

Beechwood Primary School

Ambleside Close, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire RG5 4JJ

Inspection dates

22–23 May 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Since the last inspection, standards across the school have declined.
- Newly appointed leaders are now taking action to tackle the situation, but this is too recent to have had a measurable impact on teaching, learning and assessment, and outcomes.
- Middle leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate. Too often pupils' misconceptions are not addressed quickly enough.
- Too often work for pupils is not challenging enough, particularly for the most able pupils. This leads to pupils losing concentration and becoming distracted from their learning.
- As a result of poor teaching, weak assessment practice and low expectations, pupils across the school are not making enough progress from their starting points, and the presentation of their work is often poor.
- There are significant weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupil premium funding is spent effectively. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are not achieving the standards of which they are capable.
- Too many disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent from school.
- Parents are not kept well informed about their children's progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The interim headteacher, interim executive board (IEB) and the local authority have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Recent actions taken by the interim headteacher and the IEB have had a demonstrable impact on the effectiveness of early years and safeguarding.
- Leaders have implemented robust policies and procedures to ensure that safeguarding is effective.
- In the early years, well-planned activities excite and engage children, enabling them to make more progress.
- Pupils conduct themselves in a calm, orderly way in and around the school.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders check that pupil premium funding improves outcomes for disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that leadership at all levels is effective in bringing about school improvement.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make at least good progress and behave consistently well by:
 - establishing a culture of high expectations
 - ensuring that pupils take pride in the presentation of their work
 - ensuring that learning is set appropriately for pupils of all abilities
 - improving assessment procedures so that they are accurate and effective
 - ensuring that pupils' misconceptions are addressed swiftly.
- Improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of the early years by:
 - planning learning opportunities for children to develop their skills in the outdoor area
 - improving communication with parents.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, standards across the school have declined. There are currently significant weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and too many pupils are making inadequate progress.
- The recently appointed interim headteacher has accurately evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses. She knows the school well and has set high expectations. She has correctly identified the priorities for improvement and is actively committed to improving the school as a matter of urgency.
- The interim headteacher has wasted no time in implementing changes to tackle weaknesses in teaching and learning across the school. The actions taken, however, are very recent and they are not fully embedded. As a result, they have not made a substantial difference to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, or to outcomes for pupils, which are inadequate.
- The interim headteacher is being supported effectively by a national leader for education (NLE) and an IEB. Together, they have implemented robust, effective changes to improve the effectiveness of the early years. These changes have had a demonstrable impact on standards. There have been improvements in the quality of teaching in the early years and this is creating noticeable benefits for the children's learning.
- Recent actions taken by senior leaders have also resulted in significant developments in the effectiveness of safeguarding. Due to improved procedures and robust training for all staff, safeguarding is now effective.
- The recently appointed special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has taken some steps to improve the quality of provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. However, leaders have not measured the progress that these pupils are making.
- Leaders have not made effective use of pupil premium funding in order to remove barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, these pupils are not making enough progress from their starting points. Although the interim headteacher and the IEB have begun to take action to address this, the impact of their actions is not yet measurable.
- Middle leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. As a result, they are not having sufficient influence in raising standards across the school.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils are taught a range of subjects that support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and promote their understanding of British values. They provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enrich the wider curriculum, for example opportunities to represent the school in competitive sporting events. Pupils and parents welcome the opportunities that this offers.
- Many parents welcome the recent changes and improvements that have been made to the school, and they are positive about the direction the school is now taking.

