

Berry Hill Primary School

Nine Wells Road, Berry Hill, Coleford, Gloucestershire, GL16 7AT

Inspection dates 17–18 April 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| 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.

- Pupils make particularly good progress in reading so that standards are above average at the end of Year 6.
- Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress from their well below average starting points so that standards in English and mathematics are average by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils feel safe in the school and they behave consistently well in lessons and around the school.
- Teaching is predominantly good and occasionally outstanding. It has improved since the previous report because teachers now give pupils very clear targets and guidance on how to improve.
- The leadership has an accurate grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It reacted swiftly to address a dip in performance and took effective actions which have improved teaching and achievement.
- The governing body is now holding the school to account much more effectively. It is well informed because it has good systems to monitor the performance of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. This is because teachers do not provide sufficiently challenging work regularly enough to extend the progress of the most able. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage does not consistently make the best use of the outside area.
- Pupils make less rapid progress in writing than reading. Too few pupils have a good understanding of punctuation and sentence structure and their writing tasks are not linked often enough to their interests in reading.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 14 lessons, taught by six teachers. Half of these were jointly observed with either the headteacher or assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, teachers, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors listened to a selection of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reading in class.
- Inspectors looked at school documentation, including that relating to the progress and attainment of pupils currently in the school, safeguarding and attendance, and how teachers' performance is monitored by school leaders. The inspectors also examined the work in pupils' books.
- The views of 42 parents were analysed through the Parent View website.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed in 29 questionnaires returned by school staff.

Inspection team

Alwyne Jolly, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Inge Fey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has an average proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children from families who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from families with parents in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs and who are supported at school action is well above the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and who are supported at school action plus or by a statement of educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current 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 by:
 - developing the use of the outdoor area to enhance children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - making sure teaching more consistently provides sufficient challenge to extend the learning of the most-able pupils.
- Improve the standard of pupils' writing by:
 - developing their skills in punctuation and how to form sentences correctly
 - linking writing tasks more closely to what pupils are reading to build on their strengths
 - extending throughout the school the good practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 where pupils' skills in speaking and listening are developed effectively to enable them to write better.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join Reception with skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematics that are well below those expected for their age. When they leave the school, standards are in line with the national average in the key subjects of English and mathematics, confirming the good progress that has been made. Lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's own tracking confirm the rising trend in pupils' attainment and progress. All groups achieve well, although occasionally the most-able older pupils do not attain the standards of which they are capable in writing.
- Varied and occasionally relatively small cohorts mean that results in national tests must be viewed with caution for any one year. However, there has been a clear rising trend of attainment in line with the national average. When there was an apparent dip in attainment in 2011, particularly in mathematics, decisive actions were taken to address apparent underperformance, ensuring this dip was not repeated.
- The Year 1 phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make) screening check indicated that some boys had not grasped the essential basic skills for reading. However, intense scrutiny by inspectors confirmed that the younger boys now have a more secure grasp of the connection between letters and sounds. There are good systems to develop reading. As a result pupils in all years read enthusiastically and can talk confidently about the authors they like and the stories they enjoy. Current attainment reflects the above average national test results in 2012 where all pupils attained the expected level and many exceeded it.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because the work is set at the right level for them. Their attainment compares well with other pupils who need extra help in schools.
- The achievement of pupils supported through the pupil premium is impressive. In the latest national tests they attained average points scores which were above the national average in both English and mathematics. In fact there was no gap at all between their performance and others in the school or nationally. This strong relative performance is also evident in current work in books and lessons.
- The weakest feature is the standard of writing. There has been an effective focus on speaking and listening which has been translated into better writing by younger pupils. However, this has not been extended into Key Stage 2. The school provides suitable opportunities for writing across the curriculum but does not harness pupils' enthusiasm and competence in reading to push up standards in writing. Progress, particularly for those who are less able, is further hampered by an insecure grasp of punctuation and limited ability to form interesting sentences.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching for all ages is predominantly good and occasionally outstanding. This has a direct impact on the consistently good progress observed in classrooms and reflected in pupils' work. When teaching is outstanding it is because there are high expectations and the pace of learning is rapid. Occasionally in other lessons, too little is expected of most-able pupils so their learning is not extended sufficiently.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively throughout the school and their pro-active approaches enhance pupils' learning. In several classes they teach small groups of similar ability pupils purposefully and with careful judgement as to the amount of support each pupil needs. This has a particular impact on the good progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Relationships are good between the pupils themselves and pupils and adults. A range of teaching strategies is used for all classes and the subject content is invariably interesting and relevant.

