

# The Beacon Infant and Nursery School

38 Robartes Road, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL31 1JQ

**Inspection dates** 22–23 January 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Teaching is consistently good, with some outstanding practice across the school.
- Behaviour is good. Safeguarding arrangements enable pupils to feel very safe at all times of the day.
- This is a very caring school where everyone really does matter. Pupils are very proud of their school.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and the harmonious atmosphere makes an important contribution to effective learning. There is excellent teamwork amongst the staff.
- Parents and carers highly value the support the school gives to individual children and their families.
- Pupils make good progress across the school and achieve well.
- Governors, senior staff and managers share high aspirations and have supported the headteacher to improve the quality of teaching. This has led to an improvement in pupils' achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always given sufficient opportunities to follow up the guidance teachers provide when they mark work.
- Teachers do not always check the level of pupils' understanding during lessons. As a result, they do not always provide sufficient advice and guidance to help pupils make more rapid progress.
- Progress in writing is not rapid enough for all pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons of which three were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons, heard children read and scrutinised a sample of pupils' written work.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, including senior and middle leaders, pupils and governors.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance as well as documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors took account of 12 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, a parental letter and spoke informally to a number of parents.
- The inspectors also took account of the 18 responses to staff questionnaires.
- A telephone conversation took place with a representative from the local authority.

## Inspection team

David Nebesnuick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mark Anderson

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This infant school is an average-sized school of its type.
- Most pupils attending the school are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, children from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is well above average.
- A slightly above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at normal times is lower than average.
- There is a breakfast club managed by the governing body and which formed part of the inspection.
- There have been a large number of staff changes since the previous inspection.
- There is a nursery unit on site, managed by the governing body, and which formed part of the inspection.
- Some facilities, including the hall, are shared with the adjacent junior school and the children's centre.
- The headteacher is a local leader in education (LLE) and provides support and guidance to other local schools. She is currently Chair of the local Cooperative Trust of five schools.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring that all teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons so that pupils make at least good progress and, whenever necessary, provide additional support and guidance to ensure that pupils make faster progress
  - enabling pupils to have sufficient opportunities to follow the guidance that teachers give in marked work on how to improve and develop their ideas
  - ensuring that additional ways are provided for all pupils to develop and strengthen their writing so that they achieve more rapid and sustained progress in this important skill.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Nursery with skills and abilities that are generally well below the levels expected of their age.
- Children settle quickly into school and the effective teaching in the Nursery, plus the good individual adult support each child receives, ensures that they make a good start to their education and achieve well. This good achievement continues throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and the majority of children leave the Reception class with skills and abilities that are only a little below age related expectations.
- Good progress in Year 1 and the effective teaching of phonic skills (linking letters and sounds) ensure that the school's Year 1 phonics screening test results are similar to the national average.
- Pupils' attainment in Year 2 in mathematics and reading is close to the national average. Writing skills have, for a number of years, remained the weaker area and are included in the school's development plan for improvement.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well in this inclusive school by all staff. They make good, sometimes outstanding, progress, from their individual starting points. A strong commitment to providing equality of opportunities enables these pupils reach their potential. Additional support is targeted well to support the work being done in lessons.
- The most able pupils do well, as do those pupils whose first language is not English. They make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress because their individual learning needs are well known and effectively provided for by each class teacher.
- The majority of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress, although a minority achieve below their age related expectation. Their attainment in the national assessments in 2013 was one term behind other pupils in writing and mathematics, but less than half a term in reading. Indications are that in the current year those eligible for the pupil premium are making faster progress and the gap in attainment is rapidly closing.
- Pupils who join the school at other than normal times are well supported and settle quickly. They participate fully in the life of the school and are quickly able to make good progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good, with some outstanding teaching. School leaders have high expectations of the teachers, check their performance regularly and support teachers to improve.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are especially good. The harmonious atmosphere that is created makes an important contribution to the pupils' effective learning.
- There is excellent teamwork among all staff. Most plan lessons well and use their good subject knowledge to ensure that learning tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities. In a few lessons not all teachers regularly check pupils' understanding and this can slow the individual progress, especially if additional guidance and support are not offered when needed.
- Evidence from pupils' exercise books in literacy, as well as work on display around the school, shows that pupils can achieve well in their writing. However, although teachers regularly give feedback on how to improve the quality of writing, pupils do not always make the most of the opportunities to follow up this advice and this has slowed their overall progress in recent years. Further ways are being explored to encourage all groups to improve their writing skills.
- Teachers regularly plan activities that make links across different subjects. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils became fully involved in simulating a flight to the moon and having the adventure of a lifetime. This involved dressing up as astronauts with music, drama and developed the pupils' imaginations through role play. This carefully planned activity enabled

outstanding learning to take place. This approach is often used across all classes. This gives teachers the opportunity to share ideas and to develop imaginative resources so that the pupils have a rich and varied learning experience. The success of this approach was evident in a Year 1 lesson. Pupils took part in five different activities about space travel. These included building planets and cardboard rockets. All pupils worked hard and made good progress in developing their writing skills because they were engaged and excited about their learning.

