

Beacon Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124978
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	340691
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Sheila Browning

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Grimes
Headteacher	Sue Walker
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 December 2006
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation for pupil attainment and achievement, management, planning, safeguarding of pupils, teaching and the curriculum. Inspectors analysed 88 parental questionnaires.

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

- how successfully the school is promoting pupils' writing skills, especially in Year 2 and in Years 3–6
- whether teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of, especially in Years 3–6, are high enough to raise pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics and note any improvements in the use of assessment
- whether the quality and effectiveness of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding, as the school suggests.
- how successfully the new leadership team and governors are embedding ambitious targets and sharing good practice in teaching and assessment.

Information about the school

Beacon Hill is a smaller than average primary school. The great majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. The school is based on two sites, with provision for an Early Years Foundation Stage class and a Year 1 class being in a house, 'Browns', a short walk away from the main building. The school is accredited as a 'Healthy School' and has gained various awards, amongst them being the 'Eco School' award, 'International School Federation and Intermediate' award, and 'Activemark' in recognition of its work. There is a breakfast club and after-school care club managed by the governing body. The school is part of a confederation of seven other local schools that work together to provide learning opportunities for the children and training and which helps monitor children's progress.

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

2

Main findings

Beacon Hill is a satisfactory school. It is an improving school and over the past year, there have been some significant developments in key areas of the school's work. Pupils' good attitudes to learning and their good behaviour reflect the effective care, support and guidance they receive. Older pupils say, 'Behaviour is so much better now'. They enjoy the increased number of clubs and activities offered, including breakfast club. Pupils say they feel happy, safe and valued and they play a key role in the life of the school as buddies, play leaders and school councillors. Pupils' excellent understanding of keeping fit and healthy is seen in their involvement in changing the quality of school dinners, in their published 'International Cookery Book' and high participation in sports.

Partnerships with the local community are good. The very large majority of parents value the school's work, particularly the many changes brought about recently. Nonetheless, a small minority expressed concerns about behaviour, and the lack of communication between home and school. The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have high expectations of staff and pupils. They set ambitious yet realistic targets based on a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. A major building project begun in July has already improved facilities and the headteacher has empowered colleagues as a team in embracing change. In response to good leadership and management, there is a sharper focus on pupils' learning and, though satisfactory, teaching, learning and the curriculum are all improving. These and the good systems in place to monitor the school's work, coupled with a rigorous analysis of pupils' progress, ensure a good capacity for further improvement.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start and build on this well in Years 1 and 2. Whilst the school judges provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to be outstanding, inspection evidence indicates that provision is good because children are not always sufficiently challenged in their learning. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress, and several make good progress. This has not always been the case and has varied for some time. Pupils' progress is an improving picture now as teachers assess pupils' needs and plan more relevant tasks. By Year 6, standards are average. Pupils' reading, scientific and mathematical skills have improved due to well-focused teaching. Their writing, whilst improved, is too often brief and narrow in content and purpose, and not enough good work is shared and celebrated. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve satisfactorily because of increased support. More able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently, especially when the pace of lessons slips, with

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fewer opportunities for independent learning. While pupils have learning targets, they are not clear about what to do next to improve their work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the percentage of good teaching by:
 - improving day-to-day assessment so pupils know what to do next to do even better
 - always providing sufficient challenge for the more able pupils
 - improving the pace of lessons so that pupils get more time to be engaged in independent learning.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing across the school by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and for different purposes and at length and celebrate and share good writing.
- Inform parents and carers about recent improvements and changes in the school and strengthen the involvement of parents in their children's learning.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' good behaviour contributes to their learning. They work well together, are interested and want to learn. In most lessons, pupils achieve satisfactorily and enjoy learning. The considerable work done to improve pupils' reading skills has a positive impact on their writing skills. Pupils enjoy 'hands on' learning activities which capture their interests, such as when Year 1 pupils 'made jam sandwiches' before writing instructions for a dreamy monster. Year 6 pupils visited the new tunnel on the main A3 at Hindhead and had fun debating issues about who will benefit from the tunnel. They used maps and developed their research skills before writing about it all.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and build on this in Years 1 and 2 so that by Year 2, they attain above average standards. Standards in national tests are average by Year 6. However, noticeable improvements are seen in Years 3 to 6 where until recently, pupils made slow or no progress. Better attendance and the greater focus on learning have raised pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, though there is more to do to improve pupils' writing. Involvement in a local authority mathematics pilot scheme has also helped improve pupils' learning experiences, with more 'fun' activities. Sharper lesson planning is more focused on the differing range of pupils' abilities but does not provide sufficient challenge for the more able. Good partnerships with outside professionals and specific programmes have greatly improved provision for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they now achieve appropriately. Gifted and talented pupils benefit from enrichment courses.