- Teaching of the basic skills of mathematics and English is consistently good. It promotes understanding of mathematical principles so that the skills pupils learn are secure. The link between letters and sounds is particularly well taught to develop pupils' early reading skills. There is a good balance of practical activities and reinforcement of essential sounds which engages the pupils' interest and accelerates their progress.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good as children's needs are carefully identified and addressed in both the planning and delivery of lessons. This ensures they make good progress in all areas of learning. Children benefit from well-judged adult support but show a quickly developing sense of independence. The outdoor area, however, is not being used sufficiently to enhance children's learning.
- The quality of marking was criticised in the previous report but now is much better. It is thorough, regular and is characterised by detailed suggestion on how pupils can improve. This supports clear targets which are well understood by pupils. These are key factors in the consistently good progress made by pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their punctuality and positive attitude to school life. Representatives enjoy being part of the school council and other pupils welcome the jobs they have to do in their classrooms. Attendance is broadly average and has improved over the last year.
- The positive attitudes are reflected in pupils' enthusiastic participation in many lessons. There is an emphasis on paired discussions in most classes to engage their interest. Occasionally, however, a minority of pupils are too passive and teachers do not involve them fully enough in lessons.
- Behaviour in lessons is consistently good and often outstanding. This was notable in the Reception class when children undertook an activity as part of the Forest School initiative. Although they were excited and stimulated, they remained sensible and focused carefully on what they were doing.
- Behaviour in the playground is also good. Pupils said there were rare occasions of bullying, mainly name-calling, but they were dealt with swiftly by teachers. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take and how to respond to them. They considered they felt very safe in school.

The leadership and management are good

- The senior leadership has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There are rigorous systems to review its performance and a range of support is used well to identify effective strategies to bring about improvement. This was exemplified by the decision to seek a greater input from the local authority after a dip in results in 2011.
- Very clear advice and effective monitoring support from the local authority helped the school to identify priorities and implement rapid action plans. The school quickly improved the quality of its development planning and introduced clear strategies to improve performance. This led to higher standards, better tracking of pupils' progress and improved attainment and progress. The school is now receiving 'light touch' support.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous report due to more regular and rigorous monitoring by middle managers as well as the headteacher. This led to clear development points on how to improve to which teachers have responded well.
- The school has a well-balanced and broad curriculum and pupils' books indicate the wide range of their studies. Visits and links to other schools and communities in Italy, Spain and Poland reflect the strong international links which enhance the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development.

- Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and interact well together. This is because the school is effective at promoting equal opportunities and refuses to tolerate any form of discrimination. The school successfully addressed almost all the identified areas for improvement in the previous report. It recognises it still has to build up better links, particularly with a small minority of parents who gave critical Parent View responses. However, its performance confirms it is well placed to improve further.

The governance of the school:

- The governing body has responded positively to criticisms in the previous report. Performance management arrangements are thoroughly implemented by both the headteacher and governing body and give motivation for good teaching. This has been supported by appropriate professional development, particularly for new initiatives and to train governors. This was because they recognised that in order to hold the school more effectively to account, they needed to receive specific training in relevant areas. They are now particularly knowledgeable in how to interpret data and measure the comparative performance of the school. The governing body's minutes reflect how it challenges the senior leaders and ensures teaching, attainment and provision are all good enough. It is well informed about the pupil premium allocation and has ensured the money is used to enhance those pupils' progress and attainment. The school's safeguarding arrangements fully met requirements at the time of the inspection.
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What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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> |

| Boarding/Residential provision | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements. |
| Grade 3 | Adequate | A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses. |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 115549 |
| Local authority | Gloucestershire |
| Inspection number | 401518 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 158 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ed Breton |
| Headteacher | Gail Jones |
| Date of previous school inspection | 23–24 June 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01594 832262 |
| Email address | head@berryhill.gloucs.sch.uk |

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