

# Basildon C of E Primary School

School Lane, Upper Basildon, West Berkshire, RG8 8PD

**Inspection dates** 6–7 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make a strong start in their learning. Most pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, including those pupils with special educational needs.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. The progress of pupils is checked carefully and well-judged support is given if a child risks falling behind.
- The teaching of reading and pupils' enjoyment of books are strengths of the school.
- The school offers pupils a range of lively topics for study and clubs and visits are enjoyed by pupils.
- The school is a welcoming place to be and pupils feel safe. Pupils' behaviour is calm and thoughtful, they enjoy being at school and attendance is high.
- Parents and carers are closely involved in the day-to-day work of the school, which is at the heart of the village community.
- Leaders and managers are committed to improving further the quality of education. The governing body plays a particularly strong role in driving forward many key aspects of the school's work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently provide work which makes the more-able pupils think hard, or allow pupils to explore ideas in ways of which many are capable,
- Some marking of pupils' work is of a high quality, but not all teachers reach this standard.
- Middle leaders are still developing their roles. They have not yet improved the quality of teaching and learning as much as they could.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 12 lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to classrooms, and attended two assemblies.
- The inspector looked at a number of teaching and learning documents, the tracking and assessment of pupils' progress and attainment, pupils' books and folders, as well as school policies and safeguarding arrangements.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, other governors and middle and senior leaders, and with pupils at lunchtimes.
- The inspector read 17 questionnaires completed by teachers and support staff.
- The inspector met with parents and carers at the start and end of the school days and took account of the 33 responses to the online Parent View survey.

## Inspection team

Roy Blatchford, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Basildon C of E Primary is smaller than the average primary school. It has expanded slightly since the previous inspection, although cohort sizes vary.
- There is an on-site pre-school provision, not managed by the school's governing body. The latest report can be found on the Ofsted website.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for extra funding through the pupil premium is well below the national average. This funding is aimed at pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is well-below average. The proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding and accelerate pupils' progress further by:
  - ensuring the more-able pupils are consistently given work that makes them think hard in their English and mathematics lessons
  - ensuring that teachers' marking and interventions help pupils' understanding of how to improve their written work and independent learning habits.
- Develop the roles and responsibilities of the middle leaders by:
  - giving them more opportunities to check on the quality of teaching and learning
  - enabling them to lead professional development for staff, focused on the school's priorities.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school with the skills levels expected for their age and make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their understanding of letters and sounds is secure. As they move into Year 1, their reading skills are stronger than those in writing, while social and communication skills develop strongly. Pupils' investigations in outdoor activities enhance their understanding of the world around them.
- Attainment is above national average by the end of Year 2, reflecting continuing good progress. The current Year 2 pupils are making very good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. School data indicate that progress through Years 3 and 4 has slowed in the past, but a much-improved picture is now evident.
- Attainment in recent years at the end of Key Stage 2 has been higher in English than in mathematics, both comparing favourably with the national picture. Current cohorts are expected to achieve equally well in English and mathematics, with a small number of Year 5/6 pupils performing well above national expectations.
- Analysis of the school's data, lesson observations, and scrutiny of pupils' exercise books indicate rising trends in achievement across the curriculum, including science, which during the previous inspection was a relative weakness.
- Reading is taught well across the school, and rates of progress and attainment throughout all years compare very favourably with national averages. By Year 5, most pupils are confident and fluent in their reading, with some pupils exceptionally fluent. The whole school promotes a love of reading, and the home-school reading diaries reflect the high profile given to this core skill.
- The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and support staff know these pupils' learning needs well, and plan timely interventions.
- Well-judged initiatives in mathematics – for example, early morning small-group tuition - are raising attainment for slower learners, including for pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils comment on the way in which teachers plan interesting activities to bring alive new skills and knowledge, in classrooms and in outdoor learning.
- There is some outstanding practice, which is rooted in teachers' excellent subject knowledge, for example in music and English. In those lessons, pupils are engrossed in their learning and the teachers demonstrate highly skilled, probing questioning, expecting pupils to achieve more than they themselves believe they are capable.
- Excellent examples of enjoyment and participation in learning were seen in a religious education lesson in the Year 5/6 class, who demonstrated depth in understanding of Moses' character and motivation. Year 2 pupils showed a grasp of Greek myths beyond their years, founded in the teacher's own enthusiasm for the subject.
- In most lessons, teachers take careful account of what pupils know and understand already. However, more-able pupils, for example in mathematics, take too long practising what they can already do before encountering activities which make them think hard. Opportunities for pupils who are confident with language to explore fascinating vocabulary and new ideas are sometimes missed.
- The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress are generally well embedded. Teachers' marking identifies 'two stars and a wish' and, at its best in Year 6, teachers and pupils are in dialogue using the exercise books to extend learning. However, there is not a consistency in high-quality marking which identifies how best a pupil can improve further.

