

Bayford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ashdene Road, Bayford, Hertford SG13 8PX

Inspection dates 10–11 February 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher’s highly successful leadership has been central to the improvement in the school since the last inspection.
- School leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection. It is now typically good.
- Throughout the school, pupils are making at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers’ marking of pupils’ work in English and mathematics is effective because they consistently follow the school policy.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are taught in a nurturing environment and activities are interesting.
- The school’s curriculum provides rich opportunities for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical well-being.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and are respectful towards one another.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and as a result they enjoy coming to school.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now above average.
- Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They provide a good level of challenge to senior leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always expect enough of some pupils. As a result, they are not making accelerated progress.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- The high-quality teaching and learning seen in mathematics and English are not always evident in other National Curriculum subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress of all pupils in mathematics and English by making sure that all learning activities are sufficiently demanding.
- Make use of the strong practices seen in the delivery of mathematics and English to improve the quality of teaching and learning in other National Curriculum subjects, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers expect the same high quality of work and standard of presentation in these subjects
 - ensuring that all teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills
 - ensuring that pupils make the necessary corrections to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The school has improved since the last inspection because the senior leaders and governors have high expectations for all pupils. The headteacher's thorough and systematic approach to the development of the school has ensured that improvements in teaching, learning and leadership are secure and sustainable.
- An overwhelming majority of staff working in the school at the time of the last inspection believe the school has improved. The headteacher has the confidence of his staff who share the leaders' high expectations for pupils to achieve their very best.
- The school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate. The headteacher and governors have used the local authority to validate their evaluation. Clear priorities for development have been identified.
- Senior leaders meet regularly to track and review pupils' progress. They report their findings to the governing body who effectively challenge senior leaders. Pupils who are making slower progress or falling behind with their learning are identified and provided with the support they need. As a result, these pupils go on to make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is monitored using a variety of information, including pupils' progress. Teachers are held to account for their performance. They are expected to meet their performance targets and provided with support and training in order to do so. If targets are not met, then pay increases are not awarded.
- Leaders have been highly successful in improving attendance. The proportion of parents who take their children on holiday during term time has reduced considerably. Persistent absence has moved from above to below average.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding appropriately to ensure that the small number of disadvantaged pupils achieve academically and have full access to school trips and visits. As a result, they achieve at least as well as their classmates.
- The school appropriately uses the primary sports funding to train teachers to deliver sports lessons and to employ a full-time sports coach. They are also part of Hertford Schools Sports Partnership which provides the opportunity for pupils to participate in sports competitions. Pupils enjoy their sports lessons and are proud of their achievements.
- The school provides a well-balanced curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has focused on improving the quality of the mathematics and English curriculum. This means that the teaching in other subjects is not so well developed. Science teaching is showing strong improvement. Pupils are developing both their scientific knowledge and enquiry skills. Pupils are taught French and music by specialist teachers.
- British values and the school's values of courage, appreciation, respect, peace, responsibility and love are threaded through school life. During the inspection, pupils in Key Stage 1 were learning about the development of the National Health Service. Each year, pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 elect members from their class to be on the school council. These pupils are very proud of their work and of what they have achieved; for example, improved facilities in the toilets, better play equipment and improved safety of the playground.
- The school caters very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to celebrate the achievements of one another and learn about other cultures and faiths. The daily prayer is often written, and then read by the author. The other pupils listen and show respect during this time. The curriculum is enriched through trips, visiting speakers and after-school clubs.
- Subject leaders have had a positive impact on improving standards within their subjects. Alongside senior leaders they monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. They have an accurate understanding of the strengths within their subject areas and have accurately identified what needs to happen to eliminate weaknesses.
- School leaders have worked closely with the local authority since the last inspection. They have supported the school by providing training for subject leaders and teachers and also kept a close eye on the rate of progress. The local authority recognises the positive changes that the school has made since the last inspection.
- Most parents feel that the school is well led and managed. Parents who spoke to the inspector were mostly complementary about the school and acknowledged the improvements made since the last inspection.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Since the last inspection, governors have undertaken a review of their work – leading to a restructuring of roles. They are now an effective group, determined to ensure that the school continues to improve.

