

De Beauvoir Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100224
Local Authority	Hackney
Inspection number	335506
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Nasim Butt

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	316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Laura Bayford
Headteacher	Vijay Bhanaut
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 18 lessons and saw all 12 teachers teach. First-hand observations comprised 60% of all inspection activities. Inspectors held meetings with four governors including the chair, senior staff, pupils, parents and support staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at records for the tracking of pupils' progress, the school development plan, individual education plans, safeguarding policies, curriculum policies and a range of other policies and plans. The inspectors also took account of the 26 parental questionnaires which were returned.

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

- how effective leaders at all levels are in raising standards and accelerating the progress which pupils make, particularly in mathematics, by the end of Year 6
- how teachers are enabling pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more able, to learn effectively and to make the best possible progress
- the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and the extent to which it has moved on since the last inspection
- the effectiveness of self-evaluation processes and development planning in securing more rapid overall school improvement.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school where a higher than average proportion of pupils join and leave the school at other than the usual times. Pupils come from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is high and some of these are at an early stage of learning English. Almost one third of all pupils are on the register of special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has recently been accredited with the National Healthy Schools Award. An on-site parents centre offers a range of courses.

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

De Beauvoir provides a satisfactory standard of education. Some aspects of its work are good. Strong relationships between adults and pupils are evident in lessons and around the school. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good. After a period of decline, pupils' attendance is now good and improving.

When children enter the Nursery, their skills, especially in language and communication, are not as developed as those of most children of that age. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average in English and science. However, pupils' attainment in mathematics is slightly below average in Year 6, and below average at the end of Reception and Year 2. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. In some classes, pupils make good progress, but in too many cases, pupils' progress in numeracy is no better than satisfactory and is occasionally inadequate.

Parents and pupils value the caring ethos of their school. As one pupil commented, 'I like this school; it helps me with my behaviour and my problems. They give me nice healthy food.' A variety of cultural activities enliven the curriculum. During the inspection, a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6 treated all Key Stage 2 pupils to African drumming and singing in the native language of Zimbabwe. Parental engagement and community cohesion are strong aspects of the school's work. The on-site parents centre gives parents access to accredited courses in English language, sewing, catering and information technology. Several have trained to become teaching assistants.

The quality of teaching varies throughout the school. Although there is some good teaching, too much is only satisfactory. This is mainly because teachers do not consistently use assessment information to match tasks closely enough to the learning needs of pupils, especially the more able. Written feedback is not sufficiently well linked to individual learning targets and is therefore not precise enough to accelerate progress. After a period of instability due to staff and leadership changes, the headteacher and his deputy have re-established a strong sense of common purpose, with raising pupils' achievement at its core. They have accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses in the school and implemented many initiatives for improvement. Their ambition for improvement is shared by the staff. A competent group of curriculum leaders is now in place to drive these initiatives forward. These well-motivated leaders are developing their skills of monitoring and evaluation which means that the desired impact on pupils' progress is currently not as secure as it might be. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further and provides satisfactory value for money.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics by:
 - increasing the proportion of pupils who exceed their age-related levels in numeracy
 - ensuring that pupils make at least satisfactory progress in all classes and good progress in the majority of classes in mathematics
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to reinforce their numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that the majority of teaching is good or better
 - ensuring all teachers use assessment more effectively to plan lessons that provide appropriate challenge to different ability groups, in particular the more able
 - providing pupils with consistently good quality written and oral feedback, linked to learning targets, to support them in making further improvements.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that all leaders and managers develop the skills of monitoring and evaluating the quality of pupils' learning through lesson observations.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy their learning and make satisfactory progress overall. Their achievement by the end of Key Stage 2 is beginning to improve as initiatives to raise the quality of teaching are starting to have a positive impact. However, pupils' progress in numeracy is no better than satisfactory in too many classes at present. Pupils enjoy developing their language skills and communicating their learning to each other. For example, in a Year 5 literacy lesson, pupils highlighted figures of speech in a piece of poetry and many eloquently explained the context in which they were used. Because of the good and consistent support they receive from teaching assistants, most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress and some make good progress.

Pupils behave well and are confident that any incidents that might cause concern in the playground or around the school will be dealt with effectively. They demonstrate a good awareness of internet safety, and older pupils are aware of the dangers of cyber bullying. Several pupils commented that the school is a 'bully-free zone'. Pupils enjoy the wide range of sporting activities available through physical education and extra-curricular clubs. They put their good knowledge and understanding of staying healthy into practice at lunchtime. The school council makes a substantial contribution to the school community, often resolving conflicts and having a notable impact. Pupils' sense of care and compassion is strongly reflected in the work they do with Elders in the Caribbean community. These experiences, collectively, help the pupils' personal

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development to be good.

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

How effective is the provision?

