

Bramley Church of England Primary School

Bramley Lane, Bramley, Tadley, Hampshire, RG26 5AH

Inspection dates 21–22 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Leaders, managers and governors have not done enough to deal with the school's weaknesses.
- Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Too few pupils make the progress of which they are capable, especially in writing, because teaching is not good enough.
- Teachers do not expect enough of pupils so they learn at too slow a pace.
- Too often, tasks set, or questions asked, are not hard enough.
- Pupils lose motivation and interest when the pace of learning slows.
- Pupils' handwriting is not always good enough, nor is the presentation of their work always neat.
- Pupils do not get sufficient advice about how to improve their work.
- Leaders are not checking on teaching well enough; some teachers need more training.
- When leaders check on teaching they do not give enough attention to the impact the teaching is having on learning, and they do not give teachers sharp enough advice about how to improve their work.
- The findings from formal checks that have to be made on teaching and leadership have not been acted on effectively.
- Governors have not had the skills to find out what has been happening and demand that the school does better.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils feel safe, and they are happy to be at school because of their good relationships with adults. They have positive attitudes to learning, and often behave well.
- The new leaders of the governing body have made a good start in tackling past weaknesses in governance, and are beginning to build productive relationships with the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also heard some pupils in Years 1 and 2 read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the school’s staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the small number of responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They analysed the 51 responses that were on Parent View by the end of the inspection, and spoke with small numbers of parents and carers accompanying their children to school.
- Inspectors also took account of the 17 responses to the questionnaire for school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school’s own data on pupils’ current attainment and progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding, the curriculum and performance management.

Inspection team

Chris Grove, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Una Stevens

Additional inspector

Carolyn Steer

Additional inspector

Derek Watts

Additional inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- This is a primary school that is much larger than average.
- Most pupils are White British with smaller numbers from other ethnic heritages, principally other White backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding to support particular groups of children, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average at a little above 10%.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- None of the pupils receive alternative provision (such as teaching in other schools or units).
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school's breakfast club and the after-school club are not managed by the governing body and did not form part of this inspection.
- Among a range of awards, the school holds the Rights Respecting Schools award.
- The local authority commissioned a review of the relationship between the governing body and the school's leaders in early summer 2012. Since then, the local authority has made new appointments to the governing body. Governors elected a new Chair of the Governing Body and a new vice chair, from September 2012.
- A new deputy headteacher started in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eliminate inadequate teaching and provide more good and better teaching by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons
 - making sure that teachers vary activities in their lessons consistently well and do not let the pace slip in order to sustain pupils' interest and motivation
 - improving lesson planning to ensure it makes clear exactly what pupils should be learning
 - ensuring tasks are not too easy and build on what pupils can already do
 - setting tasks and asking questions which are hard enough for all groups of pupils, especially the most able.
- Ensure greater impact from the school's checks on the quality of teaching and learning through:
 - a closer focus on pupils' progress when leaders observe and judge the impact of lessons
 - sharper advice to teachers about what they could do to make improvements.
- Speed up pupils' progress in writing at all key stages, by:
 - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to practise writing at length in different subjects
 - making sure that teachers have higher expectations for the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work

- helping pupils to understand the next steps in their learning through better use of targets, and to know how to improve their work through better feedback from marking.
 - Improve the impact of the school’s leaders and managers on sustaining improvement by:
 - making rigorous use of the formal checks that have to be made on the performance of staff in order to raise the quality of teaching and of leadership
 - evaluating more robustly how well the school’s actions to bring about improvements are working
 - developing the skills of those who have leadership responsibility so that they check more rigorously on teaching and evaluate better how well pupils are doing in their areas of responsibility.
 - Ensure that the members of the governing body develop the skills to hold school leaders to account for the performance of the school.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Pupils are not making enough progress. Standards at the end of Year 6 have varied from below average to broadly average over the last three years, and have not been high enough given pupils' attainment when they were in Year 2.
- In recent years, attainment at the end of Year 2 has been significantly above average, but progress in Key Stage 1 has now slowed. Attainment fell back and was broadly average in 2011/12. Progress in writing is inadequate across the school. In both Year 6 and Year 2, standards in writing have been lower than those in reading and mathematics.
- One reason for this is that there have not been enough opportunities for pupils to write long pieces of work in different subjects. A second reason is that expectations about pupils' handwriting are not high enough.
- Pupils in Year 2 have not learned to use joined-up handwriting. Whereas many older pupils have developed this skill, others still write their letters separately, and this slows their rate of working. In addition, there is too much variation between pupils in their presentation and neatness. For instance, the quality of presentation by some pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 is poor. Although some produce neat writing, too many others have not learnt to make good use of lines in exercise books, or to avoid the need to cross out mistakes untidily. By contrast, the higher expectations of pupils in Year 6 result in work that is better presented.
- When children enter the Reception classes, their knowledge and skills are as expected for their age. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of the Reception Year children reach average standards in most areas except writing, though this is starting to show improvement.
- There is no difference in the achievement of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Those pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make progress that is similar to that of their peers. Although learning support partners (teaching assistants) often provide effective help for these pupils, in class they are affected by the same weaknesses in teaching as other pupils.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding to provide additional support staff to help pupils known to be eligible for it to catch up. It does not collect robust evidence to evaluate how successful this policy has been, in terms of the difference it has made to the pupils involved. Results show that the gap between the standards these pupils reach and the standards of others is smaller in reading and mathematics than in writing.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- The quality of teaching over time is inadequate because it is resulting in pupils' inadequate achievement. Not enough teaching is sufficiently good to help pupils make up ground they have lost.
- Teachers' planning for lessons is often not good enough. The objectives for pupils' learning are not consistently clear or well-enough explained to pupils. In addition, although teachers often set different tasks for different groups, the match of tasks to pupils' abilities is not consistently good. This means that pupils are not always challenged to extend their learning. The tasks set for the most-able pupils, in particular, are often too easy.
- Similarly, in discussions, teachers do not regularly ask questions that challenge pupils to put into words their understanding or their reasoning. However, in a good lesson in Year 3, pupils responded enthusiastically to the demand to explain their mathematical understanding to a group or to the class. This extended their thinking well, and also gave the teacher good opportunities to assess what they had learned. The teacher then praised these pupils for being good 'teaching assistants', reinforcing their success.
- In too many lessons teachers do not set high enough expectations, especially about how