- Governors review the school improvement plan and use this to measure progress on a regular basis. They understand pupil progress information and how the school is performing compared to other schools nationally.
- Governors understand how the pupil premium and sports funding is spent and the impact that these are having on pupils' outcomes.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because they participate in activities that allow them to review the school at work. For example, looking at pupils' books to make sure that the marking policy is being followed and talking to pupils about their experiences in the school.
- Governors ensure that staff performance management is carried out appropriately. They review pay awards and ensure that strong performance is recognised and take appropriate measures to tackle underperformance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and given high priority within the school. Clear systems are in place and staff know the procedures that they should take if they have concerns about a child. Staff unanimously agree that pupils are safe in the school.
- The school ensures that all the appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers to ensure that they are suitable to fulfil their role. New staff quickly receive the appropriate training, which is regularly updated. Governors check staff training records to ensure that every action is taken to keep pupils safe. Leaders are alert to the potential risks pupils face from modern day issues such as extremism and radicalisation.
- Governors regularly check school policies relating to child welfare and safety and the central record of staff and volunteers. The identity of all visitors to the school is checked and they are provided with information about safeguarding.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- School leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching. Evidence in pupils' books, direct observations of pupils' learning, and progress information indicate that teaching is now typically good.
- Teachers use their knowledge of their pupils to plan activities that interest and engage pupils in their learning. Lessons start promptly because pupils are eager to learn.
- Teaching assistants are very effective in supporting pupils with their learning. The inspector saw many examples where teaching assistants asked questions which made pupils think about their learning or enabled pupils to complete a task because they checked that the pupils understood what they had to do.
- Most teachers use questioning effectively to check and develop pupils' understanding.
- Reading is well taught. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to help pupils develop their phonics (letters that sounds make) skills quickly. As a result, most pupils read well and with a high degree of confidence.
- Guided reading lessons provide the opportunity for pupils to further develop their reading and comprehension skills. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 told the inspector that they enjoyed these lessons because the activities were interesting and helped them with other subjects.
- Mathematics is taught well. Teachers make sure that pupils use mathematical terms correctly; for example pupils in Years 1 and 2 were using the terms numerator and denominator correctly. Pupils are taught to use a wide range of resources, such as times tables squares and fractions walls, to help them with their calculations. Pupils' books show that pupils have the opportunity to solve mathematical problems and use their skills in other subjects, especially science.
- The standard of writing has improved across the school. The school has adopted a new handwriting policy and the inspector saw evidence of this having an impact on the neatness of pupils' handwriting. Pupils' writing has also improved in terms of quality and quantity. Each week, a small number of pupils are judged to be 'super star' writers. The work of these pupils is shared with others during an assembly and displayed in the school hall. Pupils value this recognition of their work.
- Homework is set regularly according to the school policy and almost all pupils complete their homework. Some pupils and parents felt they would like more homework to be set.
- All teachers follow the school's marking and feedback policy consistently. This means that pupils receive clear guidance on the strengths of their work and what they need to do to improve their work. In English and mathematics, teachers all ensure that pupils make the necessary corrections to their work. This practice is not so consistent in other National Curriculum subjects.
- There are occasions when teachers do not set work that is sufficiently demanding enough or do not quickly

move pupils on to the harder work.

- The high-quality teaching and learning seen in mathematics and English is not always seen in other National Curriculum subjects. When looking through pupils' exercise books in other subjects, the inspector noted that on occasions teachers did not insist on the same high standards.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. This is because there are clear strategies in place to support pupils. Pupils say they feel safe in school. A group of pupils told the inspectors that they are safe in school because 'there are always adults around to look after us'.
- Pupils know that they will be listened to if they have any concerns, or they can use the 'worry boxes'. Pupils say they rarely used these boxes because there was 'always someone to listen to us'. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 said they feel safe because, 'We are a family. Like a family we look after one another.'
- The school works closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs or disability receive the support they need in order to make progress in their learning.
- Pupils are well informed about the possible dangers when using the internet and social media. They talked confidently about these dangers and the steps they must take to keep themselves safe. Pupils receive advice and guidance on other aspects of keeping safe as part of their personal, social and health education lessons and from visiting speakers.
- Leaders involve pupils of all ages in discussions about safety and behaviour rules. As a result, pupils understand the rules. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong but understand that sometimes pupils make the wrong choices.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are based on respect and understanding, hence relationships are positive. From Reception Year, pupils are encouraged to take risks with their learning, to develop independence and to take responsibility. As they grow older, pupils' self-confidence grows. Year 6 pupils are well prepared to start secondary school.
- Pupils enjoy the lunchtime and after-school clubs which are contributing to their healthy lifestyles and social development.
- The school is an inclusive community and pupils are taught to value individuals and their differences. Pupils say that 'Everyone is accepted here. We are a Church of England School but you don't have to be a Christian. We accept everyone; it doesn't matter what their race, religion or colour is.'
- As part of their guided reading sessions, pupils are encouraged to read *The Children's Newspaper*. Pupils therefore have opportunities to discuss current and world affairs. Pupils say they enjoy reading these newspapers because articles are written so they can understand them. They have the chance to talk about events that interest them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils display positive attitudes towards learning. This is best seen when they are given work that challenges them as they are highly motivated to succeed. While there are occasions when a few pupils may lose attention, lessons are very rarely disrupted.
- The conduct and behaviour of pupils around the school is exemplary. They are considerate and respectful towards one another. Pupils of all ages play together at break and lunchtime. Older pupils display high levels of self-discipline.
- Pupils look smart and are proud of their school uniform and their school. They respect the school environment.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare but that it does happen. Pupils told the inspector that 'nobody has been bullied for ages'. The pupils are all confident that if bullying happens it is dealt with quickly by staff. This view is shared by the large majority of parents.
- Attendance is high because almost all pupils said how much they enjoy coming to school.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Children enter Nursery and Reception with skills and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. As a result of effective assessment and good teaching, pupils make good progress and achieve well. For the last

two years, the proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development in all areas has been above average. Children are therefore well prepared for Key Stage 1.

- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. Evidence seen in lessons and pupils' exercise books shows that these pupils are all making progress that is similar to or better than their classmates. The number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group is small so it is not possible to comment on how the attainment of pupils in Year 6 compares with their peers without risk of identifying them.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress from their starting points. This is because they receive support that is carefully targeted to their needs.
- Most-able pupils typically make at least the progress that is expected of them in all subjects.
- Pupils make good progress with reading. For the last two years, the proportion of pupils meeting the threshold in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been above average. Pupils in the current Year 1 are on track to attain similar results. Intervention for pupils who fall behind with their reading is timely and effective as they soon catch up. Older pupils read confidently with understanding and enjoyment.
- Progress in mathematics is good and improving. Books show that pupils can use different methods to solve problems and have the opportunity to deepen their mathematical understanding through interesting problem-solving activities.
- Pupils make good progress in writing. Work in pupils' books is of a high standard. They are taught to use a dictionary and thesaurus to support them with their spelling and develop their vocabulary. Standards of punctuation and grammar are improving and older pupils use sophisticated grammar to convey meaning to the reader. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use and develop these skills in other subjects.
- During the last two years, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Key Stage 1 and 2 tests has been in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils making expected progress met or exceeded national figures but the proportion of those making better than expected progress has been variable in mathematics and reading. Pupils leave the school well prepared for secondary school.
- The progress of pupils in other subjects had been slower than in mathematics and English. Work in pupils' books shows that progress is improving in other subjects, especially in science.

Early years provision

is good

- Provision is good because adults know the children well. Staff communicate effectively with the adjoining pre-school and parents before children start in the nursery. Parents are involved in the initial assessment of their child and contribute to their learning diary throughout the year.
- Children learn in a safe and nurturing environment. Staff listen to the children and praise them for their achievements. Children are enthusiastic, happy learners who engage in their learning because activities are well matched to their stage of development, experiences and interests.
- Teachers encourage the children to think and solve problems. For example, a group of children making a rocket from construction blocks decided it was taller than the headteacher. With the help of the adult they were able to work out how to stand it up and compare the height with that of the headteacher. The children were very excited that they were right.
- All children make at least good progress from their starting points in all areas of their learning because they are encouraged to try unfamiliar activities. One parent commented that her child had gained in confidence since he joined the nursery and discovered a love of drawing.
- At the time of the inspection, the school received no additional early years pupil premium funding.
- Since the last inspection the school has improved the outdoor area. It is now a stimulating learning environment and staff plan learning challenges that allow pupils to develop their physical skills.
- Children are well behaved and know how to stay safe. Children in Nursery mix well with the older children in Reception and they work well together and help one another with their learning. The inspector saw many examples of pupils supporting one another with their learning.
- The early years is well led and managed. The leader has a clear understanding of the strengths of the provision and knows what needs to be done to further improve the learning experiences of the children. Parents who expressed a view were happy with their child's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	117387
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10009146

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Kotting
Headteacher	Jonathan Preston
Telephone number	01992 511259
Website	www.bayford.herts.sch.uk
Email address	admin@bayford.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 February 2014

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from a White British background and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below the national average.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-aged classes from Nursery to Year 6.
- The early years provides part-time Nursery education and full-time education for children in the Reception class.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in each class. She visited eight lessons to observe learning, talk to pupils about their work and to review work in pupils' books across a range of subjects. The headteacher accompanied her for all of these activities.
- The inspector listened to a group of Year 2 and Year 3 pupils read and talked to them about their reading. She also talked to pupils from Years 5 and 6 about their reading experiences.
- The inspector visited one assembly.
- A formal discussion was held with a group of pupils, along with informal conversations with others at break and lunchtime.
- A range of documents were examined, including the school's analysis of its own work and its improvement plan, information on pupils' academic progress, and documents relating to the quality of teaching, staff training, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the early years' leader, English and mathematics leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and four members of the governing body. The inspector also held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 82 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. She also spoke with a number of parents informally at the start and end of the school day.
- The inspector received and considered the views of the nine staff and 13 pupils that completed questionnaires.

Inspection team

Caroline Parody, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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