

Bickleigh Down C of E (V A) Primary School

School Drive, Woolwell, Plymouth, PL6 7JW

Inspection dates

25–26 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. They make a good start in the early years provision and then continue to make good progress in the rest of the school.
- Pupils' attainment has been rising and is now broadly average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics, with some groups of pupils attaining above average results.
- Teaching is consistently good and lessons are active and enjoyable. Teachers plan purposeful activities that motivate pupils well and help them to learn new skills quickly.
- The happy atmosphere in the school reflects the way that leaders value and respect all members of the school community, keeping to the school's ethos and values.
- Sport is of a high standard and has a positive impact on pupils' determination to do well, contributing to the pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Good leadership and management since the last inspection mean that the school continues to improve quickly. Senior leaders have made the development needs of the staff a priority so that they fulfil their roles well.
- The governing body is knowledgeable about the school and how pupils' achievement and teaching are improving. It provides good challenge and support to other leaders.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and their attitudes to learning are strong. They behave very well, are polite and courteous, and work hard. They feel extremely safe and parents agree that the school is a safe place to learn.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teachers are slow to notice when pupils are ready to move on to a more difficult task and so progress slows.
- Written advice about how pupils can improve their work is not always precise enough and pupils do not have enough chances to act on that advice.
- Curriculum planning is not always explicit enough in helping pupils to understand life in modern Britain.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons and parts of lessons, four jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other leaders in the school including the Church School distinctiveness leader, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, and with parents and pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the 31 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the views of parents from informal discussions at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors considered school leaders' plans for school improvement, as well as information about pupils' progress. They also listened to some pupils read and looked at planning and monitoring documents, and records relating to behaviour and attendance. They also scrutinised safeguarding procedures and examples of the targets teachers are given as part of the management of their performance.
- The inspection team analysed the 31 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Julie Jane, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Roy Souter	Additional Inspector
George Long	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bickleigh Down Church of England Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has been taking part in a Targeted Intervention and Support Programme run by the local authority to support school improvement and has received guidance from a National Leader of Education.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. There are no pupils in the care of the local authority in the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is low. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The early years provision for children is full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress made by all pupils by:
 - giving more consistent and effective comments when teachers mark pupils' books, and planning time in lessons so that pupils have more opportunities to respond to these comments
 - ensuring that teachers monitor and question pupils' responses to teachers' marking in books
 - making sure that teachers respond quickly in lessons when pupils show that they are ready to move on in their learning.
- Improve the curriculum so that planning explicitly prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life in modern Britain, actively promoting fundamental British values.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

are good

- Following the previous inspection leaders and managers, in partnership with governors, have taken effective action to raise standards and make sure pupils benefit from a good education.
- The high aspirations of the headteacher for his pupils are shared by the staff. A new structure in the senior leadership team has developed the skills of the middle leaders. They understand their roles well in helping the school to get better. Achievement has improved because of the effective way in which they have shared their expertise.
- Leaders and managers have benefited from the targeted support of the local authority, including the work they have undertaken with a National Leader of Education. They are aspirational for the school's continued improvement and their plans for its future development are appropriate.
- Senior leaders make very good use of data to check that all groups do as well as they can. They ensure that pupils who are in danger of falling behind receive support to help them catch up. Leaders check the accuracy of school assessments by sharing information across year groups.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection because of the effective training that teachers have had, as well as through challenging targets they are set as part of the management of their performance. All staff now have high expectations of pupils' achievements.
- The school works well with parents. Nearly all those who responded on the online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to others.
- The school's system for safeguarding pupils is strong and meets statutory requirements. The school is vigilant in making sure that all pupils are safe from harm. Pupils say there is no bullying in the school and know what to do if they are worried about anything. Attendance is steadily improving as a result of monitoring by senior leaders.
- Pupils enjoy their learning. The school has prepared very well for the introduction of the new curriculum (topics and subjects taught). Visits out into the local area bring learning alive, and pupils say they enjoy these most. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is well developed and they show understanding and compassion for each other as well as British values of respect, forgiveness and honesty, linked to the school's five core values. Pupils' understanding of the range of religious and ethnic heritages represented in modern Britain, however, is not explicitly planned into the curriculum carefully enough to prepare pupils for later life in modern Britain.
- The additional funding for sport has been used very effectively to introduce a variety of new sports and to improve the skills of teachers. There is a very strong focus on improving pupils' lifestyles and their physical well-being, as well as competing in a wide range of high-level competitions across the county.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are clearly ambitious for the school and provide a good balance of challenge and support to leaders. They are aware of how the school compares with other schools both nationally and locally and prepare questions in advance of meetings to help them understand the achievement and progress of groups of pupils. Governors also make regular visits to the school to check this for themselves. They are now able to judge the quality of provision and the impact on pupils' achievement objectively. For example, they identified priorities for improving girls' writing and closing some gaps in attainment between some pupils. Governors know the quality of teaching has improved and they regularly check that teachers have the training they need to get even better. They have established good links between pay and performance, and ensure that only good and outstanding teaching is rewarded financially. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
- Finances are well managed. Governors monitor closely the use of additional pupil premium funding to make sure that it is well spent, ensuring that it is used to close the gaps in attainment between eligible pupils and that of others. Decisions about the use of primary school sport funding have also been effective in raising standards and increasing opportunities in physical education.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- There is an exceptionally welcoming atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils take pride in their school and are very polite and well mannered to each other and adults. They are expected to behave well and

they do.

- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They use their initiative and discuss tasks together very well so that little time is lost in beginning activities. Pupils respond very positively to the high expectations of them in lessons.
- The behaviour and attitudes of all pupils make a powerful contribution to their own learning and are crucial to the progress they make as they move through the school.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is outstanding. During the inspection, older pupils waited in silence to enter the lunch hall so that they would not disturb the learning of younger pupils who had started back into lessons.
- Pupils take the roles and responsibilities they are given very seriously. Playleaders have a very positive effect on playground behaviour and safety, while other responsibilities, such as serving on the school council and becoming sports leaders, provide excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their personal and social skills outside the classroom.
- Governors are right to observe that behaviour is an area of strength of the school, acknowledging that it reflects the school's core values.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and have a very clear idea of how to keep themselves safe in different situations, such as on the internet. They have a very good understanding of the many different forms of bullying but say that it does not happen in school. Parents and staff are very positive about the school's ability to keep their children safe.
- The school's records over time show that there are very few exclusions or racist incidents and incidents of bad behaviour are rare. Parents and staff agree that the exemplary behaviour seen during the inspection is typical. Parents have complete confidence in staff to sort out immediately any issues that might worry them.
- Attendance is improving and is now well above the national average. Senior leaders have taken effective steps working with families to bring about regular attendance and to make sure pupils are punctual to school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection and, as a result, all groups of pupils are making better progress.
- Pupils who have been identified as needing extra help, including the most able, those who are struggling with their work and those who are disabled or have special educational needs, are given support to help them improve. Skilled guidance from teachers and teaching assistants make a good contribution to the learning of these pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and reading, writing and mathematics are taught well. Teachers use good subject knowledge when questioning pupils. The extra challenge from these questions helps to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Pupils respond well, for example, when they discuss their learning with each other. They benefit from hearing each other's ideas. This is particularly the case in mathematics where their discussions enable them to explore their ideas at a deeper level, helping them to learn well.
- Pupils recognise that the comments teachers write when they mark their books help them to improve their work but they say they are not given the time to respond to this marking. This means that they do not consistently practise and apply the advice given to them about what they need to do next, particularly when not all teachers give pupils precise next steps. This means that pupils are not always able to learn from their mistakes and improve the quality of their work.
- Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils. They plan work that is engaging and builds successfully on pupils' positive attitudes towards learning. While work is usually at the right level of challenge for most pupils, some are ready to move on more quickly before the teacher has been able to assess their learning and set them new tasks.
- The school makes regular and rigorous checks on pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers use this information to set work that is generally not too easy or too difficult. Pupils say they are encouraged to work out for themselves what they have to do next. If they get stuck, they confidently access the wide range of resources available to help them before asking for extra help.

- Parents are pleased with the quality of teaching in the school. They agree that teachers plan homework that is fun and helps pupils improve their work.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- From the time children start school in the Reception year, they achieve well, although this has not always been the case in previous years. Attainment has now risen to broadly average or above for most groups of pupils by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards in mathematics have recently been below those in reading and writing. However, the actions taken last year have been effective in addressing this. In 2014, progress in mathematics in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were better than in both reading and writing. Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics showed an improvement on previous years' results.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics (sounds that letters make) check at the end of Year 1 is above average. Pupils know the sounds and use their understanding to build unfamiliar words.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding make progress which is at least good. This is because the support they receive meets their needs. The gap between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school is narrowing slightly, although they achieve less well than other pupils in the school and nationally. However, the standards they reach in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with similar pupils nationally.
- The most able pupils achieve well, particularly in mathematics, and standards are now broadly in line with national expectations for those achieving the higher levels in Years 2 and 6. They make good progress because they have been challenged more effectively since the last inspection.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their different starting points, in line with their classmates and other pupils nationally. This is because of additional support from skilled teaching assistants who help these pupils tackle their work successfully.
- Pupils read confidently across all year groups. Inspectors found that younger pupils use their secure knowledge of the sounds that letters make to read unknown words, while older pupils read confidently for a wide range of purposes. The school has recently introduced a new reading scheme and pupils now have very positive attitudes towards reading and choose books at a good level for their ability. The standard of reading is high.

The early years provision

is good

- When children start in the Reception class, their skills are broadly typical for their age, while a few are slightly above those typically found for their age. Parents at the 'Walk in Wednesdays' sessions say their children settle well because every effort is made to ensure that parents are part of the learning process and kept well informed of their learning every step of the way.
- Learning journeys evidence children's development on entry to school, and include parents' contributions to this assessment. Parents are encouraged to support and share information about their children's learning and development at home, and this is included in school records across the year.
- During their year in Reception, the children make good or rapid progress. By the time they leave, a higher than average proportion are at a good level of development and well prepared for Year 1. This number is increasing year on year.
- There is a very happy atmosphere in the early years provision. Teachers plan exciting and interesting activities which successfully meet the needs of most children. During the inspection the children were particularly excited about a visit from the local fire brigade, and activities within the classroom such as small world, construction and role play were linked to this visit.
- Children are motivated and interested in a broad range of activities. The teaching of phonics to read unknown words is particularly effective and all adults are particularly skilled in this area of learning. Children listen carefully to adults and each other.
- Children enjoy learning both indoors and outdoors. Both areas are very well resourced and activities are stimulating and well matched to their needs and abilities. All adults observe carefully and the questions they ask help all children, including those with identified needs, develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Children are taught how to think about safety matters. Careful observations of children at work and play ensure that everything possible is done to keep them safe.

- Provision is well led and managed. The new leader has a clear understanding of what needs improving, and is taking action to improve provision so that children's achievement over time is increased. Adults have created an environment where learning is celebrated and highly valued.

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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	113493
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	451250

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	398
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Cannon
Headteacher	Martin Hancock
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 July 2013
Telephone number	01752 301837
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