

Bardfield Primary School

Clay Hill Road, Vange, Basildon, SS16 4NL

Inspection dates 17–18 January 2013

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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, governors and staff, including the office and support staff, work very well together as an effective team to drive improvement.
- Achievement is good. Pupils' rate of progress has improved since the last inspection and is now good in all year groups.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and are keen to improve their work and want to do well.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and outside of school is good and sometimes outstanding.
- Rigorous and regular checking of the quality of teaching by senior leaders, supported by a range of well focused training opportunities, has led to good teaching and some outstanding teaching throughout the school.
- Additional adult support for pupils who find learning difficult is effective in helping them to achieve well.
- The school has good relationships with parents who are very pleased with what the school provides for their children.
- Relationships throughout the school, including those with pupils, are excellent.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet sufficient outstanding teaching leading to a secure track record of a high proportion of pupils achieving better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers are not always consistently setting work which provides a suitably high level of challenge for more-able pupils. Not enough opportunities are provided to develop basic skills, such as writing, in all subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, nine of which were joint observations carried out with the headteacher and one of the deputy headteachers. Inspectors also observed pupils moving around the school, in the dining room and at break and lunchtimes. They also observed a celebration assembly led by the headteacher and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the senior leadership team, including subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors took account of six responses to Parent View (Ofsted's on-line questionnaire for parents) as well as parent's views which were communicated both orally and written. Inspectors also took account of the school's own recent parent questionnaire of which there were 64 responses.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including the school's data about the progress of pupils, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, safeguarding policies and records relating to performance management.

Inspection team

Nichola Perry, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Victoria Turner	Additional Inspector
Matthew Klimcke	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. No alternative or off-site provision is used.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding (additional money given to schools for particular pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those that are looked after) is well above the national average.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportions of pupils who have special educational needs supported by school action and those supported by school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, are well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the national minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection there have been several changes of staff, including the headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' learning in reading, writing and mathematics so that a high proportion of pupils make better than expected progress by:
 - using assessment information more precisely to ensure challenging work is always provided, particularly for more-able pupils
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills, particularly in writing, across all subjects
 - improving pupils' handwriting and presentation skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Throughout the school strengths in teaching and the way subjects are planned enable pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from when they enter the school until they leave at the end of Year 6. Pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs also make good progress because they receive well targeted support related to their specific needs and effective one-to-one intervention which ensures that they make good gains in their learning in class and over time. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection where pupils did not make as much progress as they should.
- Many children enter the school with skills well below the level expected for their age. Children of all abilities make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because they are taught well and given interesting things to do. Although they enter Year 1 with levels of attainment below average, they rapidly acquire knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of learning which means that they are well-prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is well developed so that pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. Attainment in reading has risen steadily year on year and is now average by the end of Key Stage 1. The least able readers that were heard to read during the inspection make suitable use of letter sounds to help them read new words and they are beginning to show some expression when they read.

- The introduction of a structured writing programme has contributed strongly to improvements in writing and has helped pupils to transfer their knowledge of phonics to their writing. As a result, pupils' rate of progress has improved; writing standards have risen steadily over time and are average at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 are average. Attainment has risen more rapidly than in reading and writing because pupils have made accelerated progress in developing their numeracy skills. This is as a result of increased opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge in real-life situations and to solve questions which get them thinking for themselves.
- In Years 3 to 6 there has been significant underachievement in the past so that attainment in English and mathematics, although rising steadily year on year, has historically been below average. Changes in staffing, higher expectations and improved leadership skills have led to accelerated rates of progress. As a result, standards in the 2012 national assessment tests improved to average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The progress of pupils entitled to the pupil premium has been rapid because the school has used the additional funding very effectively to provide additional teaching sessions for these pupils. The attainment of free school meals pupils is higher than similar pupils nationally; however, it is below the standards reached by all pupils nationally. This said, the gap between the standards reached in Year 6 by pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are not eligible was reduced very significantly in 2012.
- School data for pupils in the current Year 6 indicates good progress at this stage in the year so that standards are in line to be average by the time they leave the school. Work seen in lessons and in pupils' books supports this. School data shows that pupils' progress in Years 3, 4 and 5 is already good and pupils are on track to reach the national expected levels for their age by the end of Year 6.
- Learning in all classes is good because of improved teaching. Pupils are no longer losing any ground and the legacy of underachievement has been halted. There is now no 'catch-up' needed and learning focuses on moving pupils on through activities which now take account of the stage pupils are at. However, all teachers' expectations are still not sufficiently high to ensure that the more-able pupils extend their learning of new skills and apply their newly acquired knowledge from lesson to lesson so that more pupils reach the higher National Curriculum levels in Years 2 and 6.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good and sometimes is outstanding. This is ensuring that pupils now make at least good progress in all year groups.
- Effective planning increasingly takes account of the need to develop pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy across different subjects. However, this is not sufficiently well developed in practice, as seen in pupils' books. Pupils are not being given sufficient and frequent opportunities to practise their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects, so that they improve at a faster rate. Work in books also shows that expectations regarding handwriting and presentation skills are not sufficiently high.
- Lesson introductions are effective in helping pupils understand what it is that they are learning. All lessons activities are well explained. In the best lessons modelling of what pupils are expected to do is excellent so that no time is wasted by pupils wondering what it is they are supposed to be doing. In outstanding lessons teachers bring learning alive when they help pupils to think hard and consider how their learning can be applied to problems in a real life situation. These teachers are also making excellent links between learning in one subject and how this is relevant to learning in other subjects. This makes learning more meaningful and coherent.
- Assessment information about the progress pupils are making is now used consistently to set

work which provides greater challenge than in the past. This has contributed strongly to accelerating learning for pupils of all abilities. During the inspection there was good evidence to show that frequently teachers amended their planning or their teaching to take account of the progress pupils were making.

