

Belvedere Junior School

Mitchell Close, Belvedere, DA17 6AA

Inspection dates 21–22 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The executive headteacher and head of school provide high quality leadership, driving improvements in teaching and tackling underachievement effectively. Management systems are clear and rigorous.
- Standards in English and mathematics have risen since Belvedere became an academy. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- Staff work as a cohesive team, listening to advice and keen to improve in all areas.
- Pupils get on very well together and with their teachers; almost all are keen to learn and behaviour is good.
- Disadvantaged pupils, those who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of well-targeted support.
- Parents are extremely pleased with the many improvements made in teaching, learning and pupils' behaviour in the past two years.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in the caring and supportive environment provided by staff. Safe use of social media is taught very well.
- Governors know the school well and value the strong leadership team. They provide a good degree of challenge which promotes better teaching and higher standards.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Guidance given in teachers' marking is not always targeted well enough on how pupils can improve their standards.
- Teachers' expectations of the most able pupils are not high enough in some classes.
- Not all adults providing additional learning support in classrooms are equally effective.
- Some pupils have not learned the skills which result in an eagerness to learn.
- Standards in writing are not as high as in other areas; pupils' presentation of work and their handwriting are not of a consistently high standard.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning taking place in all classes. Several of these were joint observations with the executive headteacher, the head of school or the deputy headteacher.
- Examples of pupils' work were scrutinised in lessons and through sampling.
- Inspectors reviewed school documentation, including self-evaluation, information about safeguarding, monitoring records, and the school's information on pupils' attainment, attendance and progress.
- Inspectors met with governors and trustees of the school, senior and middle leaders, and groups of pupils. They provided feedback to teachers who wanted to discuss the learning that took place in their observed lessons.
- Returned questionnaires from 38 staff were analysed.
- The Parent View online survey responses of 43 parents were taken into account, as were letters from parents, and their views stated to inspectors at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Peter McGregor, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Humaira Saleem	Additional Inspector
Nigel Cook	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Belvedere Junior School converted to become an academy school in April 2013, as part of the Pioneer Academy of two schools in neighbouring authorities.
- This is the school's first inspection as an academy. When its predecessor school, also known as Belvedere Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school is a larger-than-average primary school. It shares the same site as Belvedere Infant School, the main feeder into Year 3 of the junior school.
- Governors are responsible for a breakfast club which takes place in the school hall.
- Years 3 and 4 are taught in mixed-ability classes. Years 5 and 6 are taught in streamed classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils, and those who have special educational needs is a little above the national average.
- The largest single ethnic group of pupils in the school are White British. More than two thirds of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Over half the pupils speak English as an additional language, a very high proportion compared with other primary schools.
- Nearly half of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding used to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and children who are looked after). This is higher than the national average.
- The head of school provides day-to-day leadership. The executive headteacher, who is a local leader of education (LLE) also oversees the second primary school, Stewart Fleming in Bromley, and supports a third school, Burnt Oak in Bexley, soon to join the Pioneer Academy.
- The governing body of 12 is overseen by a board of seven trustees who are in turn held to account by three directors, referred to as 'members'.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the standard of pupils' writing to match their attainment in other areas by:
 - ensuring that literacy is a focus in all subject areas
 - establishing the expectation of consistently high standards of handwriting and presentation in all the pupils' work.
- Increase the proportion of teaching that leads to outstanding learning through:
 - ensuring that all the adults present in each lesson are equally effective in helping pupils to make progress
 - ensuring that teachers always have high expectations of what pupils can complete in a lesson, particularly the most able
 - always setting clear, concise targets in marking to improve achievement, and checking that pupils act on this considered advice
 - finding more effective ways to enthuse pupils, so that they all learn through their own self-motivation and effort, as well as benefiting from high quality teaching, to make outstanding progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The senior leadership team is led strongly and enthusiastically by the executive headteacher. It is the driving force behind the many improvements that have been made under a clear vision to strive for an outstanding school. 'Children's learning is at the centre of what we do', is an often-repeated phrase.
- The staff wholeheartedly support the head of school and executive headteacher. The school's policies and systems contribute to the high level of care and good behaviour which enable pupils to progress well.
- Middle leaders, such as the staff responsible for key subjects and special educational needs, know their roles well. They have high expectations and are working hard to improve standards. Their balanced approach is proving effective in managing improvement, for example through in-depth monitoring of pupils' work and teachers' planning, as well as providing effective support for colleagues.
- The school's performance tracking information, based on very good assessment systems, accurately predicted that the standard of writing would not be as good as it should have been last year. This same reliable process indicates that better progress has been made this year, and standards in English and mathematics are now higher, particularly in writing. This shows how the leadership focus on improving teaching is having an impact on pupils' achievement.
- The good curriculum includes a wide range of subjects. Planning is based on engaging pupils in their tasks. Class timetables show a balance of subjects while maintaining a good daily emphasis on English and mathematics. Reading has a strong focus. Extra-curricular activities are both popular and well attended. An excellent range of visits, such as by Year 4 to the *Golden Hind* during the inspection, provides pupils with extremely worthwhile opportunities linked directly to what they are studying. The curriculum is organised to ensure that equality of opportunity is provided for all, and that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Senior leaders make accurate assessments of teaching and learning, using the information to ensure that lessons are planned to help individuals improve and enhance their achievement. The information that leaders glean from visits to lessons, work scrutinies, and tracking assessment combines to give a clear picture of teaching and learning over time. These processes are carefully linked to robust performance management, based on teacher and pupil performance, and identifying training needs.
- Parents value greatly the efforts the school makes to respond to their queries and to keep them informed through the website and informative newsletters. The Parent View online questionnaire responses are very positive about all aspects of school life.
- Pupil premium funding is carefully recorded and spent effectively, leading to the narrowing of gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and their peers. The purchase of electronic readers, for example, as part of this support, has been met enthusiastically by these pupils. It is too early to measure the impact of the initiative on standards in English. Increasing numbers of both disadvantaged and other pupils attending the early-morning breakfast club show how important this is to both parents and their children. The good food and enjoyable activities prepare pupils well to make the best of learning opportunities in morning lessons.
- The primary school sport funding is used well, for example by funding specialist coaching which enables pupils to experience additional physical activities such as gymnastics.
- Safeguarding arrangements are strong. Procedures and policies meet requirements and pupils' welfare has the highest priority.
- Well-established links with the many selective and non-selective schools to which the pupils transfer enable pupils to move on with confidence to the next stage of their education. The school makes good use of Year 2 performance information from the adjoining infant school, preparing well to ensure that pupils quickly continue to improve their learning on entering Year 3.
- Staff benefit from strong cooperative links with the other schools involved, or about to be involved, in the Pioneer Academy. These include in-service training and comparing the standards of work to ensure assessments are accurate.
- The school's concise self-evaluation provides an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses which links closely to the detailed school development plan.
- The school's overriding ethos of a calm and caring community strongly supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Excellent assemblies focus on personal values, such as resilience, exemplified by a famous basketball player who 'failed a thousand times but always bounced back'. Pupils work as playground buddies and assist in the dining hall. Through religious education and other lessons, they learn about other faiths and cultures and how important it is to get on well together without any form of discrimination or prejudice. The school actively encourages the promotion of British values, and is very