much pupils should achieve. This limits pupils' progress. However, in the best teaching seen, expectations were very well set. For instance, in an English lesson in Year 6 about writing a report, the teacher first discussed with the class just how much written work could reasonably be expected in the time available. Pupils then set about the task with a will, producing extended pieces of writing that were neatly presented and incorporated thoughtful choices of vocabulary in well-constructed sentences.

- In many lessons, the pace of learning was not brisk enough to maintain pupils' interest. On occasions, pupils paid good attention early on, but did not sustain this, sometimes because they spent too much time sitting and listening. In other instances, the variety of activities was not enough to engage the pupils throughout the lesson.
- The quality of teachers' marking is not consistently good. In some classes, pupils are given detailed comments about what they could do to improve. In others, marking is not followed up, so that pupils make the same mistakes again. In one class, English books were not marked for some time.
- Older pupils have been set some potentially useful targets, for example in writing, which aim to indicate the next steps in learning. However, the arrangements to assess pupils' progress towards achieving their targets are not rigorous enough to ensure that the impact is good.
- Across the school, adults and pupils get on well. Parents and carers agree that their children are happy at school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Behaviour requires improvement because although pupils often apply themselves well to their learning and to the tasks that teachers set, this is not consistently the case. If work is not varied enough or the pace of learning slackens, as it does in some lessons, pupils do not always sustain their motivation to work.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school, showing courtesy and respect towards adults and other pupils. They mostly behave well in lessons because teachers create a calm working climate for learning. Most parents and carers agree that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved.
- In the playground, pupils mix sociably with others, and play well together. They are orderly when they move around school during working time.
- Pupils say that they feel secure in school because, 'teachers make you feel safe'. Their views are corroborated by almost all the members of staff who completed a questionnaire. In their responses to the online survey, most parents and carers also agreed. Pupils indicate that there is occasional bullying in school, but they say they can confide in a trusted adult.
- The rate of attendance is broadly average.

The leadership and management

are inadequate

- Leaders and managers have not done enough to improve teaching. Observations of teaching are undertaken regularly, but too often leaders do not take enough account of the extent of pupils' progress when judging the impact of teaching. As a result, teachers have not been given enough effective advice about what to do to improve pupils' progress.
- Leaders have not had sufficient training opportunities to become more effective, including developing the skills needed to check the quality of learning and teaching.
- The management of teachers' performance has not been rigorous enough. Members of staff say that in the previous year there was no formal arrangement to appraise how well they were doing. However, teachers also report that the leadership team has this year put in place performance management arrangements for members of staff that include targets to improve leadership and the outcomes for their pupils.

- The school is not showing the capacity to secure further improvement. It has not successfully tackled issues specified at the last inspection as needing improvement, for example pupils' achievement in writing, and, most especially, the quality of teaching. Self-evaluation has not been rigorous enough in identifying and addressing weaknesses, and leaders do not have a sufficiently realistic view of how good teaching is.
 - Leaders review pupils' performance at the twice-termly review meetings, which lead to additional support where necessary and help to promote equality of opportunity.
 - The local authority has provided considerable support. In addition to a commissioned review, local authority officers reported on the weakness in pupils' progress in 2011, and have supported the leaders of English and mathematics. The authority has categorised the school as needing high priority support.
 - The curriculum is broad and balanced. It serves pupils' interests, but does not meet their needs, for instance by ensuring that good progress in writing is encouraged across different subjects. The work that led to status as a Rights Respecting School has benefited pupils in a range of ways, for example to create a sense of community among Reception children, or to offer roles of responsibility to older pupils, such as the Games Makers. Assemblies, such as one centred on senior citizens' letters of thanks for the harvest festival boxes donated by pupils, do much to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - The school's leaders pay careful attention to all aspects of safeguarding, which fully meet requirements. The school maintains a culture of safe practice.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is inadequate. The governing body as a whole does not know enough about how well the school is doing, the impact of the performance management of staff on the quality of their teaching and leadership, or about how the school rewards good teaching and tackles underperformance. Governors have too limited an oversight and understanding of the school's finances, including the use of pupil premium money, and the evidence to judge how well this additional income is being spent. In a short time, the new Chair of the Governing Body has started to gain a clear overview and accurate understanding of the main issues in governance, leadership and management, provision for teaching and pupils' achievement. Weaknesses in governors' previous performance management of the headteacher are being addressed. The new vice chair has assessed the training needs of governors in order to ensure that from now on all governors develop a better understanding of finance, curriculum and personnel issues.
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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	116278
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	405637

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	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicky Parker
Headteacher	Ann Berresford
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 October 2010
Telephone number	01256 881339
Fax number	01256 882395
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