

Beckley Church of England Primary School

Main Street, Beckley, East Sussex, TN31 6RN

Inspection dates 13–14 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils, staff and parents and carers are proud of their school and value the caring, family ethos.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children get off to a successful start in the Reception Year and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan motivating lessons that pupils find interesting. They enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities, and as a result have good attitudes to learning.
- Leaders and all staff strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All pupils work well together and show high levels of respect to all adults and other pupils.
- Pupils feel safe and behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Parents and carers have very positive views of the school and feel their children are happy, safe and cared for well.
- The acting headteachers and the governing body are providing a clear steer and have made considerable improvements in a short space of time including raising expectations and improving punctuality and attendance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently outstanding to ensure pupils' attainment is higher.
- Work is sometimes not challenging enough to ensure that pupils always make the progress
- Pupils' achievement in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics.

they are capable of, particularly those who have the potential to reach higher levels.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons and part lessons, talked to pupils about their work and listened to pupils read from Year 2 and Year 6.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteachers, the senior teacher, other staff with key leadership responsibilities, groups of pupils and governors. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's own check on its performance including the quality of teaching, the school improvement plan, information on pupils' progress and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector took account of 39 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to some parents and carers at the start of the day. She also looked at nine questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average although in previous years has been above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, in the care of the local authority or from service families, is below average. There are currently no pupils who are in care or from service families.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a Reception class. There are three other classes, each with pupils from two year groups. Two of the four class teachers were appointed at the beginning of the school year.
- Since January 2014, the school is being led and managed by two acting headteachers while the governing body seeks to appoint a substantive headteacher. Both acting headteachers are from the Rye Academy Trust. One is the executive principal of the Trust and a Local Leader of Education and supports another local primary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to raise achievement, move teaching to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - expectations are consistently high and work is sufficiently challenging so that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable and reach their potential
 - progress in writing improves to match that in reading and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start at school with skills and knowledge at the expected levels for their age. They make good progress in the Reception Year and the proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the time they start in Year 1 is above average.
- Small and fluctuating numbers in each year group mean that published data need to be interpreted with caution because one pupil can represent a high percentage of the total.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, standards have been improving over the past three years and are above average, particularly in reading and writing.
- Apart from a dip in 2012, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have been above average over time. The results of the 2013 national tests and assessments were the highest for the past three years. All pupils made the expected progress from their starting points and reached at least the expected levels of attainment for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Achievement is not outstanding because expectations for the standards pupils can achieve from their starting points have not always been high enough. Leaders have correctly identified, for example, that some pupils throughout the school have already reached their end of year attainment targets. Leaders are taking effective action to remedy this through rigorous tracking of pupils' progress, raising expectations for achievement and targeting individual pupils to reach the higher Levels 5 and 6 by the end of Year 6.
- The very few disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do well compared to similar pupils nationally but currently some are not always making as rapid progress as others in the school. Progress is similar to others in that they do better in reading and mathematics than they do in writing.
- In 2013 only a very small number of pupils in the Year 6 group were supported by the pupil premium. Their attainment was around six months ahead of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupil premium funding is generally used well to support individual pupils in all year groups and currently, some in this relatively small group are making better progress than their peers. However, in Years 5 and 6, they are not making as rapid progress as others in reading and writing.
- In the 2013 Year 1 phonics screening check (linking sounds and letters), the proportion of pupils reaching the expected result was just below average. The school investigated the reason for this and found that the most able readers were trying to make sense of the 'made up' words. Effective action has been taken to remedy this. Reading for enjoyment is promoted well across the school. Small-group guided reading sessions help the older pupils develop higher-level reading skills.
- Achievement in writing has not been as strong as in reading or mathematics. Fewer pupils make more than expected progress to reach the higher Level 5 in writing than in reading or mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils clearly enjoy learning and achieve well. Teachers expect pupils to take a pride in their work and are good role models by making sure that their classrooms are attractive and tidy, lessons start promptly and displays are motivating and support teaching and learning well.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in getting pupils to explain their thinking. Pupils have time to discuss their views and opinions and learn from each other.
- There are positive relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils and as a result, pupils want to do well and are prepared to work hard. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and work effectively with class teachers. They provide good

support for individuals or small groups.