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Pupils enjoy their responsibilities, and the school council are planning what to put in a time capsule alongside the film made by Year 6 about Hindhead Tunnel. Buddies encourage younger ones to eat healthily and they give out 'I've cleaned my plate stickers'. They enjoy gardening, and raise funds for charities. Through their link with a school in Kenya, they have made a video and exchanged letters which successfully develops their understanding of different cultures. Pupils say they like all the new books, equipment and clubs and the choir are really looking forward to performing at the O2 arena.

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	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Several pupils say lessons are more interesting now. Teaching observed was satisfactory and some good teaching was seen. Teaching reinforces good behaviour and positive relationships. Learning intentions are shared with pupils but it is less clear how pupils are to improve their work. Pupils say they like learning when teachers use the interactive boards. Good use of 'talking partners' in a Year 4 English lesson helped pupils identify key features for a newspaper article. Teachers use the information about pupils' starting points and progress but teaching is generally focused on challenging and supporting lower and middle attaining pupils. Tasks are not sufficiently demanding for more able pupils. In a few lessons, the pace of learning is too slow and opportunities to promote independent learning are missed. Teaching assistants are not always used effectively to promote good learning. Guided reading and blending sounds and letter sessions are starting to improve pupils' writing skills. Teaching does not focus sufficiently on allowing pupils to write for a

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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range of different purposes and at length. Examples of good writing are not shared with pupils. Pupils are tracked carefully and extra help given where needed accelerates their learning.

Medium-term planning has been revised successfully to include information and communication technology and cross-curricular links and the school has plans to review the curriculum further in order to make it more purposeful and relevant and focused on learning through first-hand experiences. The extended day has developed to include many more clubs at lunchtime and the breakfast and after-school care clubs have been reintroduced. Partnerships through the confederation benefit pupils considerably. Many enjoy sporting opportunities. In recognition of this, the school has a 'Schools Award for Innovation in Sport'. Pupils take part enthusiastically in activities, such as theatre and music groups, visits, and a residential trip.

Partnerships with a number of agencies contribute significantly to pupils' learning. A home/school link worker provides good support to pupils and their families. Expertise is sought and acted upon from specialists such as speech and language therapists and behaviour management specialists. The school has some striking examples of where it has helped individuals overcome difficulties. An extra teacher has been employed to teach small groups of vulnerable pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 who need extra support. As a result, pupils gain in confidence and as one said, 'We get extra help in class. I'd really struggle without it'. Transition to secondary school is good and induction to Reception has improved.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior and middle leaders are united in their commitment to improving the school. Good leadership has inspired staff and developed them professionally so that they are accountable. As a result, there is substantial evidence that teaching and pupils' resulting achievement are improving more quickly. Involvement in the mathematics pilot project is just one example of how innovations are used to improve provision. Subject leaders are more confident in monitoring and leading their subjects. The data management team keeps a sharp eye on pupils' achievement. Focused on promoting equalities and tackling discrimination, governors monitored the extended day and literacy and numeracy provision; they challenge and monitor the school's work effectively. Inclusion and safety of pupils have a high priority and robust safeguarding procedures exist. Leadership promotes community

