesy and ready smiles. You, and the adults working with you, helped to make us feel very comfortable as visitors.

Both you and your parents told us that your school has many strong points and we agree. Mrs Keddie and her staff lead the school well, making sure that provision for you is good. This is clear in the way you enjoy lessons, welcome your opportunities to learn and that you feel safe and well cared for. Because your attendance is good and because you behave extremely well, you make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. We found that you are particularly skilful in mathematics and science investigations.

You told us there was not much that you would like to see improved apart from wanting to use the library more and to have the opportunity of a residential visit. The teachers have been working hard – and successfully – to improve your writing and you need to continue your efforts with this. We think you would benefit from some extra knowledge about the contribution different cultures make to our society. All teachers give you good support through their marking and setting targets for you but they use different methods and we think a common method would benefit you.

You always appear to work very hard. Belmont Church of England Junior School is a place where it is worth trying hard.

With our very best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Cooper

Lead inspector