

# Bickerton Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Long Lane, Bickerton, Malpas, Cheshire SY14 8AP

**Inspection dates** 17–18 April 2013

<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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Achievement is good. Pupils join the school with skills expected for their age or slightly below. They make good progress, so that they leave at the end of Year 6 with attainment which is above national average.
- As a result of careful assessment and outstanding teaching, children make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Teaching overall is good. Teachers understand how well pupils are doing, and most use this information to plan lessons which meet the needs of all learners.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils feel very safe in school and are proud to be part of the school community. As a result, attendance is above average.
- As a consequence of the excellent support and guidance that they receive, pupils treat each other, adults and visitors with great respect and courtesy, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils have a genuine interest in others, and this is reflected in their high quality relationships.
- Leadership is good. Both leaders and governors have a very accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They use this information well to plan actions which are focused and prioritised, and bring about appropriate improvements.
- Leaders and governors use their knowledge of teachers' skills to provide training which meets their needs. As a result, staff morale is high and the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement is not yet outstanding. There are variations in progress between classes, particularly at Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Teachers do not always provide sufficient challenge to ensure that pupils reach their full potential. Teaching at Key Stage 1 requires improvement.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed all teachers and parts of nine lessons. Two lessons were observed jointly with the senior leadership team.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, and took into account the quality of their work and marking in their books.
- Opportunities were taken to talk to pupils in lessons, around school, and a formal discussion was held with members of the school council.
- Thirty seven responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, governors and with a representative of the local authority. The inspector also considered the responses to a staff questionnaire.
- A range of documentation was examined. These included minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of monitoring activities such as lesson observations, analysis of behaviour records, improvement plans and the school's data tracking pupils' progress.

## Inspection team

Christine Birchall Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Bickerton Holy Trinity Primary school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. This means that pupils are taught in five mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average as is the proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs. The vast majority of pupils are White British, with none speaking English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils leaving and joining the school outside the Reception Year and Year 6 is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. Pupil premium funding is provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils who are looked after by the local authority and the children of military personnel. In this school, pupils supported by the pupil premium are those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of teaching which is outstanding, so that achievement is outstanding, by:
  - systematically sharing the outstanding teaching which already exists within the school
  - ensuring that teaching and provision in Key Stage 1 builds on the outstanding practice which exists in the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - ensuring that all teachers are completely clear about what they want pupils to learn in lessons, and that they share with pupils what they need to do in order to be successful and achieve well
  - ensuring that all marking and feedback to pupils consistently provides them with clear next steps about what they need to do to improve.
- Ensure that governors know enough about teachers' performance management targets to check how well they are used to improve the quality of teaching.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- When pupils join the school in the Reception Year, their skills are typically those expected for their age and in some cases slightly below. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, their attainment is above average. This represents good progress. However, progress is uneven across the school.
- Children make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that they finish the year with attainment which is well above average. They are inquisitive and excited about learning, and are very able and willing to express their ideas to each other and to adults. The small number of Year 1 pupils taught in this mixed-age class also makes outstanding progress.
- However, progress generally slows at Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, attainment is broadly in line with national expectations, and has not built on the progress they made at the start of their school experience. Progress accelerates again across Key Stage 2.
- Achievement in English and mathematics is good overall. In English, pupils are usefully given opportunities to write for a range of different purposes and different styles, and English skills are well developed across the rest of the curriculum. In reading, younger pupils use their phonics skills (their knowledge of letters and the sounds that they make) to help them to sound out words. By Year 6, they read with confidence and enthusiasm. In mathematics, pupils are given opportunities to solve problems and to apply their understanding to real-life situations. This helps them to develop further their understanding of mathematical concepts and helps to secure their knowledge and skills.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also achieve well, as a result of careful monitoring and support. Similarly, there are no differences in the achievement of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium and the rest of their classmates. They make equally good progress and their attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6. The school successfully promotes equality of opportunity.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good overall and promotes good achievement over time, although there is a small amount of weaker teaching and some which is outstanding.
- A common feature of all lessons is high quality relationships between pupils and adults, which ensures that pupils are enthusiastic and attitudes to learning are excellent. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to support pupils and to ensure that they have the confidence to contribute to lessons, and classroom environments are bright and stimulating.
- When teaching is at its best, teachers use the information they have about how well pupils are doing extremely well to plan exciting activities which meet the needs of all pupils. For example, the children in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class were enthralled by the superhero day which was part of a theme spread over a number of weeks. The day was very carefully planned to ensure that the children had the opportunity to undertake a range of challenging activities around finding 'Bickerton Bear' who had been kidnapped. Their response was impressive as they solved problems which included physical challenges as well as how to get at a key which had been frozen in ice. Similarly, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were provided with a number of problem-solving activities which were well targeted to the needs of different pupils and promoted excited discussion about what they were learning.
- In the lessons where progress is most rapid, teachers use questioning very skilfully to encourage pupils to develop and explain their ideas, and expectations about what pupils can achieve is high. Marking and feedback are thorough and explain very clearly to pupils what they need to do to improve, and pupils respond well to the feedback.
- However, in a very small proportion of lessons, and particularly in Key Stage 1, the teacher was insufficiently clear about what it was they wanted pupils to learn. The information about how