- Teaching assistants are skilled at working alongside teachers and supporting pupils, both individually and in small groups. They are well trained and the support they provide is leading to an improvement in the standards that individual pupils achieve.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are considerate and thoughtful towards each other. Relationships between pupils and adults are a strength of the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding and is at the heart of what the school values. The care shown for every individual ensures that the ethos of the school is very inclusive. Parents and carers really value the high level of care provided to their children.
- Attendance this year is average, a result of the school working very closely with parents and carers to emphasise the link between good attendance and improved progress in pupils' learning. The attendance rate has steadily improved over the last three years from low to its current level. The school has introduced a rewards system for high attendance and this is regularly celebrated through the weekly parental newsletter.
- The school welcomes all pupils who wish to attend the school. This means that a very small number of pupils have difficult behaviour and this has led to their exclusion at times from the school. As a result, the school looks for imaginative and varied ways of providing specific support for individuals, such as the Rainbow Class. Overall, teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively.
- Pupils behave well at playtimes and lunchtimes. They say that there is almost no bullying of any kind in the school. This included cyber bullying. They feel safe and say that if there is any bad behaviour then the individual involved sits on the 'thinking chair'. They speak with enthusiasm of the 'golden tickets' for good behaviour.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and this ensures a positive learning environment within the classrooms. Pupils are considerate to each other and have good attitudes to learning.
- A positive start to the day in the well-run breakfast club in the adjacent children's centre, managed by the governing body, ensures that those pupils who attend are ready to learn.

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

- The very experienced headteacher has a clear vision of how the school can improve further and shares this effectively with staff and governors. She has skilfully steered the school through a period of significant staff change since the last inspection.
- The school's focus is on raising teaching from good to outstanding through the process of monitoring teacher performance and setting challenging targets. The staff's very positive responses to their questionnaire indicate their support for the efforts to bring further improvement.
- The headteacher is a local leader in education as well as Chair of the Lanhydrock School Trust and in these capacities she works closely with the five schools in the trust and provides advice and support to other schools in the area.
- Those teachers at the start of their career are supported well and given many opportunities to learn from more experienced teachers.
- Robust systems for recording and analysing data on the performance of individual pupils are in place. The information is used well to ensure equality of opportunity and monitor the progress of

pupils who may be vulnerable and to identify those that need additional intervention support.

- The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Issues from the previous report have been addressed. The decline in standards over the last two years has been tackled through well-targeted actions to improve the quality of teaching. This indicates a good capacity to continue to improve.
- The curriculum is broad and well balanced and is supported by a wide range of additional events, such as the construction day at Bodmin College, the Forest School and the St Piran's Day celebrations. These experiences not only provide a rich and vibrant curriculum but also many opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school works very closely with parents and carers, who are very supportive. The school encourages them to spend a few minutes in the morning in the classroom until their child has settled. This is highly valued, as is the weekly newsletter. All parents and carers with Reception children are encouraged to share their ideas on the 'Tree of Hope' and this is well used.
- The additional sports funding has been well used to provide further professional development for all staff in dance, multi-skills and gymnastic training in order to provide additional opportunities for pupils to enjoy an extended range of physical activities.
- The school maintains a rigorous focus on all aspects of safeguarding and child protection which fully meet statutory requirements. School leaders take very great care to ensure that vulnerable pupils are carefully supported.
- The recent decline in pupils' standards has been reversed, in a large part due to the effective middle leadership in the school. Recent initiatives include the introduction of learning ladders in both literacy and mathematics and these are leading to rapidly improving progress in the core skills, particularly for those pupils supported by the pupil premium.
- The local authority has supported the school through its recent staff changes and continues to provide light touch support.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body both supports and asks searching questions of the school. Governors visit the school regularly to find out what is going on and to keep themselves well informed about the key issues. They have a clear understanding of performance management procedures and make sure that staff salary progression is closely linked to the good achievement of pupils. The governing body oversees the school's finances well so that, for example, sports funding is used effectively to promote health and well-being. The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures meet requirements so that staff and pupils work in a safe environment. They oversee the effective allocation of the pupil premium funding and monitor carefully what its impact is.

## 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>	111910
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	404464

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Derek Rushton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Attwell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16–17 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01208 72773
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