Governance of the school

- The local authority has intervened and taken robust action to address the school's declining standards. It has put in place valuable support from an NLE and has quickly established an effective IEB to govern the school.
- The IEB has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Along with the recently appointed interim headteacher, it has taken swift, decisive action to begin to tackle weaknesses across the school. However, these actions are very recent. While the IEB has had a measurable impact on improving safeguarding and early years, it has not yet been able to demonstrate measurable results from actions taken to improve teaching, learning and assessment, or on the outcomes for pupils.
- The IEB has not measured the impact of pupil premium funding on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, in order to challenge and support leaders to secure improvement. As a result, too many disadvantaged pupils are making limited progress and are not achieving the standards of which they are capable.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Recent actions taken by the interim headteacher and the IEB have ensured that robust policies and procedures are in place to keep children safe.
- Safeguarding records are up to date and referrals to agencies such as the local authority social services are followed up promptly. The safeguarding leader works well with other agencies to help families receive the necessary support.
- Leaders have ensured that appropriate training is in place for all staff. As a result, staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children and know what to do if they have a safeguarding concern.
- Leaders have improved the systems for the safer recruitment of staff and volunteers, and rigorous procedures are in place.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. Tasks are often too easy for pupils, particularly the most able, sometimes restricting pupils' opportunities to produce work of a high standard.
- As a result of poorly planned teaching and lack of challenge, pupils often lose interest in their learning. When this happens, pupils become distracted from their task and they lack concentration, which slows their progress.
- Assessment practice is weak. Too often teachers' assessments are inaccurate and, as a result, some assessment information is overgenerous. Consequently, learning is not consistently set at the correct standard for pupils, limiting the progress that they make.
- Teaching does not address the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding promptly enough, particularly in calculation, spelling and punctuation. Misconceptions in pupils'

understanding, and errors in their work, go unaddressed over time. Furthermore, teachers do not give pupils the guidance that they need in order to correct and improve their work.

- Sometimes, the least able pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are not supported effectively. Tasks are not planned well enough to meet their needs. As a result, these pupils struggle to access the learning and their progress slows.
- Very recent improvements in the teaching of mathematics have ensured that pupils are provided with more regular opportunities to develop their skills in problem-solving. Teachers do not, however, provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills through reasoning. Consequently, pupils are not making sufficient progress in developing secure mathematical skills.
- The quality of teaching in phonics is inconsistent. While some pupils are challenged appropriately and are developing a secure understanding of phonics, the expectation of what some pupils can achieve is too low. As a result, some teaching of phonics is not sufficiently challenging to enable the pupils to make strong progress.
- The teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics is not consistently effective. Learning is not planned well enough to enable pupils to develop their skills and to deepen their understanding in other subjects.
- Several parents are dissatisfied with the amount of information that they receive about their child's progress and attainment. Furthermore, some feel that they are not given enough information on the next steps in their child's learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Leaders and teachers have established a caring, nurturing environment and positive relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils are happy, feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- The school's curriculum enables pupils to develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when online.
- While most pupils are confident that teachers address incidents of bullying quickly and robustly, a few pupils and parents do not feel that bullying is always dealt with effectively enough.
- Pupils do not have high enough expectations of themselves. They lack pride in their work and presentation is often of a poor standard.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Due to inadequate teaching, pupils have not developed consistently positive attitudes to learning. Too often pupils lose interest in their learning, become distracted from their work and lose concentration.