well pupils were learning was not well used to provide activities which met the needs of all, and although pupils tried hard to do what was expected of them, progress in the lesson was not good.

- Marking is positive, but does not always explain clearly enough where pupils had gone wrong, or what they needed to do to improve.

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

- Pupils are overwhelmingly positive in their attitudes to school, saying that there is nothing which could be improved. They report that they feel very safe because of the high levels of care which they receive from adults, and this is confirmed by the views of parents. Pupils questioned could not think of any instances when bullying had taken place, but felt confident that if it did they would be able to talk to a teacher and get it resolved. They understand about the different forms which bullying can take, including cyber bullying, and are confident that they have been taught how to keep themselves safe.
- Behaviour around school is excellent. Pupils treat each other with respect, and display good manners at all times, including holding doors open for each other and for adults. Pupils from the Reception Year to Year 6 play very cooperatively together during breaks and lunchtimes, with the older ones taking care of the younger ones. They are very confident and articulate, and were very receptive to questions from the inspector about their school, giving thoughtful and mature answers.
- Behaviour in lessons is exemplary. They make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. Pupils are excited about learning, and determined to do their best at all times. As a result, there is high quality discussion about what they are learning in lessons, and pupils support and encourage each other, and are genuinely pleased when their classmates do well.
- The atmosphere around school is very harmonious. Although almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds, they have a good understanding of other cultures. This is an inclusive school, where pupils who join the school at different times report that they are made to feel very welcome.

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

- Leaders undertake a robust programme of monitoring activities to check how well the school is doing, and they have a very accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development. They use their findings to produce action plans which are clear and well prioritised.
- Leaders have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching, and ensure that there is appropriate training and support to meet teachers' development needs so that the overall quality of teaching has improved, although there is still some variation. Performance management targets are used effectively as a tool to improve teaching, and pay progression is appropriately linked to teachers' performance.
- Systems for tracking how well pupils are doing are very thorough, and leaders and teachers can quickly identify where pupils are at risk of falling behind and take action to help them to catch up. This ensures that pupils achieve well over time, but there is still some variation in progress between classes, which is not being addressed rigorously enough.
- Subject leaders are well supported to develop their skills and to move their area of responsibility forward. They have the opportunity to undertake a range of monitoring activities, supported by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and are empowered to take appropriate actions to bring about improvements.
- The curriculum is well organised to promote good achievement, ensuring that pupils can develop their skills across a number of subjects. It provides a range of additional opportunities, such as after-school activities and visits, which enrich pupils' learning experiences, and ensures that their

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

- Parents are well informed about the progress of their children, and are actively supported to help with their child's learning, particularly the parents of disabled children, those with special educational needs or those whose children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
  - The local authority undertakes regular checks of the performance data, and views the school as having the capacity to bring about its own improvements.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governance is good. Governors know the school well, undertaking a range of first-hand activities, such as meeting with subject leaders in reviews, in order to check how well the school is doing. There are very clear systems and processes in place to enable them to fulfil their role, and it is evident in minutes of meetings that they ask challenging questions about achievement and teaching in order to hold leaders to account for bringing about improvement. They ensure that pupil premium funding is spent wisely and check that no groups of pupils are at risk of underachieving. Although they have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, they are not as well informed about teachers' performance management targets and their impact as they could be, and recognise this as an area for development. They ensure that child protection procedures are exemplary and that all statutory safeguarding responsibilities are met.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111268
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	403142

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>	118
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andy Butler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Sweetnam
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01829 720240
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