- Teachers mostly provide motivating lessons that engage pupils well. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 thoroughly enjoyed a day during the inspection devoted to cooking and preparing a range of healthy food, drawing on their previous work on healthy living. They worked together well acquiring a good level of skills and knowledge across a range of subjects.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do particularly well when given scope to use their skills in imaginative ways. They had great fun organising puppet shows with purposeful opportunities to use communication, language and literacy and number skills.
- Teachers prepare work and learning opportunities for pupils of different abilities but this is not always done effectively enough, particularly to challenge and extend the learning of the most able pupils. Therefore pupils' progress is not always as fast as it could be from their starting points to enable them to reach their full potential.
- There are some excellent examples of marking that help pupils know what they need to do to improve their work as well as giving opportunities to evaluate their own and others' progress in meeting their targets for learning. This, however, is not at the same level of quality in all classes and a few pupils are not clear enough about what their targets are.
- Reading is taught well. Skills are taught and are balanced with developing a love of reading for pleasure. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 who had been working on exploring traditional tales were not only thrilled to come to school on the last day of term dressed up as their favourite characters, but could talk with confidence about favourite stories and express opinions about what it was they liked. They spent the day on a variety of activities linked to the theme and made very good progress in their literacy and wider skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. They behave well in lessons and around the school and when they are working with teachers, teaching assistants or other adults. School records show that this is typical of behaviour over time.
- Sometimes behaviour is exemplary as, for example, during a whole-school assembly where pupils and parents and carers watched a dance performance given by Years 5 and 6 pupils and celebrated the achievement and attendance awards.
- Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy coming to school as reflected in their improved punctuality and attendance, which is above average. They are polite, caring, considerate and respectful and get on very well with each other. Pupils and parents and carers said how much they appreciate the family atmosphere in the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for in school and the school helps them to understand how they can be responsible for being healthy and staying safe in and out of school. All parents and carers who responded to Parent View agree that their children are happy at school and feel safe. Almost all think children are well looked after and behave well. These views are supported by the inspection findings.
- Pupils say there is no bullying in school, but they are confident that should any incidents occur, staff would deal with them promptly and fairly. They have a good awareness however, that bullying can take different forms, including name calling, and physical and cyber bullying.

The leadership and management are good

- In a short space of time, the acting headteachers have built on the school's existing strengths and identified clear priorities for further improvement. They have taken rapid and effective action to raise expectations for the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement.
- Despite the recent changes in staffing and leadership, there is strong teamwork in the school and staff morale is high. Pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers have every confidence

in the acting headteachers. Parents and carers are very supportive and extremely positive about the school.

- The acting headteachers are relentless and passionate in their drive to provide the best possible outcomes for pupils. They are well supported by the senior teacher, staff, parents and carers and governors who share the same vision and ambition for the school and its pupils.
- The impact of good leadership is shown, for example, in the higher expectations resulting in better progress and improving attainment as well as improved attendance. This demonstrates the school's capacity for further improvement. However, leadership and management are not outstanding because, despite an improving picture for pupils currently in the school, achievement and teaching are not yet outstanding.
- Senior and middle leaders make a positive contribution to whole-school improvement as well as providing skills and expertise in their particular areas of responsibility. For example, the expertise of a specialist mathematics teacher has raised the profile of mathematics in the school and enhanced the skills of colleagues and pupils. Many pupils said that mathematics was their favourite subject because it was fun and interesting.
- The school provides a broad and varied range of subjects that meets the interest of pupils well. A variety of clubs, visits and visitors also provide memorable experiences for pupils, including a residential visit to an environmental centre for older pupils.
- The school ensures equal opportunities and all pupils have access to the full range of subjects and learn in a supportive, caring ethos without fear of any type of discrimination. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum, the school's values and the strong links with the church, and underpins all the school's work.
- The school is using the primary school sports funding in a variety of ways. These include the provision of specialist sports coaches to improve pupils' skills and, through working alongside teachers, improving their skills to sustain improvement in the long term. The school has also increased the range of sports available to pupils in after-school clubs. These initiatives are contributing positively to pupils' well-being and health.
- The background and track record of the acting headteachers have enabled various partnerships to be formed, which are helping to improve outcomes for pupils and benefiting the professional development of teachers.
- The local authority has in the past provided 'light touch' support to the school but has increased its involvement to work with the current leaders.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and improvement priorities and knows how well the school is doing compared to the national picture. There is a positive and productive relationship with the acting headteachers. Governors are ambitious for the school and determined to appoint a new headteacher with the right qualities to drive forward school improvement and retain the special qualities of the school. Under the recently appointed new Chair of the Governing Body, the governing body has reviewed the way in which it works and determined how best to increase its effectiveness in holding the school to account for its performance. Governors have a good awareness of the school's pay and promotion processes and check the performance of staff and the quality of teaching. There is a good awareness of how the school is using its pupil premium and sports funding and the impact this has on outcomes for pupils. Governors make sure that safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements so that pupils and staff are safe.

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	114490
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	431806

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Chalk
Headteacher	Ann Cockerham/Philippa Gasson
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 January 2011
Telephone number	01797 260324
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