

Bishopswood Infant School

Barlow Road, Tadley, RG26 3NA

Inspection dates 12–13 September 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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Over time, leaders have not made sure that teaching challenges pupils sufficiently and standards have declined, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Considering their different starting points, the progress of pupils requires improvement, particularly in writing. More-able pupils are not always given work which is challenging enough to enable them to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teaching about linking letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is not always consistent. This constrains pupils' progress in reading, and particularly in writing.
- There remains too much teaching which requires improvement. Teachers do not readily adapt the tasks pupils are doing, when they finish their work quickly.
- The period of turbulence in the leadership of the school, prior to the appointment of the current executive headteacher, has limited the effectiveness of leadership and management.
- Until recently, governors have not ensured that strong leadership tackles the issues facing the school.
- The development of wider leadership is very recent and is not yet sufficiently strong to bring about rapid improvements.

The school has the following strengths:

- Since taking up post a year ago, the executive headteacher has eliminated inadequate teaching and begun to develop the wider leadership within the school.
- Strategies to tackle the decline in mathematics have begun to have an impact, and attainment has begun to improve significantly, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Children in the Reception class are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Behaviour is good; pupils are cooperative and keen to learn. Adults' good relationships with pupils and between themselves mean pupils feel safe and well cared for.
- New arrangements for governance are having a positive impact. Governors are increasingly challenging the school to show the evidence of improvements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by six teachers, including groups of pupils working with teaching assistants. About a third of these observations were carried out together with senior leaders.
- The inspectors looked at the work pupils have done, both during the lessons observed and over time, and spoke to pupils about their work and their views about their learning.
- The inspectors met with senior leaders and teachers who have responsibility for leading aspects of the work of the school. During these meetings, inspectors looked at documents provided by the school and discussed what these show about pupils' learning. These documents included teachers' records about how well pupils are doing, procedures and policies to make sure pupils are safe, the school's self-evaluation and plans for further improvements, and minutes from meetings, including those of the governing body.
- Inspectors also spoke to parents and carers informally at the start and end of the school day, and reviewed the 18 responses to Parent View, the online Ofsted survey. The inspectors also evaluated the views of staff at the school through the responses to a questionnaire, returned during the inspection.
- At the time of the inspection, children in the Reception class had only very recently started staying at school for the full school day.

Inspection team

Andrew Saunders, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Julie Sackett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average sized infant school with two classes in each year group.
- Most pupils are White British. The small minority of other pupils represent a wide range of backgrounds, including a very few who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action is slightly above average; the proportion supported at school action plus or with statements of special educational needs is average. However these proportions vary widely from year to year.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This additional funding is provided by the government for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils from families serving in the armed forces, and children looked after by the local authority. There are currently no children from families serving in the armed forces.
- In September 2013, the school federated with the junior school on the same site, although the headteacher of the junior school has been the executive headteacher for about a year. There is currently an acting deputy headteacher in post.
- As well as the junior school, there is a privately run nursery on the site; this is subject to separate inspection arrangements. There is also a breakfast and after-school club run in the school, which was not inspected as part of this inspection. The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good teaching and develop more outstanding practice in the school, by making sure that:
 - teachers plan lessons which challenge all pupils to the full extent of their capability
 - teachers use the information they collect about pupils' skills and understanding to adapt the tasks and teachers' explanations more quickly according to the pace at which pupils learn.
- Increase the pace of progress of pupils across the school, particularly in writing, in order to raise attainment, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations about the level and quality of work pupils are capable of doing, particularly pupils who are more able
 - providing pupils with more purposeful reasons to write, across the topics they study
 - increasing the consistency of teaching pupils about letters and the sounds they make, particularly in how this supports writing.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leaders across the school in demonstrating and nurturing the very best practice in teaching, by:
 - giving teachers who lead aspects of the school more training and the time to check how well agreed strategies are being used in the classroom
 - working with staff to ensure that learning opportunities in the outdoor area are just as effective as those indoors, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In the past, pupils have reached standards which have been above average. A decline means that standards have been closer to the average for the past two years.
- Last year's cohort of Year 2 pupils made accelerated progress in the last two terms, but this was not sufficient to make up for earlier, slower progress. Consequently the standards they reached dipped slightly below average in reading and writing.
- Teachers' records, the school's own self-evaluation and lesson observations show that progress requires improvement. This is true for boys and girls, pupils from different minority ethnic groups and for more-able pupils.
- In the phonics spelling check in Year 1, fewer pupils than average reached the expected level, because the teaching of phonics has not been consistent. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level rose considerably in 2013.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have previously made similar progress to other pupils in the school. In 2013, the standards reached by these pupils rose, considerably so in mathematics, because of the support they receive.
- Until recently, pupils who were eligible for the pupil premium reached standards which were very similar to those of other pupils in the school. In 2013, the progress of these pupils was not as strong. At the end of Year 2, these pupils were about a term behind other pupils in reading and writing, although the gap was smaller in mathematics.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there are good partnerships between adults, suitable resources and well-thought-out routines. This means that children settle in quickly and are keen to learn. They display great curiosity and are very cooperative, helping each other and happily taking turns. By the end of Reception, they are well prepared to continue learning in Key Stage 1. However, leaders have not yet ensured that the opportunities to learn are as enticing in the outdoor area as they are indoors, particularly opportunities to write.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching too often requires improvement, and outstanding teaching is too rare. Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can do.
- Some pupils finish their work very quickly because the tasks teachers plan for them are not always hard enough. Progress also stalls when teachers do not use the information they gather about how quickly pupils have grasped a particular skill or understanding, to adapt the task or their explanations.
- Where teaching is better, pupils are encouraged to write for a wide variety of purposes. For example, children in Reception had great fun with their 'pirate writing' which helped them to develop their skills quickly. However, teachers are not always confident in the way they teach pupils how to link letters and the sounds they make (phonics), and there are missed opportunities to relate this to writing. Too often writing tasks lack a sense of inspiration and purpose.
- There is now an agreed approach to marking pupils' work and this is being used increasingly consistently by teachers. Teaching assistants also contribute well to the feedback pupils get, so that pupils know how well they are doing. There are still too few opportunities for pupils to respond to these comments or do what teachers have suggested, and this slows pupils' progress.
- Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons, particularly outdoors, when they get the chance to make up games that develop their skills. They also like taking part in clubs and sporting activities, including football and tag rugby. This is helping pupils to appreciate the importance of

