

Beaver Road Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 131939 |
| Local authority | Manchester |
| Inspection number | 381428 |
| Inspection dates | 20–21 September 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Steven Hill |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 680 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Natalie Marshall |
| Headteacher | David How |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 March 2007 |
| School address | Beaver Road Didsbury Manchester M20 6SX |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 36 lessons taught by 34 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, and with the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation, particularly that related to the safeguarding of pupils and the progress of individuals and groups. Case studies were examined of pupils who have particular needs. Samples of pupils' work were studied and questionnaires were analysed from staff, pupils in Key Stage 2, and from 260 parents and carers.

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

- How well does the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness promote improvements in standards and provision?
- Has the school dealt effectively with shortcomings in provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the previous inspection?
- Has the progress of pupils in Key Stage 2 recovered, after an apparent downturn shown by national assessments in 2010?

Information about the school

This is a very large primary school, with nursery provision, in a suburban area of a large city. Just over half the pupils are White British, with the remainder coming from a wide variety of minority-ethnic backgrounds. About a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language, a high proportion. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is a little below average and is falling. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.

There is a private nursery provision on the school site, as well as a before- and after-school club. Both of these are managed independently of the school and are inspected and reported upon 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The school has made major improvements since the previous inspection and now provides an outstanding education for its pupils. As a result pupils' achievement is excellent. Attainment is high and has been significantly above average in English and mathematics for several years. Pupils make outstanding progress in class because of excellent teaching and an innovative and exciting curriculum that engages their interest and enthusiasm. They make exceptionally good progress in reading and in mathematics. The school has accurately identified that progress in writing, whilst good, has not been as consistently strong and has introduced changes to the curriculum to address this issue.

Pupils' concentration and behaviour are outstanding as they work very hard to fulfil their teachers' high expectations. They enjoy school greatly and feel very safe and secure, having great confidence in the support they know they will receive from adults. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Boys and girls from different backgrounds have excellent relationships, collaborate extremely well in class and play together happily outdoors. The high levels of pastoral care for all are complemented by excellent provision to support pupils who have particular needs, ensuring that everyone is included in the life of the school, academically and socially.

Driving the many improvements have been outstanding leadership and management from a strongly cohesive senior management team, who receive excellent direction and support from the headteacher and governing body. High-quality self-evaluation ensures that issues are identified, shared and tackled. In particular, the rigorous tracking of pupils' progress, improved in the past year by a sophisticated, computer-based system, means that any individual who falls behind is identified quickly and appropriate support is provided. The monitoring of lessons by senior staff has enabled feedback and support to colleagues, helping them improve their practice and greatly improving the quality of teaching and learning. A tremendous improvement has been made in the Nursery and Reception classes, a weakness at the last inspection. Provision is now outstanding, giving young children an extremely good start to their education. The good track record shows that the school has an excellent capacity to build on its success.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress in writing to match that in reading and mathematics by consolidating the recently introduced changes to the curriculum, in particular by:
 - linking work in writing more tightly to the work done in reading
 - extending pupils' opportunities to use drama and discussion to sort out their ideas and to make writing more exciting and interesting.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

| |
|---|
| 1 |
|---|

Achievement is high and pupils enjoy school greatly. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge, understanding and skills levels that are typical for their age, although there are variations year on year. Progress across the rest of the school is outstanding. In an excellent lesson with Year 6, pupils took a delight in writing about a haunted school, showing imagination, originality and independence as they trawled their vocabulary to explain the gory details, responding to the teacher's frequent interventions that challenged them to refine their work. The teacher provided a high level of support for a pupil who found the task extremely difficult, enabling her to take a full part in the lesson. In a mathematics lesson in Year 3, pupils worked hard to tackle a variety of challenging tasks that were matched well to their different abilities, so all extended their understanding of place value.

A slight dip in progress indicated by national assessments for Year 6 in 2010 was redressed in 2011. All groups of pupils in the 2011 cohort made excellent progress in Key Stage 2, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils in that group who had special educational needs and/or disabilities did particularly well in English, making enormous gains during the previous four years. That is matched by the progress of such pupils seen during the inspection, when work was tailored to their needs carefully and often they received a well-balanced mixture of support and challenge from their teachers or other adults in the classroom. The school's tracking system shows that boys and girls from different groups make similarly high levels of progress across the school, including those who speak English as an additional language, those from different ethnic heritages, and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals.

