

Bedford Drive Primary School

Bedford Drive, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead, CH42 6RT

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils have underachieved in the past and they are only now beginning to catch up. Most pupils make the progress expected of them but not enough make better progress than this.
- The rate at which pupils make progress is too variable between different groups of pupils. It is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage, slower in Years 1 and 2, good in Years 3 to 5 and, for too long, has been slow in Year 6. Boys achieve less well than girls.
- Teaching is improving rapidly but in the past it has been too variable to ensure that pupils attain in line with national averages and make good progress.
- Few pupils are aware of their learning targets because there is not enough reference to them in the feedback teachers give to pupils.
- Marking is regular and accurate but some teachers do not give pupils enough advice on how they can improve their work. There are few examples of pupils responding to teacher's comments.

The school has the following strengths

- The teaching of reading has improved and is good throughout the school. As a result rates of progress and attainment are improving well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and has improved over the last three years. Pupils feel safe and contribute to the friendly and positive atmosphere in school.
- Good quality personal support and specialist teaching for disabled pupils, and those who have special educational needs, builds their self-confidence and helps them to make the same progress as others.
- The school's good leadership team is ambitious and leaders are driving good improvements in behaviour, teaching, attendance and pupils' achievement.
- Governors are very involved in the school's work. They rigorously check the quality of teaching and progress and contribute fully to school development.

Information about this inspection

- Three inspectors visited 19 lessons and observed 16 teachers. Two of these were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition they visited some short sessions for small groups of pupils and heard children read. They observed playtimes, lunchtimes and an assembly.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and other staff, members of the governing body, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- Documents, including school records of pupils' progress, development planning, safeguarding policies and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance were inspected. A range of information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools was analysed. Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books from all classes across the school.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents by studying the school's recent questionnaire in February. There were not enough responses on Parent view, the on-line questionnaire, to register.
- Inspectors received the views of staff through discussions and review of the staff questionnaire also completed in February 2013.

Inspection team

Judith Straw, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Terry Bond

Additional Inspector

Maureen Hints

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school and has considerably more girls on roll than boys.
- The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is high and includes nearly a third of all pupils. In this school this includes pupils known to be entitled to receive free school meals and a small number of children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is just below average at school action and above average at school action plus or with statements of special educational need.
- The number of pupils who leave and join the school other than at the usual times is high.
- The school has not met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school holds several awards in recognition of its work. These include national 'Bike It' award, Eco green flag and Healthy school status.
- The school uses alternative provision for a very small number of pupils who have particular special educational needs.
- Since the last inspection a new deputy head joined the school in September 2012 and there have been several changes in staffing.
- During the inspection many pupils and some staff were absent because of an outbreak of the norovirus. On day one of the inspection 60 pupils were absent, and 46 on day two.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement and raise attainment in English and mathematics so that pupils reach floor standard by the summer of 2014 by:
 - embedding strategies to support the progress of boys, particularly in literacy
 - continuing to provide focused support for those groups of pupils who join the school late in Key Stage 2
 - ensuring work is consistently hard enough for more able pupils so that the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 continues to increase.
- Secure improved teaching across the school by:
 - ensuring that all lessons are well-planned to inject pace and variety
 - helping pupils to be fully aware of their learning targets
 - ensuring marking is fully effective in all classes by providing pupils with advice on how to improve their work and requiring pupils to follow up teacher's comments.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Progress has been inconsistent in the past so that attainment is well below average by the end of Year 6. The school's information about the progress of the current Year 6 pupils shows that this is likely to remain the case in 2013.
- Children start in the Nursery with knowledge and skills which are well below what is expected for their age. Improved teaching and a better learning environment are both helping to increase the rate of progress children make and, as a result, achievement is better now than it has been for some years in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Nevertheless, children enter Year 1 with standards which are below average.
- Better teaching of reading is helping to improve pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 and the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 is in line with national figures. Overall attainment is slowly rising in Years 1 and 2 and progress is faster. The weakest area, particularly for boys, is in writing and the school is developing different strategies to help pupils make better progress, with some success.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 5 make the progress expected of them and standards are rising rapidly in these classes. Pupils in the current Year 6 are making better progress but their attainment remains low.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported by working in small groups, or along-side effective teaching assistants who enable them to make the progress expected of them.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for a free school meal and those in local authority care, are making the same progress as other pupils. The gap in their achievement in English and mathematics and that of other pupils has been gradually narrowed and has been eliminated in 2013.
- The very small number of pupils who are educated at special schools are making good progress. The school closely checks up on their attendance and progress and the special needs co-ordinator regularly meets with the other providers.
- Pupils usually concentrate well in class, listen to their teachers and enjoy working together either independently or in groups.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teachers have responded well to the headteacher's drive to improve the quality of teaching and this is resulting in the faster rate of progress and rising standards seen in most classes. However, teaching over time has not been consistently strong enough to enable pupils to make good progress.
- The great majority of teaching seen during the inspection was good and demonstrates that the percentage of good or better teaching has improved significantly.
- Where teaching still requires improvement it is because the pace of learning is slower because teachers spend too long talking leaving less time for pupils to learn actively.
- In most lessons teachers are now setting higher expectations for what pupils can achieve. These lessons are often split into several timed activities so that the pace of learning is brisk. For example, in a challenging Year 6 English lesson pupils were writing instructions about how to look after 'imaginary animals', an activity which required imagination and careful thinking.
- Teaching assistants are usually effective in supporting the learning of individuals or small groups of pupils who need extra help with basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- Teachers mark books regularly and conscientiously. However, sometimes pupils do not finish their work and sometimes not enough advice is given to tell pupils how to improve.
- The school sets targets individual targets but few pupils know what these are or how well they

