

Bramley Church of England Primary School

Bramley Lane, Bramley, Tadley, Hampshire, RG26 5AH

Inspection dates 6–7 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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 in Key Stage 2 need to catch up from where they have fallen behind in the past. The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough for all pupils to achieve well.
- Pupil premium funding is having a mixed impact. Some pupils eligible for this funding make less progress because the teaching in their class or in small-group work is not yet good. Some of the activities designed to support these pupils are too new to evaluate.
- Some work and additional support for lower-attaining pupils is not pitched at the right level for them to improve their skills quickly enough.
- Some more-able pupils have gaps in their mathematical knowledge and this has means that they struggle to solve the more challenging problems that they should be capable of completing.
- In some lessons pupils call out inappropriately, get over excited in lessons or chat with their friends when the teacher is talking. This slows down the pace of learning.

The school has the following strengths:

- Teaching has improved so that inadequate teaching has been eradicated. Pupils are making better progress and, in many classes, are beginning to overcome their previous underachievement.
- Progress overall has accelerated, so many pupils have made better progress in the last 10 months.
- Pupils get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are ready for the challenges of Key Stage 1.
- Leadership, including governance, has been effective at improving teaching and achievement. Leaders with different responsibilities demonstrate they are capable of driving school improvement. Governors are rigorous in holding the school to account.
- Pupils feel safe and relationships between teachers and pupils are generally positive.

Information about this inspection

- Most of the inspection was spent observing teaching. Inspectors observed teaching in 21 lessons, including four joint lesson observations with the interim headteacher. Inspectors also observed small groups of pupils working with an adult other than their teacher.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised information on pupils' progress and looked at work in pupils' books. They considered information about safeguarding, monitoring of teaching and behaviour management.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to these children about their learning.
- Inspectors talked to a small group of pupils formally and others informally in lessons and on the playground.
- Meetings were held with leaders, members of school staff, members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 145 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views expressed by a small number of parents and carers who spoke informally at the end of the school day.
- The lead inspector took into account his findings from the previous two visits while the school was requiring special measures to improve.

Inspection team

Michael Sheridan HMI, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lisa Moore HMI

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-size primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than average and nearly all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium, which is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority or from service families, is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.
- The interim headteacher is seconded from another local school. She has agreed with the governing body to remain in post until a permanent headteacher is appointed. The governing body was advertising this post at the time of this inspection.
- The school received its last full inspection in November 2012 when it was judged to require special measures. This inspection took place during Her Majesty's Inspector's third monitoring visit.
- 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 teaching so all pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, achieve well by:
 - ensuring work is always set at the right level for individual pupils
 - planning carefully so support staff are focused on teaching the skills pupils need to overcome misconceptions and move forward in their learning
 - making sure that throughout the school more-able pupils are learning the mathematical skills and concepts they need to reach higher levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Improve behaviour in classes by:
 - ensuring teaching is engaging and activities suitably challenging for all pupils
 - ensuring staff consistently enforce behaviour policies so pupils understand that they are expected to behave sensibly in lessons and not disrupt the learning of others.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because there are too many pupils who have gaps in their knowledge, and teaching is not consistently good enough to overcome this previous underachievement.
- Last year's Year 6, an able group, performed poorly in their end of key stage tests, achieving broadly average standards of attainment. Their teacher assessments, corroborated by Her Majesty's Inspector at the last monitoring visit, showed that many were working at a higher level in class but their learning was just not secure enough to gain the grades they should have achieved because too much content had to be covered in the latter part of their final year.
- Pupils throughout the school make better progress than in the past. In the last year, each year group as a whole has made at least expected progress in English and mathematics. While this is the case, some higher- and lower-attaining pupils are not catching up quickly enough in some classes. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers.
- Higher-attaining pupils, particularly in upper Key Stage 2, have gaps in their mathematical knowledge. This means that they are not able to easily recall the skills they need to solve more complex mathematical problems that are essential to secure higher levels of attainment.
- Some lower-attaining pupils are not overcoming weaknesses in their learning quickly enough because they are not given the guidance they need to improve their work. In some lessons, lower-attaining pupils are given adapted tasks that keep them busy but do not sufficiently develop the skills they need.
- Pupils eligible for free school meals make variable progress. In 2013 these pupils reached standards of attainment that were about two terms behind their peers in mathematics, one and a half terms behind in reading and about a year behind in writing. Within this group of pupils there were some who performed very well and some who performed poorly, and so it is throughout the school. Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding make the best progress in classes where they have consistently good teaching.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils achieve well. Last year's Year 2 reached above average standards of attainment in reading and mathematics. Achievement in writing has improved and last year's Year 2 group reached levels in line with the national average.
- Pupils get a good grounding in the Early Years Foundation Stage with most pupils reaching a good level of development. They are well prepared for Year 1 with many already becoming confident early readers, able to use letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words.
- As a result of this good start, and the continued strong focus on learning the sounds that letters make (often known as phonics), the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in their phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 was above the national average.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- While there is no doubt that teaching has improved, it is still too variable to be considered good. Some lessons do not sufficiently meet the needs of all groups of pupils, with teachers aiming at the middle so higher- and lower-attaining pupils miss out.
- Lower-attaining pupils in some classes are given work which is a watered down version of a harder task completed by their classmates. In some cases, little thought goes into designing tasks that will help these pupils develop the skills to catch up. Teaching assistants are not always adept at supporting pupils' learning or correcting misconceptions.
- In upper Key Stage 2, teachers are necessarily spending a lot of time going over basic mathematical concepts which should be secure, particularly for more-able pupils. This illustrates gaps that have existed in the curriculum. Teachers are much clearer than they have been in the past about what mathematical skills they need to teach pupils and how this links to future

learning.

- Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. Much of the teaching is good and some is outstanding. In good lessons teachers use questions very cleverly to probe and understand what pupils already know and where weaknesses exist. In the best lessons, these questions are used to encourage pupils to think deeply and, as a result, there are plenty of 'light bulb' moments where pupils discover answers and make rapid progress.
- In these strong lessons, pupils are constantly challenged. In some lessons, teachers cleverly used the metaphor of a pit that pupils would climb out of as their understanding grew. Pupils understood this to mean that as challenges became straight forward, they would be challenged more with increasingly complex problems. Pupils enjoyed this analogy and felt secure being made to think hard.
- Teachers increasingly use interesting subject matter to bring learning alive. In one class, pupils were inspired to write by considering the contents of an explorer's bag. Pupils are increasingly more excited by the opportunities they have to write. As a result, the quality of writing is improving. In some less well taught activities, pupils' behaviour dips as some activities are not as exciting.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. There is a clear focus on the development of language across all learning so children become confident in their ability as talkers, readers and writers. Adults plan purposeful and engaging activities across all areas of learning, providing timely support where useful to ensure children get the most out of the tasks they are engaged in. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Behaviour requires improvement because pupils sometimes disrupt learning in classes. This happens for two reasons:
 - In some lessons pupils simply get over excited when interesting activities are introduced. This is partly because these type of activities are quite new, but teachers are not consistent in how they deal with over-exuberance when it becomes disruptive to others, for example when children shout out or talk over the teacher.
 - In some lessons pupils are not engaged by their activities, because they find them uninspiring.
- Behaviour around school is generally good. Pupils move around the buildings sensibly and play well together during breaks. Pupils say that they feel safe at school. The systems to ensure they stay safe are secure and robustly checked by governors.
- Pupils are aware of how to stay safe. They understand the dangers inherent in situations that they might find themselves in and know what to do if they are threatened through, for example, cyber bullying.
- Pupils state that issues around swearing and homophobic name calling have been dealt with vigorously. Teachers spend time talking through issues that have arisen so solutions are found and pupils learn to play harmoniously together.
- Most parents and carers who expressed a view stated that they felt their children were safe and happy at school. Pupils are resolute that bullying and incidents of discrimination such as racism are very rare and always dealt with quickly. Pupils are confident to talk to adults about any problems they have.
- Attendance has improved and is above the national average, not least because of a project to encourage some pupils eligible for pupil premium funding to attend more regularly.
- Strategies for dealing with extreme behaviour have been successful. Exclusions are used rarely and always with the intention of challenging and changing patterns in behaviour.

The leadership and management are good

- There have been rapid improvements in the last year and, while the school is not yet good, it is moving swiftly in that direction. Leaders have proven that they are able to effectively drive and sustain school improvement.
- Most importantly, the capacity of leadership is not held solely by the interim headteacher. Leaders at different levels have stepped up to the mark and proven their worth and ability to lead school improvement.
- The school is carefully tracking the use and effectiveness of pupil premium funding, making adaptations to accelerate achievement for these children. Funding is provided for extra-curricular activities to promote self-esteem and ensure all pupils engage fully in school life. There are two additional teachers who have recently been brought in to release class teachers so they can support eligible pupils who have fallen behind. This is a well-thought-through strategy, but it is too early to see if it is making any difference.
- The school has not yet received the additional funding intended to improve opportunities in physical education. However it is taking action to widen the range and quality of physical activity available. The school has joined with other local schools to increase the opportunity to compete against other schools. Specialist coaches have been employed in, for example, rugby, tennis and street dance. The school is intending to train staff in gymnastics as this is an area where it has identified the need for professional development. Pupils' engagement in physical activity is increasing and their health improving as a result of these actions.
- The local authority has appropriately withdrawn intense support and focused on monitoring to ensure that leaders' view of the school is effective. Local authority officers meet regularly with leaders and constructively challenge them to demonstrate the improvements made. This has been appropriate as it has allowed leaders to demonstrate their capacity and hone their self-evaluation skills.

■ The governance of the school:

The governing body has improved considerably. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and remaining weaknesses. Their ability to challenge leaders in a constructive way is impressive. They carefully monitor the use of pupil premium funding, and are now challenging leaders to show how this is making a difference. They effectively use analysis of results and information from their observations to ask questions about pupils' performance and how the school compares to others. They are seeking to ensure that all pupils, including those eligible for extra funding, have equality of opportunity to achieve. The Chair of the Governing Body has made sure that each governor plays to their strengths so they add value through their individual responsibility. Governors are clear about how performance is managed, including how teachers' performance is linked to pay. They have sensibly come to an arrangement with the headteacher's substantive school so that they share responsibility for her performance management. They make sure the school fulfils its statutory duties, including those to keep pupils safe through safeguarding, health and safety systems and the safe recruitment of staff.

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	116278
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	423991

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	398
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicky Parker
Headteacher	Lyn Downes (interim)
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2012
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