Pupils' high academic achievements are complemented by excellence in their personal development. The pupils feel very safe, one commenting that 'Problems are always sorted out by the staff...they are good at it.' Their above-average attendance, attentive behaviour in class and their ability to work effectively, both independently and in collaboration with classmates, make a strong contribution to their learning. Pupils support each other well, illustrated when Year 4 pupils in an art class, quickly and without prompting, helped a classmate who had missed the previous lesson to draw guidelines on paper. Pupils have a strong voice in the school and are proud of the positive impact of the school council on aspects of school life, such as improved dinners. They contribute in a variety of ways to the local community, raising funds for the local cancer hospital, for example, and participating in cultural events, such as performing in musical events at a cathedral. They have a very secure knowledge

of healthy lifestyles by the time they reach Year 6 and their enthusiasm for exercise is reflected in the school's many successes in sports competitions.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 1 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 1 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 1 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |

How effective is the provision?

High-quality teaching underpins pupils' outstanding learning. Classroom management is excellent and teachers have high expectations. Relationships are very positive, so pupils try to please their teachers by working hard and behaving and concentrating extremely well. That is often helped by teachers' enthusiastic approach, enhanced by very good use of information and communication technology to engage pupils' interest. Teachers make very good use of the school's excellent assessment systems to ensure that work is matched well to pupils' different needs. Targets are provided so that pupils know exactly what they need to do to move to the next level and the marking of their work, regularly and very clearly, shows them how they can improve. Some very good use is made of collaborative work, including discussion, to help pupils sort out and clarify their ideas. That is already making an impact by enthusing pupils about writing. The continual monitoring of pupils' progress ensures that misconceptions are addressed rapidly and adults challenge pupils to think about their work and extend their learning.

The school emphasises basic skills successfully, including information and communication technology, and complements these with a wide range of interesting activities across the curriculum. The internationally based curriculum, modified in response to pupils' ideas and interests, provides some excellent links between different subjects to make learning more meaningful and interesting. Aspects of the curriculum are modified in response to pupils' individual needs and attainment, helping all to make rapid progress. An extensive range of visits and visitors adds to pupils' enthusiasm, as does the good range of clubs. Pupils are given excellent opportunities to learn a musical instrument.

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

Pupils' outstanding personal development stems from excellent care, guidance and support. An emphasis on personal development within the curriculum permeates all aspects of everyday life as pupils are encouraged successfully to consider others' feelings and to respect their beliefs. Very good attention is paid to pupils who have particular needs, drawing extremely well on a range of outside partnerships to enhance provision to meet these needs and to support pupils and their families. That is a particular strength in helping pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 1 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 1 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 1 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders have driven improvements exceptionally well, so that the staff is an effective team who work together extremely well to enhance pupils' education. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and clear feedback to teachers have combined with increasingly detailed scrutiny of the progress of individuals and groups to raise achievement. For example, a focus on mathematics involved seeking the views of pupils and staff, as well as an analysis of standards across the school. Resultant action has driven up attainment and 60% of pupils who left the school in 2011 exceeded the national expectation by reaching Level 5 in mathematics. Governance is outstanding: the governing body has a clear grasp of issues and provides a high level of challenge and support to the school.

The school has worked very successfully to involve families from a wide range of backgrounds in the life of the school. That has helped eradicate discrimination and supports the excellent provision for equality of opportunity, so that some previous differences in achievement between groups have been eliminated. It has helped weld the school into a harmonious community where pupils from different backgrounds get along extremely well and are respectful of others' views and beliefs. The very positive contribution to community cohesion is complemented by strong links with contrasting communities in this country and overseas.