Although there were some good lessons seen during the inspection, too much teaching is no better than satisfactory. In many lessons, teachers managed pupils' behaviour well, reinforcing good behaviour using the school's 'stay on green' policy. Although teachers' lesson plans are clear about what pupils are expected to learn during the lesson, pupils are not consistently guided through the small steps which help to ensure effective learning. The curriculum provides effectively for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During the inspection, a visiting group delivered an interactive session on dental care and hygiene to an enthusiastic audience of Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils. Partnerships such as this are used well to support and extend the curriculum. Curriculum leaders are becoming more aware of the need for pupils to practise their numeracy skills through different areas of learning, but this is not yet happening enough. The school provides a caring and welcoming environment for all pupils. As well as effective in-class support, the learning mentor provides a valuable counselling service

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 pupils. Links with many outside agencies are effective and the school works very closely with the most vulnerable pupils and their families. Arrangements for transition of pupils into Year 1, and for their secondary education, are good and enable pupils to have confidence in their future.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's and senior leaders' commitment to improving the life chances of all the pupils is clearly shown in their enthusiasm and dedication. Their evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate and enables all leaders to have a good understanding of the areas for improvement. Staff have bought in to the vision of the school. As one teacher remarked, 'I enjoy working at this school; I feel valued and appreciated all the time.'

The senior leadership team has implemented a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating school improvement. However, most middle leaders are very recently appointed and are still developing their skills of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Consequently, their contributions to the school's self-evaluation are at an early stage. Governance is satisfactory and improving. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's performance and play a key role in setting and monitoring challenging whole-school targets. Partnerships are good, for example the strong links with many external agencies, which help the school provide better support for pupils who are potentially the most vulnerable. These links, and the successful strategies used to improve attendance, demonstrate the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. Parents and carers' views are canvassed and valued, and links with parents are strong. The school has been effective in implementing its good plan for community cohesion. Safeguarding procedures and risk assessments are implemented effectively. At the time of the inspection, all statutory requirements for the safeguarding of pupils were in place.

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

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	
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	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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

As a result of consistently good, and often outstanding, teaching, children get off to a good start in the Nursery. Many children come in with little language and few communication skills, but by the end of the year they make good progress. In Reception, however, their progress is hampered because both teaching and assessment are less secure. As a consequence, achievement is only satisfactory by the time they join Year 1. Children's numeracy skills in both Nursery and Reception are less well developed. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are included well in all activities. Children generally behave well and most play together in a sensible and safe manner. Children are nurtured well and grow in confidence in a caring environment. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has established good links with the parents and carers of Nursery children as a result of regular home visits. She is aware that the assessment information on children's progress in Reception is still being developed and currently does not allow consistently accurate judgements to be made about progress in all areas of learning. She is supported well by the other adults who work with the children.

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

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Views of parents and carers

Though there was a low response rate from parents and carers, of those who responded a large majority expressed positive views about the school. In particular, they praise the way that the school cares for their children and keeps them safe. They are confident in leadership and management and the school's response to their suggestions and concerns. Parents and carers also recognise that their children are taught well and that the school is effective in promoting healthy lifestyles. A small minority did not respond to the question about how well the school prepares their children for the next stage of their education. However, when inspectors talked to parents, as they brought their children into school, they expressed satisfaction with the quality of preparation.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at De Beauvoir 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 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 316 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	38	16	62	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	42	15	58	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	35	16	62	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	6	23	19	73	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	8	31	16	62	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	6	23	19	73	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	31	18	69	0	0	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)	7	27	15	58	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	6	23	18	69	2	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	35	16	62	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	23	20	77	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	35	15	58	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	7	27	18	69	0	0	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



5 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of De Beauvoir Primary School, London N1 4BZ

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. We enjoyed your assemblies and were impressed by how polite and well behaved you all were. You and your parents told us how much you enjoy school and all the activities. We found your school to be satisfactory and that things are improving.

These are the things we found that your school does well.

- You enjoy learning and your attendance is good.
- Your behaviour is good, and you are sensible and know how to keep safe.
- Your school cares for you well, and teaches you how to be healthy and to respect and care for others.
- Your headteacher and senior managers are working hard to ensure you achieve well.
- You make sound progress through the school.

There are three things we have identified for staff to improve.

- Ensure that teachers use assessment information to plan work that is closely matched to your ability so that you are all appropriately challenged, especially those of you who find the work easy, and that they give you good guidance on how to improve your work.
- Ensure that you all reach higher standards in mathematics by making sure that you are being taught key skills and have more opportunities to practise numeracy in different subjects.
- Ensure all your leaders and managers develop the skills to evaluate how well you are learning in lessons.

You can help by working harder at improving your numeracy skills and acting on teachers' advice on how to become even better.

Thank you for a very enjoyable and memorable visit to your school and best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Nasim Butt

Lead Inspector

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