effective at helping pupils to understand what these are and how they relate to their own lives. For example, they learn about the way democracy works through elections for school council representatives and they appreciate the need for the rule of law by discussing their class rules.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors know the history of the school very well and are playing a significant and effective role in its development. They appreciate how much it has improved, its strengths and weaknesses, and what needs to be done to progress towards being an outstanding school.
- Governors receive good, detailed information on how additional funding is helping disadvantaged pupils, the impact this has on pupils' achievement, and how sport is improving as a result.
- They review performance management information with care to ensure that pay is linked to teaching and learning. They receive regular reports on the quality of teaching, and reliable information on pupils' performance. They recently commissioned an external review of the school to provide them with an objective picture of its performance.
- Governors have a wide range of expertise, some with backgrounds in education, and question the executive headteacher and head of school rigorously on improvements. They ensure that safeguarding procedures meet requirements. They check the school's finances and publish a detailed audited report on the website.
- All new governors attend induction training and a number have received follow-up support. A detailed register is kept of courses attended.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. At times it is outstanding, in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils enjoy being at school. They and their parents appreciate the high quality of care provided and the insistence on good behaviour.
- Most pupils are eager to learn, and all those spoken to have positive attitudes towards the school, saying it has improved so much in recent years. They are proud to attend, and both pupils and staff deservedly earn each other's respect.
- In most lessons, pupils come prepared to work and try extremely hard, making the most of opportunities to learn. Occasionally, interest fades and a few do not persevere as they should without adult guidance, displaying little thirst for knowledge and understanding. Disruption is minimal and pupils are nearly always obedient.
- Pupils show good manners and are polite to their peers and adults. When working in pairs or small groups they are invariably considerate in their comments and actions. In the pleasant dining-room environment at lunchtime, Year 6 pupil helpers support mid-day supervision staff, demonstrating the school's expected standards of behaviour well. Pupils line up for the start of lessons quickly and quietly and are very well behaved before, during and after assemblies.
- There have been no exclusions since the school opened as part of the Pioneer Academy. The behaviour log shows how the situation has improved each half term in this academic year. Punctuality at the start of the day, and to lessons, is good.
- Attendance is broadly average. Records are analysed according to different groups, such as disadvantaged, ethnic background and special educational needs, with some variation between groups. Procedures to improve attendance are good, involving support staff and the education welfare officer following up patterns of absence and fast-tracking procedures to reduce persistent absenteeism.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The school is very secure. The school environment is litter-free and extremely well cared for. New fencing has been provided, and procedures to check people on entry to the school are very effective. Almost all parents are very pleased with the security of the site and how safe their children feel in school.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep safe, particularly e-safety as this receives a strong curriculum emphasis. They know of the problems that can occur with social media and say they learn about this important aspect of life at school.
- Pupils say there is no bullying, and very few incidents of name-calling take place. The school's sanctions

are known well by pupils and are a deterrent because they are implemented consistently.

