

Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy

Sussex Place, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST3 4TP

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Children have a successful start to school and make good progress in Nursery and Reception, particularly in language development.
- Pupils continue to make good progress through Years 1 to 6. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is average in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is mostly good, and there are examples of outstanding practice.
- Teachers set high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Their explanations, demonstrations, skilful questioning and marking promote pupils' learning well.
- Teachers provide demanding tasks that are well-suited to pupils' different abilities and learning needs.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners.
- Pupils are courteous, cooperative and friendly. They are extremely well-behaved in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils feel safe and very well cared for by staff.
- The Principal, leadership team and governors provide strong leadership for the school and are focused on raising achievement and improving teaching.
- Leaders and staff have created a very caring and vibrant school environment for pupils to learn and develop.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy the exciting range of learning activities provided with music, performing arts and additional activities as strengths.
- Leaders and teachers have successfully supported other schools and teachers in school improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, teaching is less than good and there is not enough outstanding teaching.
- In a few cases, lessons lack a sharp purpose and so pupils are unclear about what they are expected to learn.
- At times pupils' learning is not moved on quickly enough in lessons.
- Opportunities for pupils to plan and organise their own presentation of work are limited in a few lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 27 lessons, some of which were seen together with the Principal and senior staff.
- They held discussions with the Principal, senior staff, staff, governors and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 18 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Responses to an inspection questionnaire from 44 staff were analysed.
- The inspectors examined school policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' planning of learning, pupils' work, and the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bimla Kumari

Additional Inspector

Huda Aslam

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average-sized primary school.
- Over half of the pupils are from a Pakistani heritage and nearly a third are White British. Other pupils come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds.
- Nearly two third of the pupils speak English as an additional language which is well above average for a primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is also well above average.
- An above average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils looked after by the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals or those with a parent in the services.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school converted to an academy in April 2011. The predecessor school was Belgrave Church of England Primary School.
- Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy is a National Teaching School.
- The Principal is a national leader of education and there are specialist leaders of education and professional mentors on the staff. This expertise is used to support other schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is at least good and increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that in all classes:
 - the purpose of the lesson is clear so that pupils fully understand what they are expected to learn
 - a good pace is maintained and pupils are swiftly moved on to the main task
 - pupils are given sufficient opportunities to organise their own learning and decide how to present their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Nursery with skills well below those expected for their age. Their communication and language skills are low. The children at an early stage of learning English gain in confidence and very quickly improve their language skills.
- In Nursery and Reception, children make good progress in all areas of learning because of good teaching and the interesting range of indoor and outdoor activities provided.
- Good progress continues through Years 1 and 6. By the end of Year 6, attainment is average in English and mathematics. An above average proportion of pupils reach the expected levels in English and mathematics but a below average proportion attain the higher levels. The school is taking positive steps to extend the more-able pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of good teaching and the well-targeted and specific support they receive.
- In 2012, the Year 6 pupils supported by the pupil premium attained lower standards than other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils were about 10 months behind their classmates in reading, seven in mathematics and five months behind in writing. The funding is being used effectively to provide additional teaching to accelerate the progress of pupils eligible for the funding, particularly in reading.
- Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening because teachers provide a good range of opportunities for them to discuss their learning in pairs or in small groups.
- In reading, pupils make good progress in acquiring essential skills. They enjoy reading the wide range of books on offer at school. The results of the phonics (linking sounds and letters) check for Year 1 in 2012 were below average, but effective action has been taken to ensure that most of the pupils who did not reach the required standard have caught up. Older pupils enjoy reading and reviewing more demanding texts.
- Pupils are making good gains in their writing. They write for a range of purposes in English and in other areas of the curriculum. In Year 2, pupils wrote interesting pieces about learning in a Victorian classroom and about characters such as Oliver Twist. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 made good progress in writing a stage direction with dialogue for Cinderella. In Year 6 pupils wrote convincing pieces to persuade people to visit London. After a successful London experience, they wrote informative and evaluative reviews of the play 'War Horse'. Pupils' handwriting is developing well.
- In mathematics, pupils often make rapid gains in acquiring and applying mathematical skills to solve problems. In Year 2, pupils made outstanding progress in their understanding of symmetry. Hand-held computer devices enhanced their learning well. In Year 6, pupils used their prior knowledge extremely well to calculate percentages of large numbers in an accurate and efficient way.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good quality teaching contributes well to pupils' learning and achievement. There are examples of outstanding practice across the school. Just occasionally teaching is less than good.
- Pupils were full of praise for their teachers saying, 'Teachers help you when you are stuck' and, 'Teachers make learning fun.'
- Where teaching is outstanding, pupils are inspired and motivated by the teacher's enthusiasm and strong subject expertise. Pupils respond extremely well to the teacher's high expectations of learning and rise to the challenge of the exciting activities and tasks set. Pupils are highly motivated, productive and they learn at a rapid pace.
- All teachers successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They create an attractive classroom environment and a positive atmosphere for learning. Strong

relationships are established and pupils' ability to work in pairs and teams is very well-developed.

