

Bishop Martin Church of England Primary School

Birkrig, Digmaor, Skelmersdale, Lancashire, WN8 9BN

Inspection dates 22–23 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- It is extremely welcoming, especially towards pupils and families who join during the school year.
- Children have fun and settle happily into the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils achieve well. They make good and at times outstanding progress in their reading, writing and mathematics skills during their time in the school.
- Teaching is good with outstanding practice evident. High quality support staff help those pupils who do not find it easy to learn, to experience success.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary because all adults set high expectations of how pupils are to behave. Pupils say that they feel very safe and their parents unanimously agree.
- Inspirational leadership by the headteacher, governors and highly committed senior leadership team means that the quality of pupils' learning has improved well since the last inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in different subjects.
- Marking of pupils' work does not consistently show them how to improve their learning or provide them with enough time to follow up on the feedback.
- The skills of new subject leaders, in checking that pupils are learning as well as they could in all the subjects of the curriculum, are not fully developed.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 12 lessons, three of which were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- They held meetings with senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body, pupils, a representative of the local authority and groups of parents.
- They checked school documents relating to safeguarding, how well pupils are doing in their work and the ways in which the school checks on pupils' learning.
- They took into account the school's most recent survey completed by 28 parents. At the time of the inspection, no parents had responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Marilyn Massey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage.
- A higher than average percentage of pupils start at the school during the school year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Seven teachers, including three members of the senior leadership team, have been appointed since the last inspection in 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils' achievement is outstanding in all year groups by ensuring that:
 - marking consistently shows pupils what they need to do to improve their learning and teachers provide enough time for them to follow up on the feedback
 - pupils are given more opportunities to practise their writing skills in different subjects.
- Raise the quality of subject leadership to consistently outstanding by improving the skills of new subject leaders in checking on pupils' learning in all the subjects of the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills which are well below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage especially in their social, physical and communication skills.
- The quality of pupils' learning in Year 2 rose rapidly in 2012 to above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The strong focus given to regular reading sessions, and daily teaching of letters and sounds to help them read unfamiliar words, means that pupils' reading skills are now above average in both Year 1 and Year 2.
- Despite this, achievement in Key Stage 1 is good rather than outstanding over time. This is because disruption in staffing in the past slowed the progress of pupils currently in Years 4 and 5. As a result, they did not do as well as they could in reading, writing and mathematics when they were in Year 2. The current work of these pupils shows that their learning is improving and the gaps in their knowledge are beginning to close, especially in reading and mathematics.
- The quality of and rate at which pupils' learn and progress by the time they leave in Year 6 are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Pupils' achievement is good and not outstanding overall because the lack of opportunities to practise their writing skills means that they do not consistently reach the highest standards in writing in all year groups.
- Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons, particularly when they have the opportunity to work creatively and independently. For example, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage thoroughly enjoyed using their reading and writing skills to make passports for the aliens who had unexpectedly landed in the school grounds.
Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs or those who join the school during the school year, do as well as other pupils because of the excellent support they are given in lessons and the equal opportunities and encouragement they are given to achieve well.
- Parents are very pleased with the progress their children make and particularly with the support provided for their children's well-being.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good, and at times outstanding, teaching contributes well to pupils' good achievement. This view is supported by those parents who volunteered an opinion, who agree that teaching is good.
- Through excellent planning and exciting topics that interest the children, adults successfully extend children's speaking, listening and creative skills within the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- In all lessons observed, teachers set high expectations of behaviour and work, and the respect and care between pupils and adults were excellent.
- In the best lessons, teachers make sure all pupils have work that always gets the most out of them. Pupils know fully how they can succeed in their learning because teachers check on their understanding and adapt tasks to make sure that pupils are always challenged to do their best work.
- This was observed in a Year 6 English lesson, when pupils' learning was rapid because of the teachers' searching questions, the demonstration of excellent writing and the very good use of exciting and stimulating resources. This ensured that pupils' writing was of a high quality for their age.
- Marking and regular homework are generally used well to help pupils to improve their work. Where teaching is at its best, time is provided for pupils to look at their own work critically and to follow up on teachers' comments. However, this is not consistent in all classes. Similarly, teachers do not always offer pupils enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in a range

of subjects.

- The teaching for pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is managed well, with well-planned and exciting resources available and excellent use of support staff to ensure all these pupils achieve well.
- The teaching for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good because all adults, and particularly the skilled teaching assistants, ensure pupils receive appropriate support specific to their needs. As a result, all pupils have equal opportunities and potential discrimination is tackled well.
- Teachers make a strong contribution to the excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. High quality teaching of Spanish and topics concerning looking after the planet, for example, give pupils a good range of experiences and skills which prepare them well for their future lives.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is typically outstanding both in classrooms and around the school. The school is very harmonious and pupils fully understand the importance of good behaviour. Parents fully agree with this view. They are very supportive of the school and raised no concerns about their children's well-being or safety.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They very much enjoy school and this is reflected in their above average attendance. They are particularly welcoming to the pupils who join the school during the school year.
- School records show that behaviour is typically very good in classes, around the school and over time. Pupils' real enjoyment of school has a positive effect on their good achievement. They feel strongly that the school belongs to them and they enthusiastically welcome the numerous responsibilities given to them, such as being school councillors, peer mediators or eco-leaders. Such roles enable them to learn to act responsibly and to support each other well.
- Pupils are happy to conform to the school rules because they have helped to put them in place. Catchy slogans such as 'It's good to be green' and again 'it's cool to be kind' are quoted and fully adhered to by the pupils.
- Systems for recording and for following up any incidents of misbehaviour are consistent and secure. Strong links with social services and other educational partners ensure all pupils and their families are given appropriate support and guidance.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and understand how to keep safe. They say teachers and support staff have helped them to understand how to take care on the roads or when using the internet.
- Pupils treat each other fairly and with respect. They have an excellent understanding of the different types of bullying and say staff deal swiftly and effectively with any incidents that may arise.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, care and welfare are excellent. The children share equipment well, take turns and are happy to talk about their learning.

The leadership and management are good

- Outstanding leadership from the headteacher and governors has ensured strong staff appointments have been made since the last inspection. These have improved the quality of senior leadership and teaching, and secured pupils' good achievement. This shows that leaders know how to make the school even more successful.
- Senior leaders work closely with other staff and identify actions that will improve the school further. Staff say they are proud to belong to the 'Bishop Martin' family and that the training they receive helps them to improve their own and pupils' performance.

- Senior leaders work closely with class teachers to check that pupils learn as well as they can in English and mathematics. However, new subject leaders do not yet have the skills to check how well pupils learn in all the other subjects of the curriculum.
 - A wide range of additional activities are available in school. Music, sports and learning to speak and write Spanish are particular strengths of the school. This range of activities makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils regularly come together in assemblies for prayer and reflection. The joyous nature of the singing heard in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 is testament to their happiness in school.
 - Parents say they are well informed about the work of the school because of regular newsletters and opportunities to speak to staff about any concerns they may have.
 - The local authority provides good support to the school. Excellent partnerships which exist within the local network of schools provide opportunities for pupils and staff to share their expertise and learn from each other.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are actively involved in the checking of the staff's performance and setting clear targets for improvement. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and members of the governing body carry out regular checks to make sure that pupils are kept safe. School finances are well managed and the governors have used the extra pupil premium funding to employ support staff to work with pupils who are at risk of falling behind in their learning.
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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	119616
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	405873

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Price
Headteacher	Ann Gray
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2010
Telephone number	01695 724730
Fax number	01695 50790
Email address	head@bishopmartin.lancs.sch.uk

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