

# Beehive Lane Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114996
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	311783
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Helen Ranger

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	194
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr A Ellis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs B Dyke
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Beehive Lane Great Baddow Chelmsford CM2 9SR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01245 269464
<b>Fax number</b>	01245 490348

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This smaller than average sized school serves a mainly residential area of Chelmsford and most pupils live locally. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is around the national average. However, a relatively high proportion of this group have statements of special educational need because they require a high level of personal support. Currently 8% of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with five pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English. Pupils start in Reception with a wide range of knowledge and skills; their overall attainment is in line with the levels expected nationally for four-year-olds. A higher than average number of pupils are admitted part way through their primary education, often between Years 3 and 6. The headteacher joined the school in January 2007 and there have been considerable staff changes in recent years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Beehive Lane is a satisfactory and improving school. Following a period of unsettled staffing, it is now well placed for the future. This is because, when the current headteacher took up her post, she quickly gained a very clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She and the senior teachers have acted effectively to strengthen the quality of provision. Parents' views of the school are mainly very positive, as summarised by those who commented on 'a marked improvement' and 'a more stable environment' for their children.

Pupils' academic achievements are satisfactory. By Year 6, pupils reach average standards in their work. The school has identified where any underachievement has occurred and is tackling it. Staff turbulence outside the school's control has meant that some changes have not happened as quickly as planned, but the school's leaders are determined to continue the drive to raise standards. The standard of writing in all age groups has not been high enough in recent years, but the action to rectify this is already having a positive impact. The school's own analysis of standards in mathematics shows that progress here is not improving to the same extent. This is an area where more can be expected of pupils. In general, pupils who need extra help with learning receive it and make good progress, including those learning to speak English. However, the more capable pupils could do better; this has been recognised and is rightly a continuing focus in all classes.

Since the last inspection, there has been considerable improvement in pupils' personal development. They behave well and have increasingly positive attitudes to learning. They say that this is because the curriculum is now more enjoyable, interesting and relevant. Pupils show a good appreciation of healthy living and rightly feel safe, well cared for and well supported in school. They say they feel their views matter and they play an important role in how the school community develops.

There is a clear commitment by the school's leaders to continue to improve pupils' day-to-day learning. Any inadequate teaching is being eradicated and much of the teaching is good. A significant inconsistency that remains is in how much teachers expect pupils to achieve, especially pupils who find learning easier. There is also a relevant initiative to improve provision for the Reception class. There is scope to improve how the accommodation for this age group is used and how activities enable these youngest children to be more independent and creative in their learning.

The senior leadership team has been effective in training staff to play a fuller part in school self-evaluation and improvement. Teachers are now well placed to monitor standards and provision, and a programme for this is being implemented. The governance of the school is satisfactory, although there have been problems in recruiting and retaining governors. The current team of governors is not yet playing a full enough part in supporting the staff and holding them to account, but there are good plans to develop their role.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children in Reception are well cared for and settle quickly into school. They make satisfactory progress because the teaching is sound. By the time they join Year 1, most have reached or exceeded the levels expected nationally in all areas of learning. Planning broadly covers the required curriculum and focuses well on basic skills, such as in literacy and numeracy. Less well

developed are opportunities for children to learn independently, explore resources and make decisions, in both the classroom and the outdoor area. Adults assess individual progress regularly to provide a fully summary of standards by the end of the year. However, information on children's attainment when they start school is not full enough or accurate enough to act as a clear baseline by which to judge a child's overall progress. There are clear action plans for the new staff team in this age group and a good start has been made towards achieving them.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupil achievement, especially in mathematics and with the more capable individuals.
- Develop the Foundation Stage by establishing a clear picture of attainment on entry and by increasing opportunities for children to work independently.
- Ensure that the plans for teachers and governors to contribute more to monitoring and school improvement are implemented successfully.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' progress is satisfactory and records show recent improvements for several classes. Standards in the Year 2 national assessments have varied considerably since the last inspection, partly because of variations in the quality of teaching across Key Stage 1. This has been addressed as a key priority by the current staff team. While last year standards in Year 2 were exceptionally low, they are now above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. In Key Stage 2, pupils have made progress in line with the national average for the past few years in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The current Year 6 continues this trend.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

