

Belmont CofE (Controlled) Primary School

Buckinghamshire Road, Belmont, Durham, County Durham DH1 2QP

Inspection dates

12–13 December 2017

Overall effectiveness

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies between year groups and this contributes to unevenness in pupils' current progress, particularly at lower key stage 2.
- Leaders have not checked the impact of strategies to support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities rigorously enough. This contributes to variable progress for these pupils.
- There is variation in teachers' management of learning behaviours between classes. Where this is less successful, low-level disruption can have an impact on pupils' progress and attentiveness.
- While the expertise and capacity of governors is improving, over time, systems to hold leaders to account for pupils' progress and the impact of funding have been less well developed.
- Pupils do not develop subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding in the wider curriculum in sufficient depth, including in science, history and religious studies.
- Although outcomes are improving, variability remains in pupils' current progress between subjects.
- Middle leaders are becoming more influential in improving teaching in English and mathematics but their actions have not had consistent impact across all classes.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has shown considerable vision and determination in bringing the infant and junior schools together and raising expectations across the school.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have improved the quality of teaching in upper key stage 2. This has enabled pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, to achieve good outcomes in 2017, particularly in reading.
- Senior leaders have swiftly established high-quality Nursery provision that has significantly enhanced early years provision and provided children with an effective start to their school life.
- Senior leaders have worked effectively with the local authority and external partners to develop the roles of middle leaders. This is leading to improvements in English and mathematics teaching across many classes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, by:
 - creating greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across classes
 - promoting positive learning behaviours across all classes and managing pupils' behaviour effectively
 - enabling pupils to develop subject-specific knowledge and skills in subjects including science, history and religious studies in greater depth.
- Enhance the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing strategies to enable all teachers and teaching assistants to secure positive learning behaviours from all pupils and effectively manage behaviour
 - further developing the roles of middle leaders by enabling them to share good practice and work with colleagues to improve the quality of teaching
 - strengthening systems to diagnose, support and track the progress and needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - checking on the impact of additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium and for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities more closely
 - further enhancing the roles of new governors to enable them to hold leaders to account more effectively for aspects of performance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher has shown considerable vision and determination since her arrival in bringing the junior and infant schools together and in achieving cohesive practices across the primary school. She has raised expectations and challenged underperformance and this has contributed to improving outcomes at upper key stage 2.
- The headteacher has significantly enhanced the early years setting with the introduction of highly effective Nursery provision. Through strong appointments and the strategic development of the setting, the Nursery has swiftly established itself as a strength of the school.
- While leaders have improved standards at the end of key stage 2, their actions have not yet contributed to consistently effective teaching, learning and assessment across all year groups, as variations in quality remain.
- While new partnerships and strategies are in place to improve the diagnosis and support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, systems to monitor the progress of these pupils are less developed. Leaders and governors do not have a clear awareness of the impact of additional funding or the effect of support.
- Middle leaders have become more involved in spreading good practice and this has had clear impact upon pupils' progress in reading and mathematics. They have not yet had opportunities to sustain these improvements across all classes.
- Leaders track pupils' progress every half term and hold more formal reviews with teachers on a termly basis to check the progress of pupils in their classes. This is helping to make teachers more accountable for pupils' progress.
- Some monitoring processes are less developed and this can undermine the ability of leaders and governors to check progress and the effect of additional funding. The impact of pupil premium and physical education and sport premium funding for 2016/17 has only recently been reviewed. Although disadvantaged pupils made good progress at the end of key stage 2 in 2017, leaders do not always have robust systems in place to swiftly check their progress.
- Leaders have established a clear set of 'rainbow values' to recognise and reward some of the key behaviours and learning attributes they strive to develop among pupils. While the majority of pupils subscribe to these values, there are pupils in some classes who demonstrate less productive attitudes to learning. A significant minority of parents and pupils express concerns over aspects of behaviour in lessons.
- The headteacher has introduced a more rigorous performance management system that aligns teachers' individual targets to whole-school goals. This has contributed to improving outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2017.
- Senior leaders are developing a strong community ethos and are building closer links with the community. Parents greatly value the new Nursery provision. Four nativity celebrations held over the two days of the inspection were extremely well attended and appreciated by large numbers of parents and grandparents.

- Leaders provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils gain access to a range of experiences that support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through direct curriculum experiences and additional trips and visits. On occasions, pupils do not develop subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding in sufficient depth in the wider curriculum.
- Leaders have used additional funding to support pupils' engagement in sporting competitions and activities, including football, badminton, golf and dance. Pupils are given opportunities to pursue their own sporting interests, such as their selection of netball and gymnastics this term.