- The development of good social skills through 'talk partners' and collaborative activities is a hallmark of the school's practice. So, too, is the inventive application of 'thinking hats' to different topics across the curriculum. Pupils' independent learning in groups is sometimes not as focused as it could be.
- A small number of pupils with statements of special educational needs are supported especially well in classrooms, as seen in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to their learning. They listen very well to staff and to one another and are impressively patient with their peers who have special educational needs. Behaviour in the two assemblies was excellent.
- Pupils, parents and carers, and staff, rightly, judge that behaviour across the school is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and say that bullying is very rare. The school's incident records reflect a calm and harmonious learning environment.
- Breaktimes and lunchtimes are orderly. Pupils enjoy their attractive outdoor environment, which includes extensive play and climbing equipment.
- There have been no exclusions of pupils since the previous inspection and racist incidents are unknown.
- Attendance is above average and the numbers of pupils who are persistently absent are very low. The school's meticulous approach to monitoring attendance is valued by parents and carers. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons.
- The thoughtful religious ethos promoted by staff, for example with a daily prayer before lunch, contributes to the pupils' own self-esteem and the school community's well-being.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The current leadership team has been successful in creating a stimulating environment for pupils and teachers. The consistency in high-quality décor, display and book corners across all classrooms reflects the proper ambitions of the headteacher and the governing body.
- The school's checks on how well it is doing are accurate. This means that school development planning is focused increasingly well on the school's known priorities for sustaining and improving pupils' progress and attainment. Leaders have identified where systems have been less effective and worked assiduously to put in place procedures which enjoy the confidence of all staff, for example with tracking pupils' progress.
- Arrangements linking salary progression and performance management are monitored robustly by the headteacher and governing body. Appropriate professional development has been established to address emerging needs, with middle leaders starting to play a fuller role in this.
- The headteacher has been working purposefully with other headteachers locally to ensure best practice is shared across small schools, particularly with lesson observations and useful feedback to teachers.
- Middle leaders are quickly becoming more effective, but have not yet had the opportunity to become fully involved with lesson observations in order to move practice across the school from good to outstanding.
- The curriculum provides stimulating, practical experiences for pupils. It is well planned, with a range of interesting topics enjoyed by the pupils. With mixed-age classes, leaders are ensuring that progression in the acquisition of new skills and knowledge is planned carefully. Equality of opportunity and promoting an awareness of global issues are integral to the curriculum, highlighted in the 'Our World This Week' class collections.
- The school affords rich opportunities for extra-curricular clubs and visits, from early morning 'Number Risers', to gardening, chess, and tag rugby. Links with the on-site pre-school provision are strong and valued by parents and carers. Pupils commented enthusiastically on a recent

whole-school trip to the Watermill Theatre in Newbury, while the Year 3/4 class extended their understanding of the Romans through a visit to Bath.

- The school works very well with parents and carers, many of whom see the school as the heartbeat of the village community. The headteacher ensures effective communication exists between homes and school. Safeguarding arrangements are secure.
- The governing body and staff work imaginatively together to promote the pupils' social, moral and cultural development, and the spiritual dimension of the school's day-to-day work is notable.
- The school has benefited from timely support from the local authority, especially contributing to the middle leaders' initiatives in English and mathematics.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- A core group of governors, led ably by the Chair, has established effective working groups alongside the main governing body meetings. These governors have a detailed understanding of the strengths and points for development of the school, from the classroom to wider environmental issues. The headteacher and staff are served well by a governing body which takes its responsibilities seriously and is a powerful advocate for the school in the wider community. Governors carry out their statutory duties diligently. They ensure that there is efficient deployment of staff and resources, including checking actively how well pupil premium funding is used.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109949
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	403099

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	134
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Major
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Field
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29–30 April 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01491 671445
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