Excellent partnerships with other schools and a range of outside agencies support the high quality of pupils' personal development, as well as their high level of achievement. Partnership with parents and carers is good. Safeguarding is good and the school is extremely quick to respond to issues that arise. In the curriculum, very good attention is paid to keeping safe, so pupils feel extremely secure in school.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 1 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make excellent progress because they are taught well within the high-quality provision for their learning. There is a good balance of activities led by adults and selected by children themselves. Children are happy, confident and articulate. High-quality interventions by adults in children's activities develop their vocabulary very effectively and sustain their concentration. For example, in the Nursery, the youngest pupils used the correct word choices to describe the texture of wet sand when making sandcastles and were encouraged successfully to experiment with a variety of tools by the member of staff in charge of the activity.

Excellent relationships ensure children enjoy learning. The children are confident in talking to adults, who deal with issues raised by the children sensitively. Children behave very well, take turns when working independently and make sensible choices. They have a clear understanding of safe practices and know why it is important to adhere to rules.

Leadership and management are outstanding. Assessment is regular, of high quality and informs future plans, so that activities meet children's needs by fully incorporating their interests. Strong links with parents and carers help children to settle quickly into the setting and support the children's enjoyment and learning greatly. The issues identified at the last inspection have been addressed exceptionally well and the outdoor learning area provides an outstanding environment that children thrive in. The leaders have an accurate view of the department's strengths and weaknesses, based upon rigorous monitoring, and have clear plans to develop the provision further.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage | 1 |
| Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who returned a questionnaire are extremely positive about all aspects of the school's provision. They value particularly that their children are safe and happy in school, teaching is good and that leadership and management are effective. A few respondents to the questionnaire had concerns about some aspects of provision. In particular, about a tenth mentioned the extent to which their suggestions and concerns are taken into account, the information they receive about their children's progress, or how they are helped to support learning. Parental views are canvassed regularly and the school was able to point to a number of ways in which these had contributed to changes in provision, although in major decisions, parental input comes from their representatives on the governing body. Inspectors found that the systems in place to inform parents and carers about children's progress and to support them in helping their children learn are good. A few parents and carers wrote to say that they are unhappy about the support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspection evidence shows this provision is a strength of the school and that such pupils make excellent progress. Case studies show that pupils with behavioural difficulties are given tailored support to help them improve and the school goes out of its way to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with physical disabilities. Overall, evidence supports the positive views of the very large majority of parents and carers who responded.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beaver Road 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 260 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 680 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 182 | 70 | 71 | 27 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 172 | 66 | 85 | 33 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 109 | 42 | 124 | 48 | 23 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 109 | 42 | 122 | 47 | 18 | 7 | 1 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 138 | 53 | 106 | 41 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 105 | 40 | 117 | 45 | 27 | 10 | 2 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 100 | 38 | 132 | 51 | 17 | 7 | 1 | 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) | 136 | 52 | 101 | 39 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 121 | 47 | 111 | 43 | 14 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 108 | 42 | 118 | 45 | 11 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 88 | 34 | 126 | 48 | 21 | 8 | 4 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 140 | 54 | 99 | 38 | 11 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 152 | 59 | 97 | 37 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 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 | 43 | 47 | 10 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 46 | 42 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 36 | 41 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 30 | 48 | 19 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 50 | 31 | 5 |
| All schools | 10 | 44 | 39 | 6 |

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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.



22 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Beaver Road Primary School, Manchester, M20 6SX

Thank you for your very warm welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you hard at work in lessons. You told us that you enjoyed school and we could see why.

Your school is outstanding. There have been many improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the Nursery and Reception classes. The youngest of you get off to a great start and the rest of the school keeps up this high standard. You are all making excellent progress because your teachers are extremely good at helping you to learn and give you lots of interesting activities. You do not do quite as well in writing as you do in reading and mathematics, so we have agreed with your teachers that they are going to concentrate on improving your writing this year.

We were pleased to see that your behaviour is excellent, that you all get along together very well, and that you feel safe in school. You make a great contribution to the school community, especially through the school council, and you learn a lot about other communities, in this country and abroad.

The adults are very good at taking care of you and they organise the school extremely well. They are keen to make things even better and I know you will want to help them. You can do this by keeping up your excellent behaviour and hard work, and by trying particularly hard with your writing. We hope that you all have another enjoyable year at Beaver Road.

Yours sincerely

Steven Hill
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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