- Appropriate checks are made to assess risk in important aspects of school life, and any necessary actions identified are carried out rigorously.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils learn well because teaching is effective in motivating them to work hard. Teachers gain the respect of the pupils who behave well and enjoy lessons.
- Teachers, including the specialist teachers for modern foreign languages, physical education, art and computing, have good subject knowledge, enabling them to provide clear and accurate explanations.
- Planning for learning in the different subjects is thorough. Teachers have clear objectives which give the pupils a focus for each lesson. In subjects other than English, writing, presentation and handwriting can have insufficient emphasis, with resulting inconsistencies in the standard of pupils' work.
- Teachers are quick to identify what pupils do and do not understand, adapting tasks to ensure that pupils are challenged and doing well. This is particularly helpful in meeting the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as pupils who speak English as an additional language. These groups make good progress as a result. However, expectations are not always high enough, and some groups, particularly the most able, do not do as well as they could. Occasionally time-filling exercises slow the pace of learning.
- Pupils often benefit from additional adults in the classroom who generally provide good support for groups. Pupils value this guidance, but not all adults are equally effective in helping pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers work extremely hard in marking pupils' work. Senior leaders have identified that many of the extended comments provided have not been efficient and effective in improving standards. The school is focusing on encouraging teachers to write clear and concise specific guidance which is always followed up and checked.
- Good teaching is effective in promoting pupils' self-motivation, resulting in usually good application to their work. The rate of progress falls away for periods of time when teachers' expectations are not sufficiently demanding, resulting in pupils waiting for direction rather than learning through their own initiative.
- The teaching of reading is very effective, as seen in pupils' good achievement. Successful routines for all classes, such as guided reading, are key aspects of this success. Higher standards in reading are having a positive impact on writing, as are other initiatives such as encouraging pupils to extend the time spent on perfecting their writing.
- Mathematics teaching is good. The development of good basic number-work and accurate understanding of mathematical terminology helps pupils to build a firm base for problem solving.
- Progress information, scrutiny of pupils' work and visits to lessons indicate that teaching is effective in both the mixed ability and the streamed classes.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils are making good progress from their different starting points. Achievement is much better in writing and mathematics than last year. This reflects good teaching and the effective use of performance information to provide appropriate support when underachievement is identified.
- In reading, spelling, punctuation and grammar, progress is good, leading to above-average standards of attainment.
- Pupils refer to their enjoyment in carrying out practical science, which enhances their learning of the subject. In computing lessons, they learn programming skills successfully, such as by manipulating a robotic arm. They are developing effective skills and understanding in the wider curriculum, in art, physical education and gymnastics knowledge. They learn well in history and geography because of interesting and effective teaching.
- The school's tracking information suggests that the current Year 6 is on course for broadly average or above-average attainment at the end of the year in all aspects of English and mathematics. This compares well with the broadly average picture in 2014.
- The progress made by pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is good. They achieve as well as their peers. The progress of White British pupils, a group who underachieved last year, has been tracked carefully. As a result of the additional support they receive, they show similar progress to their peers.
- The most able are also making much better progress, achieving higher standards. They achieve well

because teachers know who these pupils are and provide appropriate additional support to meet their needs. Occasionally in lessons, when work set is not sufficiently challenging, they slow down and do not achieve as well as they should.

- Writing standards have improved because pupils build on their good standards of reading, punctuation, spelling and grammar, and because teachers provide more opportunities to write at length. An ongoing emphasis to improve upon a legacy of poor writing and an inconsistent approach to handwriting and its presentation is proving effective. However, writing in subjects other than English is not always of the same standard.
- The school takes care to ensure that the support given to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is based on identifying their specific needs, rather than just achievement. Case studies show they make accelerated progress as a result of good teaching and specialist support, for example, through well-considered speech and language intervention. In the 2014 national assessments, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others narrowed substantially from the previous year. Compared with other pupils at the school, disadvantaged pupils were about three months behind overall, five months in mathematics, one month in writing and two months in grammar, punctuation and spelling. All pupils had similar reading outcomes. Compared with other pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were about four months behind overall, four months for mathematics, seven months in writing, and two months in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Again standards were similar for reading. The school's tracking information shows further improvement this year as interventions take effect.
- Almost all parents responding through the online questionnaire indicated that they considered their children to be making good progress. Their views are corroborated by lesson observations and work scrutiny.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139115
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	449818

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	336
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Rob Radcliffe
Headteacher	Lee Mason-Ellis (executive headteacher), Sarah Moncaster (headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01322 431404
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