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cohesion satisfactorily, and strengths are seen within the school and globally through its Kenyan link. Leaders have conducted an audit, as a result of which they have plans to engage with a wider range of groups beyond the school to make pupils more aware of the different the ways of life and beliefs in Britain today. The school enjoys a satisfactory relationship with most groups of parents but the leadership team is aware that it could do more to improve communications with parents about the recent changes and developments in the school and in terms of responding to their concerns and suggestions.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start and make good progress towards the early learning goals in most areas of learning and especially in their personal, social and emotional skills. Evidence from the new Early Years Foundation Stage profile shows that at the end of this stage, children’s attainment is above the national average. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together as a team and are well focused on children’s welfare. Children learn in a safe environment but, at times, there is a lack of challenge and stimulation. There is a good mix of child-led and adult-led activities, though some independent activities, especially outside, could be more purposeful and resources reviewed and replaced. Good leadership has ensured strong links with parents and improvements in planning and assessment. Children have access to a secure field and wooded area and enjoy the castle construction climbing frame.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most parents responding to the survey are happy with their children’s experience of school. A small minority had several different concerns. The largest area of concern was expressed about the school not taking account of parents’ and carers’ suggestions and concerns. A few expressed concern about the management of disruptive behaviour and about communications between home and school and information about their child’s progress. Inspectors found that concerns about behaviour were not generally shared by pupils and no disruptive behaviour was seen during the inspection. Additionally, the school has a detailed behaviour policy and this and the good focus on behaviour management by all teachers have led to significant improvements. The school acknowledges that it could do more to improve home/school communications. Inspectors looked at the information shared with parents about their children’s progress and found it to be appropriate. The school has plans in hand to improve the dialogue between home and school with regard to pupil progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beacon Hill 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 199 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	50.0	41	46.6	3	3.4	0.	0.0
The school keeps my child safe	43	48.9	42	47.7	2	2.3	0	0.0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	26.1	46	52.3	10	11.4	3	3.4
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	29.5	44	50.0	8	9.1	4	4.5
The teaching is good at this school	21	23.9	62	70.5	3	3.4	2	2.3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	25.0	55	62.5	9	10.2	1	1.1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	28.4	54	61.4	7	8.0	1	1.1
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)	17	19.3	46	52.3	8	9.1	0	0.0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	15.9	57	64.8	7	8.0	3	3.4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	11.4	50	56.8	13	14.8	7	8.0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	15.9	46	52.3	18	20.5	4	4.5
The school is led and managed effectively	22	25.0	51	58.0	7	8.0	3	3.4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	29.5	51	58.0	4	4.5	1	1.1

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 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

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>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.



1 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Beacon Hill School, Hindhead GU26 6NR

We really enjoyed talking to you; thank you for being so friendly and helpful. Beacon Hill is providing you with a satisfactory education. We share your view that the care and support you are given by staff is a real strength. We were impressed with your behaviour and how well you get on with each other, especially looking after and playing with the younger ones. We were very impressed at how much you knew about keeping fit and healthy. You told us about the many recent improvements in your school and how much you enjoyed all the different clubs and activities. Your headteacher, staff and governors work hard and we can see lots of improvements. Teaching is satisfactory and improving. Those of you in Reception and Years 1 and 2 make good progress and attain above average standards. All of the improvements help you to make better progress than before, especially in Years 3 to 6. You are making up for previous gaps in your learning and attain average standards, and more of you reach higher standards. Well done! You can help too by keeping up the good work.

To maintain your school's improvement, we have asked your headteacher and her staff to:

- make sure more of the teaching is good and help you to understand what to do next to improve your work
- make sure that those of you who find work easy are always challenged and step up the pace of your learning and give you more opportunities to learn independently
- help you to improve your writing skills by providing more opportunities for you to write in different styles, and for different purposes and at length and celebrate and share good examples of writing with you
- make sure parents and carers are kept informed about all the changes and improvements in school and have better information about how you are getting on.

Yours faithfully

Sheila Browning
Lead inspector

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