- Although the level of challenge in lessons is good overall, it is still not sufficiently high to stretch all more-able pupils. In the best lessons, work set really challenges pupils to apply their skills, for example, activities in a Year 1/2 lesson demanded some serious thinking for the higher ability pupils. They set about the problems without panic and, with some expert support and prompting from the class teacher, achieved success.
- The level of challenge for the least able pupils is good. These pupils are extremely well supported by appropriately trained support staff who model their practice on the good standards demonstrated by teachers, for example, in their use of questioning and the high quality discussion observed during lessons.
- Although marking is not yet consistently detailed in respect of what pupils need to do next in their learning, pupils spoken to during the inspection say they are confident that they are making good progress. They are involved well in amending and improving their work and are encouraged to assess how well they understand their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils work diligently to complete tasks and always give of their best. They listen well and eagerly engage in tasks and activities. Lessons are not interrupted and low-level disruption is rare. Attitudes to learning are very good, particularly where they are really motivated by vibrant teaching. Pupils listen and concentrate hard, both to each other and their teachers. They work together constructively and are respectful and considerate towards each other.
- Pupils say the good behaviour that inspectors saw in class and around the school is typical. They report that pupils get on well with each other and only occasionally are there any issues in the playground, which they say is well supervised. Pupils spoken to accept difference readily when they recognise that 'some pupils need more attention than others.' They say they love coming to school and recognise the importance of regular attendance. Attendance is now average.
- The atmosphere in school is highly positive. Pupils participate eagerly and confidently in discussions because they feel secure and understand how highly valued their contributions are.
- Pupils are able to talk about the different forms of bullying and know what to do and who to inform if it occurs. Pupils clearly understand the behaviour policy because they have been involved in its review. They talk knowledgeably about the key areas that they have selected for improvement – annoying, inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour – and also the sanctions now in place should anyone fall foul of the policy.
- Pupils with behaviour or other difficulties blend in with the class because their behaviour is well managed. For example, pupils joining the school from other schools or settings are helped to settle quickly and benefit from the clear boundaries of what is acceptable behaviour.

The leadership and management are good

- There has been good improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the previous inspection. The newly appointed headteacher has built very well on the work of her predecessor. Her excellent leadership skills have succeeded, in a very short space of time, in galvanising the entire school community into another gear. All staff are totally supportive of her efforts to bring about improvement and the views of many are expressed in one comment: 'the

transition between the last and the new headteacher has been smooth and has begun a new strong phase in the school.'

- Leadership is aspirational. Development planning highlights key objectives to move the school forward rapidly. Self-evaluation is highly accurate. The role of senior leaders is developing at a rapid rate and other staff are being groomed for leadership. Monitoring of teaching is rigorous and has eliminated inadequate teaching and that requiring improvement. Performance management systems have been revised and staff are now being held more strongly to account for their performance.
- Equality of opportunity is well promoted and any discrimination is tackled effectively. The school has used its pupil premium funding effectively to support eligible pupils with a wide range of extra adult attention so that these pupils are making equally good progress in line with their classmates.
- All statutory requirements are met relating to safeguarding.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well through subjects and the activities provided. Visits, visitors and good links with families and the local and wider communities, enrich learning and broaden pupils' horizons. Stunning displays around the school provide good evidence of the varied work pupils do. Parents are pleased with what the school provides for their children. Those spoken to during the inspection are full of praise for the new headteacher.
- The local authority provided a significant level of effective support for a previously satisfactory school. Regular training sessions to improve teaching expertise were held and observations and feedback successfully improved weaknesses in teaching and accelerated pupils' progress. They recognise the steady rate of improvement over time and have been impressed with the evident extent of improvement since the last inspection and the changes made by the new headteacher. There will be a light-touch approach in the future.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are effective in supporting the school's leadership by playing a central role in shaping the strategic direction of the school and taking important spending decisions. They demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the school's performance, the quality of teaching, performance management systems and salary progression. They know what is done to reward good teachers and to tackle underperformance. They also know how the school needs to improve still further and they are insightful in their proposals for achieving this. For example, they are keen to engage parents more fully in the school's work and their children's learning. Governors have an excellent approach to monitoring and evaluating the school's performance so as to provide a high level of challenge to the school's leadership. For example, by observing senior staff checking on pupils' progress in their books and asking challenging questions about the process. Governors ensure effective budget management and use funding prudently to bring about improvement. They are proactive in managing the pupil premium funding and, as a result of its positive impact to date, have plans in place to extend its effectiveness in the future.

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	133341
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	402568

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Barrett
Headteacher	Angela Savill
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2010
Telephone number	01268 553488
Fax number	01268 5566330
Email address	admin@bardfield-pri.essex.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