Governance of the school

- The new chair of the governing body brings high levels of educational expertise that he is using to strengthen governance and increase the ability of the governing body to hold leaders to account.
- Four new governors have recently been appointed and this has increased the capacity of governance after a period where the chair carried out the majority of monitoring roles and responsibilities. These new governors are embracing training opportunities to develop their expertise, although this work remains at an early stage.
- Governors show an understanding of strategic priorities and of strengths and areas for improvement. They work with the local authority and school improvement partners to improve their practice and gain an objective insight into progress. Over time, they have not reviewed the impact of the pupil premium funding or physical education and sport premium funding with sufficient rigour.
- Governors are aware that systems to monitor the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities have lacked rigour and are working with leaders to monitor this more assiduously. However, their actions have not yet led to significant improvement in this area.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and governors take their responsibilities for pupils' safety very seriously. They carry out appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of adults working on site. Leaders work with the local authority to review the effectiveness of safeguarding practice.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding has a high profile around the school. They ensure that training is up to date. Records show that leaders pursue concerns over pupils' welfare, although some actions are not recorded in full detail.
- The majority of pupils feel safe and happy in school. Leaders commission the support of a counsellor to provide social and emotional support for pupils. A buddy system is in place to provide pupils with support from their peers if they experience bullying or to address other concerns. Pupils believe that teachers act effectively on those occasions when bullying occurs.

- Leaders actively promote pupils' welfare and safety. Pupils showed an awareness of the actions they could take to stay safe online and of the possible threats posed by social media.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies between key stages and subjects and contributes to varying rates of progress across subjects and for different groups of pupils.
- There are clear strengths in teaching in upper key stage 2 which have accelerated progress in recent years and contributed to strong outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2017. However, the picture is more variable elsewhere and contributes to less consistent progress.
- Where learning is less effective, teachers do not use time effectively to enable pupils to learn with pace and make good progress. Too much time is spent on transitions between tasks and this can weaken learning as pupils lose interest and attention.
- There is variance in how teaching assistants are used to inform learning and support progress. At their best, teaching assistants provide well-targeted support that aids progress. However, on other occasions, they work exclusively with lower ability pupils and this can limit the ability of those pupils to receive specialised input from their teachers. Teachers and teaching assistants can sometimes talk over one another in full-class sharing sessions.
- In upper key stage 2, teachers promote positive attitudes to learning through effective planning and tasks that are well matched to pupils' abilities. This picture is more variable in other year groups where work is not as consistently tailored to pupils' abilities. Teachers and teaching assistants do not consistently address off-task behaviour or low-level disruption, which can undermine learning for other pupils.
- Teaching is improving in key stage 1 and work in books is indicating more positive progress. However, the quality of teaching still varies between classes.
- Teaching does not consistently enable pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make good progress. Although interventions are logged, teachers and teaching assistants do not clearly evaluate the effect of support on progress.
- Leaders have introduced strategies that are improving the quality of mathematics provision. These have contributed to pupils achieving much better outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2017, with increasing proportions of pupils working at greater depth. These approaches are not consistently implemented across all year groups.
- Teachers and teaching assistants effectively model sounds and develop pupils' abilities to recognise the links between letters and sounds. These approaches contribute to the majority of pupils achieving the required standard in the phonics screening check. Inspectors listened to pupils reading with fluency and expression. Teachers instil in pupils a love of reading and develop strong skills of inference and deduction. This is reflected in the extremely good progress pupils made in reading at the end of key stage 2 in 2017.
- Teachers are developing pupils' writing abilities through increased access to extended writing and a stronger focus on key writing skills. There is evidence that this is

contributing to improving progress, particularly in upper key stage 2, although it is not as well developed lower down the school.

- Middle leaders are supporting initiatives that have enabled increasing proportions of pupils to work at greater depth in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 and consequently make stronger progress. Opportunities to consolidate skills and apply problem-solving skills are not consistently embedded across all classes.
- Teachers do not develop pupils' subject-specific skills and understanding in the wider curriculum with sufficient depth. Curriculum coverage does not enable pupils to make strong progress in aspects of science, history, geography and religious studies.
- Teachers regularly set homework which pupils feel supports their learning. The majority of teachers provide feedback in line with the school's policy.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The headteacher has worked with pupils to develop a common set of 'rainbow values' to which the vast majority of pupils subscribe. Pupils are articulate and self-assured, and communicated their thoughts and opinions clearly to inspectors.
- Leaders have successfully worked with pupils to develop their social responsibility. They provide support to other pupils in their roles as buddies. The headteacher has given pupils independence in their choice of sporting activities for the term ahead. Pupils have raised money for charities by supporting BBC Children in Need and contributing to a local food bank. Their work as eco-warriors and as advocates for fair trade has further enhanced their wider sense of social responsibility.
- Pupils develop an awareness of equalities and British values by gaining insight into different cultures and faiths. They have worked with organisations such as 'Show Racism the Red Card' to tackle racism.
- Leaders recognise the importance of addressing pupils' emotional needs and employ a counsellor who works with pupils to address their concerns and build their self-confidence. The school provides a breakfast and after-school club that supports pupils' physical fitness and coordination and develops their social skills. Pupils' physical welfare is promoted through access to a range of sports and competitions.
- Pupils are able to discuss the actions that the school has taken to help them keep safe, including how to keep safe online and how to avoid the possible threats caused by social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. The majority of pupils are polite, courteous and well mannered. However, a significant minority of pupils and parents feel that learning can be undermined by low-level disruption.

