



Beecroft Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107883
Local Authority Leeds
Inspection number 287940
Inspection date 23 January 2007
Reporting inspector Lesley Clark

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Eden Way
School category	Community		Leeds
Age range of pupils	3-11		West Yorkshire LS4 2TF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 2144562
Number on roll (school)	214	Fax number	0113 2144635
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr S Harris
		Headteacher	Miss J Turner
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Beecroft Primary is a popular and oversubscribed school near the centre of Leeds. A large proportion of pupils come from areas of high socio-economic disadvantage. A small minority travel from elsewhere in the city because of the school's good reputation. The spread of ability is extremely wide but is well below national expectations when children start school. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds has risen significantly in the last two years with the conversion of nearby flats into accommodation for overseas students. Many of these pupils stay for 6 to 12 month periods. A quarter of pupils have English as an additional language. A very small proportion has little or no English on arrival. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Two-thirds of the teaching staff has changed in the last four years. The school is designated a 'leading school' for excellence within the local authority.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Beecroft Primary fully meets its aims for 'all pupils to achieve high standards of work, behaviour and attitudes to others'. It gives pupils an outstanding education at the end of which they leave as confident, well-rounded individuals with a strong sense of their rights and responsibilities. It is a happy, purposeful school and pupils, parents, staff and governors are immensely proud of it. High academic standards have been sustained over many years because all pupils make outstanding progress during their time at Beecroft. Excellent teaching and exceptional leadership by the headteacher and management team ensure that pupils acquire the self-discipline to get to school on time and give of their best. Pupils point out that, 'Children respect teachers and teachers respect us.'

The school has an accurate view of its achievements and knows exactly which steps to take next to maintain its high standards. Over the past 10 years under the present headteacher it has demonstrated its outstanding capacity to improve. Management systems are simple and highly effective. Parents think the world of the school. Almost all returned the questionnaires to express their views, saying 'they focus on learning not just teaching' and commenting that 'children are passionate about being at school'. Governors give outstanding support and advice as a friendly but critical group with the interests of the school at heart. The school provides outstanding value for money.

Standards continue to go up because of outstanding teaching and an extremely good curriculum which gives a very good balance between learning new skills and applying them in interesting, worthwhile and practical contexts. A large proportion of pupils, typically two-thirds, exceed the level expected at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science and virtually all reach expected standards. Reading and writing are equally strong. Pupils use mathematical skills every day in different subjects and, in science, pupils say they 'learn through seeing and doing because teachers make it as practical as they can'. Teachers' insistence on high standards of presentation is a major contributory factor to pupils' outstanding achievement, for it promotes methodical working methods as well as teaching pupils to take pride in their work.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children become confident learners as exciting and thought-provoking activities help develop their communication and language skills so they gain an understanding of the world around them. The systems to support pupils' personal development and to guide them academically are outstanding and secure excellent progress for all pupils at each stage of their education. A key factor is the extent to which pupils are involved in assessing their own learning so they have a very clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. As a result all learners, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity, learn to be reflective and self-aware. Pupils greatly enjoy school as shown by their exceptionally good attendance and the fact that almost all attend after school clubs. Their outstanding personal development and exemplary behaviour are products of the great commitment that each staff member shows to them as individuals. There are no school rules because each child is taught from an early age to be self-disciplined. Pupils' mature self-reliance and respect for others mean that they act safely and appreciate different views and

cultures. Pupils' vigorous interest in sport and their knowledge that 'eating a healthy diet helps you look and feel well' ensure that they live healthy lives.

The school thrives on teamwork, demonstrated by staff and embraced by pupils who have a real say in what goes on at school. Important responsibilities within school, high academic standards and an understanding of their rights as individuals, mean pupils are extremely well prepared for their future lives.

What the school should do to improve further

The school's thorough improvement plan covers all potential areas for improvement required to maintain its status as a 'leading school' of excellence: there are no further ones to add.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding and standards are high. Children make an excellent start in the Foundation Stage and continue to make excellent progress in every class. Special arrangements provide children from exceptionally disadvantaged backgrounds with full time education at a very early age so they have a chance to catch up before starting in Year 1. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and high at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. The trend in the school's results is upwards and pupils make significant gains during their time in school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language flourish because of the intensive individual support they receive to help them learn very effectively. The school sets accurate but challenging targets which it usually meets or exceeds.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy all that they do and behave in an exemplary fashion. The strong emphasis on self-discipline means that, from a very early age, pupils become confident, articulate and self-reliant. Older pupils are proud of their responsibilities and say, 'There is no bullying, we don't even think of it because everyone works as a team and every child matters'. School council members fully represent the views of all and having trialled a 'Friendship Stop' in the playground decided this was not needed 'because we're all friends'. Pupils know they are listened to and show their appreciation by taking full part in all the additional sporting opportunities provided at their request. Pupils themselves also run lunchtime clubs such as dance and chess, consciously copying their teachers' first class organisation skills. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. An assembly run by pupils concluded that they had a duty to 'speak and behave with respect and consideration for others' and 'always be optimistic and believe in ourselves'. Their strong appreciation of other cultures is extremely well promoted through literature which nurtures their ability to reflect on