are doing in achieving their targets.

- Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children can choose from a wide range of activities and have plenty of interaction with adults and support when they need it.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are given extra help so that they are able to make the same progress as others. The school caters for children who have a wide range of complex needs very effectively.
- Good support and catch-up sessions are available for the many pupils who join the school in the middle of the academic year and during Key Stage 2, sometimes as late as in Year 6.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- All the pupils spoken to during the inspection, and the vast majority of responses to recent school questionnaires agree that behaviour is typically good both in lessons and at playtimes. Behaviour has improved over the last three years and scrutiny of behavioural records confirms this.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare and if it occurs then it is dealt with quickly. Pupils are aware of different kinds of bullying and name-calling and say that although sometimes play can be rowdy at lunchtimes, they feel safe and trust the adults in school to help if there is a problem.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in different situations and are aware of the dangers such as those on the road, drug and alcohol abuse, stranger-danger and the hazards of using the internet and social media.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities such as serving on the school council, becoming playground leaders and road safety officers.
- Attendance has improved and is consistently in line with the national average. The school works well with many other agencies and professionals to support families and children whose circumstances make them vulnerable to ensure that they attend school regularly and receive extra support when they need it.

The leadership and management are good

- Three years ago pupils did not make enough progress. The headteacher's steadfast leadership has put an end to this. While there is still room for better performance by many pupils, standards are rising, staff are more ambitious, teaching is better and this is raising pupils' achievement.
- Leadership has been strengthened across the school. The leadership of teaching and learning is resulting in pupils in nearly all classes making better progress and, for an increasing number, good progress. Challenging targets are set for teachers and they are held to account for the progress pupils make each half term. All teachers' assessments are accurate so that everyone is aware of which pupils need extra help. The headteacher has made a firm link between teacher's performance in the classroom and what they are paid. Increases in salary are dependent upon proven improvements in teaching and pupil progress. Equal opportunity is well promoted through this system, to ensure that all pupils make similar progress. The gap in achievement of free school meals pupils has closed and the gap between the progress of girls and boys is narrowing rapidly.
- Middle leaders have responsibility for checking on their areas and ensuring that planning, teaching and the marking of books is leading to better achievement.
- The school works tirelessly with parents in encouraging them to be involved in their children's education. Parents are particularly pleased with the recent e-book initiative in which teachers upload books onto the internet so that children and parents can read them at home. Children with no access to the internet can take the books out of the school library.
- Safeguarding arrangements are securely managed and fully meet statutory requirements.
- The school has received extensive and useful support from the local authority providing expert

advice in the teaching of English and mathematics and in verifying that the school's estimates of its improving performance are accurate.

- Senior leaders have a very clear and accurate grasp of the school's priorities and know its strengths and weaknesses. All staff work hard to ensure the school is a warm, friendly and stimulating environment in which children can learn. The curriculum is being overhauled to bring extra creativity and excitement into lessons and is good. It supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and provides a window on the wider world.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are very well informed about the school through their numerous visits and attendance at school events and discussions with leaders. They have a good range of expertise and this, together with a regular series of training courses for their roles means they are in a good position to hold the school to account. Governors understand how to compare the school's performance with that of others and check for themselves the annual data on English and mathematics. They pay particular attention to how the headteacher manages teacher's performance and how the additional pupil premium funding is spent on helping those in danger of underachieving. They fulfil their duties with regard to safeguarding rigorously.

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	104988
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	404965

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	363
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Meaden
Headteacher	Rebecca Bridges
Date of previous school inspection	11 April 2011
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