While children in Reception could be more independent, pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They enjoy learning and commented on how the more practical and topic-based curriculum has injected more fun into lessons and has led to improved behaviour. It has also encouraged their attendance, which is above average. They understand how to keep safe, for example when using the internet. The good take-up of sports and regular opportunities for exercise exemplify their commitment to a healthy lifestyle and the school has an ActiveMark Gold award. Pupils demonstrate a strong sense of belonging to their school and appreciate how their achievements are celebrated, for example in assemblies and displays. They are proud of the work they do through the school council. Members took part in a 'local democracy week' and joined discussions with a local councillor. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education by the good personal and social skills, which go hand in hand with their sound academic achievements.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The school recognised that the quality of lessons varied too much. This had been partly, but not entirely, because of a considerable number of staff changes. Improvements are evident. Most lessons are at least satisfactory and an increasing proportion are good. In particular, staff have improved the ways they use assessment information to support their planning. This is gradually leading to higher expectations of pupils, although lessons do not yet fully cater for the needs of potential higher attainers. Initiatives to improve the teaching of writing are engaging pupils' interest more effectively and promoting better learning. Teaching assistants work well with class teachers, especially to support pupils who need individual help, although their skills are not fully deployed throughout the full lesson at times. Teachers have introduced a good range of strategies to inform pupils how well they are learning, such as 'success criteria' and group targets. These supplement teachers' marking, which is good in literacy but less detailed in numeracy.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

A key indicator that provision is improving is the good range of activities now available. Staff are forging purposeful links between subjects and working with pupils to check that they are engaged by lessons. A good range of clubs, visits and visitors are offered. Better provision for pupils with particular gifts and talents is a current focus and this includes productive links with a local secondary school. The programmes for pupils who need extra individual help are well planned and ensure their good progress. Resources are generally used well. However, the semi-open plan nature of the building means that lessons are sometimes disturbed by sound travelling from adjoining classes.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pupils speak highly of the day-to-day care provided by adults. They feel safe and confident that adults will help with any problems. One commented, 'They don't shout, they help us with our lessons and make me feel welcome.' There are good systems in place to safeguard pupils and to protect their health and safety. The special needs coordinator works closely with pupils, their families and the staff to promote pupils' progress and enjoyment of school. This includes attention to the particular needs of looked-after children and those with statements. The improving arrangements for tracking individual academic progress ensure that pupils mostly, but not entirely, receive accurate oral feedback on their work. Targets are being used increasingly to set pupils challenges. This is raising their self-esteem and confidence.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 3

The effective headteacher, ably supported by her deputy headteacher, has taken a measured and realistic path to ensure that the school gets better in order to achieve its ambition of being a thoroughly good school. The extent of improvements in important areas in recent terms show

good capacity to continue planned developments. In particular, there have been tangible results in improving pupils' behaviour, in developing teaching and learning and in training staff and governors to carry out effective self-evaluation. The school's leaders and managers show the aptitude and determination to succeed. Teaching staff speak enthusiastically of how they are becoming more knowledgeable about the school's effectiveness and about how they can improve the quality of education further. The school has also eliminated a budget deficit with impressive speed and established better financial controls. As part of these developments, the staff have drawn on good partnerships; for example, with the local authority and other schools. The partnership with parents has also been established well in most cases, although more remains to be done to communicate the extent of recent successes to a minority of parents.

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## Annex A

## 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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

13 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Beehive Lane Community Primary School, Chelmsford CM2 9SR

I am writing to thank you for your help with the recent inspection of your school. Mrs Wright and I found that your school is satisfactory at present and improving fast.

Most of you reach the standards expected for your age. Your teachers want to make sure that you do even better. It was exciting for us to hear how much you enjoy the new ways they are teaching you to improve your writing. We think you can also do better in mathematics. You can help this to happen by listening closely to the advice the adults give you in lessons. We could see that you are learning how to keep healthy, for example, through lots of sport and exercise. It was good to hear that you feel safe and well cared for in school and that adults value your ideas.

Behaviour in your school is good. We were pleased to hear that you think it has improved because lessons are becoming more enjoyable. You told us how much you like the ways that topics are being taught and the practical activities in particular. We saw that those of you who need some extra help with learning are doing well. Those of you who find learning easier could sometimes reach higher standards and we have asked your teachers to carry on improving that.

We have also asked the staff to make sure they carry out their plans for the Reception class. If this happens, they will be able to check that five-year-olds in your school are making good progress. We think that Reception children also need more times to be independent in choosing and planning their activities.

The staff and governors are working well together to help you all. They have good plans for how they can check that your school keeps getting better. We want them to make sure they carry out these plans. We know that you will help them to keep up the good work!

Best wishes to all of you.

Helen Ranger

Lead inspector