- In the Nursery and Reception classes, children are provided with an interesting range of indoor and outdoor activities. They receive well-focused teaching from adults. Children have plenty of opportunities to explore, be creative and learn on their own.
- In almost all lessons, the teacher successfully shares the purpose of the lesson with the class so pupils understand what they are expected to learn. Teachers also set specific steps to success to guide pupils' learning. Just occasionally, the teacher does not share the learning intentions well enough with the class and pupils are less clear about their learning.
- Teachers' explanations, instructions and demonstrations are clear and informative. Questioning is used effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and to check their understanding of new learning. In just a few lessons, the rate of learning slows when teacher's introductions are too long when pupils are eager and ready to move on to the main task.
- Teachers make effective use of the information about pupils' attainment to plan their teaching and to match tasks to pupils' different abilities. This is particularly noticeable in mathematics. As a result, pupils are challenged well and their interest is sustained. They make good progress in acquiring knowledge, deepening their understanding and applying skills. In a few lessons, pupils' learning is too directed by worksheets, charts and writing frames. When this happens, pupils, especially the more-able, have insufficient opportunities to decide how best to organise and present their own work.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are promoted well. Essential reading skills, including phonics (letters and the sounds they make), are effectively taught through a regular and well-structured programme. Pupils' handwriting is developing well because this area is taught so well.
- The teaching of writing is effective and there are examples of excellence. Teachers use a range of stimuli to inspire pupils' writing. They demonstrate writing skills and techniques very well to the pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to draft and improve their writing.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is effective. Activities and support are closely suited to pupils' individual learning needs. During lessons, teaching assistants carefully record how well pupils are doing and help them move on to the next stage of their learning.
- Pupils benefit from teachers' good oral feedback and written marking. Marking acknowledges good work and constructive comments help pupils to improve. As a result, pupils know how well they are doing and understand the next steps in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Children in the Nursery classes settle well into school routines because of the positive relationships established with adults. They gain in confidence in their learning and in their personal and social development. Children enjoy the exciting activities provided as they learn and play together.
- Throughout the school, pupils show considerable enthusiasm for learning. In lessons, concentration and levels of participation are high. Pupils are cooperative, friendly and show consideration and respect for others. They have a good understanding of different cultures and faiths. Relationships in the school between adults and pupils and between pupils are extremely harmonious and positive.
- Pupils are extremely well-behaved in lessons, in assembly and in the playing areas. In many lessons seen, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour and relationships with others were exemplary. The school's records of incidents show that behaviour is typically of a very high standard.
- Pupils have a very clear understanding of bullying and the various forms it can take, including name-calling, physical bullying and cyber-bullying. Pupils reported to inspectors, 'There might be a little bit of bullying in the school'. However, all were confident that any unkind or unpleasant behaviour would be dealt with quickly by the adults.

- The school works effectively in promoting and monitoring attendance. Pupils are eager to come to school because they enjoy their learning and the wide range of exciting activities provided and, as a result, attend regularly.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers are successfully promoting good achievement for pupils, good teaching and outstanding behaviour and safety.
- The Principal, head of school and staff have created a very caring, safe and vibrant school environment for pupils to learn and develop. Values such as courtesy, consideration and respect are at the heart of the school's ethos.
- The school has an effective leadership structure where roles and responsibilities are carefully defined. Senior and key leaders are fully engaged in checking and improving their areas of responsibility. Positive action is being taken where there are inconsistencies in pupils' achievement or teaching.
- Checking the quality of teaching and how to improve it is high priority for the school. Some of the school's teachers successfully coach and develop teachers at Belgrave and in other schools. Senior leaders observe lessons and provide constructive feedback to teachers. A good range of professional training opportunities is provided for staff. There are elements of teaching which are less than good and leaders are taking steps to tackle these.
- There are effective procedures for checking staff performance and developing their professional skills. Targets to improve performance are carefully linked to pupils' progress and to the improvement of learning activities.
- An exciting range of learning activities promotes good achievement and outstanding personal development for pupils. There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in a range of subjects. Clubs, educational visits, music and the performing arts and outdoor learning are strengths of a well-developed curriculum.
- All pupils have access to the full range of activities provided, and the staff strive to ensure that different groups do as well as they can. The school is a harmonious and productive community with no signs of discrimination.
- Pupil premium funding has been allocated efficiently and effectively to provide additional support to help eligible pupils and to accelerate their progress.
- The Principal and other members of staff have been successful in promoting school improvement and strengthening teaching in a range of other schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are supportive and extremely proud to be associated with the school. They have a clear understanding of pupils' attainment and progress and how these compare to schools nationally. Governors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. The governors' clear knowledge of the school's performance enables them to challenge the leadership team and hold the school to account. Governors are up to date with the requirements relating to the management of staff performance, and ensure that promotion and salary are linked to pupils' progress. They check that the pupil premium is properly spent. Governors attend a range of training courses to increase their effectiveness. Effective steps are taken to ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met.

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	136549
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	423316

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

Type of school	Academy Converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	481
Appropriate authority	Trust board
Chair	Susan Johnson
Principal	Chris Brislen
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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