life. Pupils' capacity to reflect and to learn from experience is a key factor in their exceptional achievement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Homework is used exceptionally well to ensure that pupils continue disciplined working at home and, because it is often used as a starting point for lessons, pupils invariably complete it. Marking is encouraging but pupils are left in no doubt about how to improve their work. Because all teachers pay attention to small details, pupils respond by working neatly and methodically. High expectations, tempered with encouragement and support, help pupils express complex ideas with increasing clarity. The phrase 'two minutes to discuss with your partner' punctuates all lessons and ensures pupils' active participation in their learning. Questioning checks how well pupils grasp new concepts and teachers' expert subject knowledge means they teach with conviction. Demonstrations are clear, simple and effective and work exactly matches pupils' needs. Foundation Stage children learn extremely well through a mixture of taught activities and times to find out for themselves.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

An outstanding curriculum ensures that learning essential skills is balanced by enjoyable, interesting projects that challenge pupils to use and apply them. Greater provision for physical education and music has resulted in further improved standards and a rapidly growing school orchestra, with all juniors learning to play an instrument. An outstanding range of extra-curricular clubs, including Spanish, together with extensive residential and educational visits further expand pupils' educational opportunities. Foundation Stage children follow an extremely good curriculum which fully utilises the outdoors as a learning area.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

There is outstanding provision for pupils' welfare and child protection procedures are robust. The systems to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are learning English as an additional language are outstanding. Talented or gifted pupils are also catered for extremely well in all subjects. The systems to support academic progress are excellent and lead to highly effective learning. Pupils are fully involved in assessing how well they are doing and take responsibility for checking whether they have met their targets. Parents are closely involved through a weekly 'Share' group and frequent meetings with staff. High quality social, emotional, health and citizenship education promotes pupils' personal development most effectively.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. All future plans are the outcome of stringent checking and evaluating all aspects of the school's work. Effectiveness at all levels is measured and action taken as required. This ensures continuing high standards and achievement. The leadership team has a non-teaching staff member which gives the team the flexibility to mentor and work alongside new recruits. The headteacher and two assistant headteachers take the lead in English, mathematics and science which keeps the focus strongly on teaching and learning and ensures absolute consistency in teaching methods, assessment and promoting effective learning. The school's self-evaluation hesitates to conclude teaching and learning and the Foundation Stage are outstanding overall because mentoring is still in progress. This caution is due to the very high expectations set by the whole leadership team and typifies their approach. The introduction of specialist music and art teachers has further strengthened teaching.

Absolute attention to detail is what makes this school work so well. For example, attendance is really high because absences are chased up 10 minutes after school starts. The school involves parents fully in all that it does so that its ethos permeates home too. This is why pupils and parents have such a wholehearted respect for the school and take pride in all it does. Above all, children really matter in this school and their voice is evident throughout. The conviction that all children can behave provided they are taught to do so is borne out by the confident, well-spoken pupils who lead and manage others with similar respect and firmness that adults show to them. The governing body makes an outstanding contribution and qualifies its enthusiasm for the school's strengths with clear understanding of what it needs to do next. Financial management is excellent and helps the school keep ahead with new developments.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for your warm welcome and for talking to me about your school. I really enjoyed meeting you and looking at your work. My visit was part of the inspection system for the whole country that assesses how well pupils are learning. Yours is an outstanding school and I agree with those of you who said it helps you to act and behave properly. It really is a special place and you all help to make it so.

These are some of the things that are really good about your school.

- You achieve high standards in your work. I was particularly impressed that you use ink pens from Year 3 upwards and think it makes your handwriting neat. Some of your writing is exceptionally good, for you use interesting words and phrases to bring it alive.
- You are fully included in what goes on at school, both in lessons and through your school council. The councillors have good systems to ensure they really do represent your views, including the younger children.
- You behave exceptionally well and do not need rules to help you because you want to come to school to learn and to do your best.
- Your attendance is much better than in most other schools.
- Your teachers make learning interesting and they help you to make excellent progress because they take such care with marking your work and involving you in checking what you need to do to improve it.
- All the extra activities you do, including art, sports, residential visits and the school orchestra give you a really well balanced education.
- Your school is extremely well organised and prepares you exceptionally well for your future lives.

Beecroft Primary knows exactly what to do to keep on getting better and better. It listens to your suggestions and to those from your parents and governors and gives you the best possible guidance. It helps you understand your rights and responsibilities. Most of all it gives you a really good education which you all agreed was what you are entitled to.