- The majority of pupils are productive learners who apply themselves positively and work well with their peers. They subscribe fully to the positive learning behaviours promoted by the school community through its 'rainbow values'. However, this can vary across classes, and strategies to address behaviour are not consistently implemented.
- Leaders have worked with parents and pupils to secure improvements in attendance. Through a mixture of support and challenge, leaders have secured improvements for pupils who previously had high rates of absence. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils improved in 2016/17, although their attendance this term has fallen.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because current pupils make variable progress between classes and year groups. The strong progress pupils make at the end of upper key stage 2 is not reflected in lower key stage 2 or consistently across key stage 1.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have raised expectations and their actions contributed to pupils achieving much stronger outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2017. Pupils made extremely strong progress in reading, while progress in mathematics was also above average. Pupils' progress in writing was not as strong.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage in 2017 was well above average, while the proportion who achieved greater depth was also above average.
- Pupils' progress is much more uneven in lower key stage 2 as teaching is more variable and learning behaviours are not as well developed.
- There are signs of improvements in pupils' progress at key stage 1 but the stronger start pupils receive from early years is not always rapidly built upon.
- Disadvantaged pupils made good progress, particularly in reading, at the end of key stage 2 in 2017. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils were not as strong at key stage 1 in 2017 and their current progress remains more variable, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils do not make strong progress in the wider curriculum as work in subjects including science, history and religious studies does not enable them to develop subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding in sufficient depth.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is mixed. Over time, these pupils have made weaker progress than other pupils and systems to track the impact of support have been less effective.
- Teaching enables the majority of pupils to achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check, with outcomes in the past two years being in line with those seen nationally. The teaching of reading is a strength across the school.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress at the end of key stage 2, although this strong progress is not always evident in other year groups.

Early years provision

Good

- Strong and clear leadership in early years is contributing to highly effective provision that is improving outcomes for children. As a result of strong teaching, assiduous planning and excellent relationships, children make good progress and achieve levels of development above those seen nationally.
- The headteacher showed considerable vision in establishing Nursery provision in September 2016. She appointed a strong leader who has assembled a highly effective team and swiftly established a stimulating and nurturing learning environment.
- The Nursery and Reception leads work closely together to map provision and track progress. This is contributing to smooth continuity between the two settings, which is supporting children's progress and their wider personal development.
- Teachers and teaching assistants across early years use thoughtful questioning to check children's understanding and to prompt further thinking. Children enjoyed being asked to consider the effect of 'one more' or 'one less' in addition and subtraction tasks. High-quality and engaging experiences, indoors and outdoors, stimulate children's interest and capture attention. Children are keen to share their work and accomplishments, showing inspectors their reward letters and the toys they made in Santa's workshop.
- Learning sustains high levels of interest and engagement. Children listen and respond attentively in more formal adult-led activities and move smoothly to pursue their own interest and enjoyment in child-led activities.
- Key skills are developed from an early age. In Nursery class, children showed a confident awareness of number, with some counting up to 20, while in Reception class teachers deftly enabled children to develop their phonic skills and emerging writing skills.
- In both Nursery and the Reception class, teachers and teaching assistants model sounds effectively and encourage children to develop their understanding of the links between letters and sounds. Teachers' tracking shows that progress is monitored to inform future planning.
- Parents are involved in the initial assessments of their children's abilities and an online tracking system provides parents with sustained involvement in their children's learning.
- Children demonstrate positive learning behaviours from an early stage. Teachers and teaching assistants have developed highly effective routines where children work and play in an organised, purposeful and considerate manner.
- Teachers have developed effective systems to monitor children's progress closely and record this accurately. Children's work and progress are captured through a wide variety of tasks and activities. This work shows that children make good progress from their starting points.
- Safeguarding practices in early years are effective. There are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements. There is a strong ethos of care and support that promotes emotional welfare and children's personal and social development.

School details

Unique reference number	114227
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10036534

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	291
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Mallard
Headteacher	Kirsty Harrison-Brown
Telephone number	0191 3844178
Website	www.belmontceprimary.co.uk
Email address	belmontceprimary@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	2–3 November 2011

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The primary school was formed on 1 January 2015 from the merger of the previous infant and junior schools.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.
- A new headteacher took up post in January 2016.
- The school introduced Nursery provision from September 2016
- A new chair of the governing body was appointed in November 2016 and four new governors have recently been appointed to the governing body.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.

- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and whose first language is not English is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN support is below average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of lessons, covering the vast majority of classes in the school. The headteacher accompanied inspectors during observations on the second day of the inspection.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also met two members of the governing body, including the chair. Inspectors met a group of pupils at lunchtime on the first day of the inspection. Inspectors also met the local authority school improvement partner and talked by telephone to the diocese school improvement partner.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors talked to parents on both days of the inspection.
- Inspectors extensively examined the quality of work in a wide range of books. They discussed pupils' work and their learning with them in lessons.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work and considered documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, and information relating to pupils' achievement and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account 47 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View and 33 free-text responses from parents. They also took into account 52 responses to the pupil questionnaire and six responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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