- Pupils' attendance overall is in line with the national average. However, for disadvantaged pupils, attendance is low and shows little sign of improvement. Too many disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent and not enough has been done, until very recently, to address this.
- Most of the time pupils play well together at playtimes and lunchtimes. They enjoy using the outdoor facilities that the school provides and engaging in the planned activities that help to keep them active.
- As a result of recently improved routines and procedures, most pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly way.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- In recent years, standards have been declining at the end of key stage 2, particularly in mathematics. In 2017, pupils' progress in mathematics at the end of Year 6 was in the bottom 5% of pupils nationally. Furthermore, less than half of pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. As a result, pupils are not well enough prepared for their secondary school education.
- In 2016, standards in reading, writing and mathematics declined at the end of key stage 1 and were below national averages. Despite better outcomes in 2017, improvements have not been sustained. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils currently in key stage 1 are making limited progress.
- Historically, the provision for disadvantaged pupils in this school has been ineffective. Pupil premium funding has not been used effectively enough to improve outcomes for these pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are not making the progress that they need in order to achieve the standard of which they are capable.
- As a result of inadequate teaching and low expectations, the progress that current pupils are making across the school in reading, writing and mathematics is limited. Over time, pupils repeat their mistakes in spelling, punctuation and in the application of their mathematical skills. Teachers do not address these errors quickly enough and, consequently, the progress that pupils make is slow.
- Teaching does not consistently challenge pupils, and often work is too easy. As a result, pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable, particularly the most able. Very few pupils achieve a high standard by the end of key stage 1 or key stage 2.
- Teaching does not consistently provide the necessary support and guidance for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Furthermore, weak assessment practice prevents leaders from effectively monitoring the progress that these pupils make. As a result, leaders do not know how well these pupils are achieving.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the required standard in phonics has been increasing over the past three years. However, due to low expectations and inadequate teaching, current pupils are not making as much progress as they are capable of in developing a secure understanding of phonics.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- For the past two years, the proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of Reception Year has been below the national average. Very recently, leaders established new assessment procedures to monitor, more effectively, the progress that children make. These procedures, however, are not embedded in practice and are not being used consistently well.
- Over recent months, leaders have established a clear vision for the early years setting based on high expectations. They have implemented robust actions to address past weaknesses in teaching and improvements can already be seen in the quality of provision. As a result, children's work demonstrates that they are now making steady progress from their starting points.
- In the indoor environment, learning opportunities are planned to engage and excite the pupils and to develop their key skills, for example in counting. These improvements in the quality of teaching are having a noticeable impact on the children's learning.
- When playing, some children do not interact with others, preferring to play alone. As a result, their social development and communication skills are not being developed as well as they could be.
- While steps have been taken to improve the quality of provision, some activities do not effectively promote children's learning, particularly in the outdoor area. As a result, at times some children are not able to engage in purposeful activities that interest them and develop their skills.
- Routines are well established. Children behave well, responding quickly to the instructions of adults, and are friendly and welcoming. This contributes to a calm and orderly environment.
- Adults are beginning to make more effective use of questioning to engage children in their learning and to move learning on.
- Improved teaching and learning are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, their resilience and perseverance. One pupil, when finding out he had made a mistake when subtracting numbers, was delighted to discover his mistake and to find the correct answer. He then took great pleasure in correcting his work.
- Teachers do not ensure that parents are involved in the initial assessments of their child, and do not keep parents sufficiently informed of their child's progress. As a result, parents do not always know how to support their child's learning at home.

School details

Unique reference number	109936
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10048562

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	359
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Mr Mark A'Bear
Interim Headteacher	Miss Sarah Curtis
Telephone number	0118 969 5976
Website	www.beechwoodprimaryschool.com
Email address	admin@beechwood.wokingham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 February 2013

Information about this school

- Beechwood Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has undergone a change in leadership since the last inspection. In February 2018, the local authority established an IEB to govern the school. In April 2018, the IEB appointed an interim headteacher. The school is currently being supported by an NLE.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These standards set the minimum expectations for pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides a childcare breakfast club and after-school club on its site.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in all classes at least once, across a range of subjects. Some sessions were observed jointly with senior leaders in the school. Inspectors looked at the quality of pupils' work during lessons and through a focused analysis of work in books.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders, the designated safeguarding lead, the SENCo, other staff, members of the interim executive board, a representative from the local authority and the national leader of education who is supporting the school.
- A wide range of school documentation was reviewed, including information available on the school's website and records relating to pupils' attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour. Information on governance, including minutes of the governing body and the interim executive board, was examined. Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness, the school development plan and supporting evidence were scrutinised.
- Inspectors spoke with parents during the inspection and considered the 98 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parent survey, including 52 free-text comments.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke with pupils in lessons and around the school. They also met formally with groups of pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, around the school, during breakfast club, and during play, break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records and the central record of recruitment checks on staff.

Inspection team

Leah Goulding, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Doug Brawley	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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