healthy lifestyles.

- The support given to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is increasingly successful because their needs are carefully evaluated and the most appropriate strategies put in place. This is improving the progress these pupils make so that they make up any lost ground.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils like being at school, they behave well and are keen to learn. They get on with the tasks their teachers have planned for them and maintain good levels of concentration. Very occasionally, pupils become distracted when the tasks they are given to do are not inspiring or hard enough to keep them engaged.
- Pupils say that poor behaviour is a thing of the past. The school's success in tackling the behavioural issues of a few pupils is a significant factor in the increased progress Year 2 pupils made last year.
- Pupils currently in the school need very few reminders about the expectations adults have of them, and frequently remind each other about the 'Golden Rules'. As one pupil said to another, 'We do not do that here!' Parents, carers and pupils agree that behaviour has improved and is typically good.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying of any kind in the school, and pupils receive training about what might constitute bullying and how to help prevent it from happening in their school. They feel safe at school and get plenty of teaching about how they can help to keep themselves safe, for example on the road and about fire safety.
- Older pupils like having opportunities to work and play alongside younger pupils and they are proud to be good role models for them. Pupils from different backgrounds get along very happily together. There are good relationships across the school.
- The attendance of most pupils is broadly average. The school reminds parents and carers about the impact of pupils' attendance on their performance although the attendance of a very few pupils is below average, despite the school's best efforts.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Changes in leadership are recent, following a period of turbulence. The new executive headteacher has quickly established an accurate view about the work of the school and has set out a clear vision for improving the situation. Close links with the junior school are helping to bring about the necessary changes. However, this has not yet had enough time to have a sustained impact on pupils' performance over time.
- The executive headteacher has accurately evaluated the quality of teaching and is effective in challenging teaching which needs to improve. Recent training has been undertaken to help teachers know what leaders expect, and records show that the proportion of teaching judged to be good is increasing. There is no longer any evidence of inadequate teaching.
- Teachers who lead aspects of the school are mostly very new to the roles. While they are enthusiastic and share the vision for the school, they have not yet had time to make an impact in all areas. They do not always have the experience or time to check that the best teaching strategies, which have been promoted by leaders, are being used in each lesson.
- More recently, the teaching of mathematics has improved because of more effective leadership including a thorough review of what is taught and how it is taught. Similarly, there have been improvements in the resources available and the training of teachers in mathematics, to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Parents and carers have positive views about the school; some said that many things have improved since the executive headteacher took over. They feel confident that the school will continue to get even better.
- The accurate self-evaluation of the executive headteacher, the widely shared vision to achieve

better outcomes for pupils, the increased challenge by governors, and the recent improvements in mathematics, show that the school has the capacity to continue improving.

- The local authority provides a medium level of support for the school, and has helped the governors make the transition to the federation of the junior and infant schools. The level of support has diminished as the executive headteacher has shown that improvements are taking place.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Until recently, governors had not ensured there is strong leadership of the school and this has led to the decline in achievement. Since merging with the governing body of the junior school, governance has improved. Together with the executive headteacher, governors now have a more accurate view about the issues the school needs to tackle, and are making sure that these issues are given a high priority. They have supported the executive headteacher in making sure that the levels of pay awarded to teachers reflect the quality of their teaching, and that teachers have appropriate training. Governors work with the school to evaluate how effective the pupil premium is proving in improving outcomes for eligible pupils. With the executive headteacher, they check that all groups of pupils have equality of opportunity and that any potential discrimination is challenged.
- Governors make sure that the school meets its statutory requirements, that staff are trained to understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe, and that procedures for recruitment ensure adults working with pupils are appropriate to do so. Members of the governing body increasingly undertake training to keep themselves up to date with developments. They have improved their knowledge of the quality of teaching, and of how the performance of the school compares with that of others

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	116035
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	426441

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary McCrae
Headteacher	Glen Golding
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 September 2011
Telephone number	0118 9812836
Fax number	0118 9817782
Email address	adminoffice@bishopswood-inf.hants.sch.uk

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