

# St Mary's CofE VA Primary School, Burnham-on-Crouch

Marsh Road, Burnham-on-Crouch, CM0 8LZ

**Inspection dates** 13–14 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in all year groups.
- Teaching is not good enough across the school to raise standards by helping pupils make faster progress.
- Pupils do not routinely receive high quality marking and feedback to help them see how to improve their work.
- The checks that senior leaders make on teaching do not focus enough on the progress pupils make. Therefore, they have not improved teaching significantly since the previous inspection.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) requires improvement, and literacy and numeracy skills are not promoted sufficiently in different subjects.
- The school does not make best use of the information it has about pupils' progress to set ambitious targets to raise achievement.
- Pupils do not always demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour in lessons requires improvement.
- The roles of leaders responsible for different subjects and aspects are not fully developed in relation to checking and improving teaching and learning.
- The governing body does not hold the school sufficiently to account for pupils' learning and progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The new system for collecting and analysing data is giving the school a clearer view of pupils' progress.
- Pupils feel safe, and most behave well at play and lunchtimes.
- The governing body has improved its ability to monitor the school's work. It is now beginning to challenge as well as support the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 14 lessons, four of which were seen jointly with the headteacher or other members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors also carried out a series of short visits to classes across the school, observed assemblies, break and lunchtimes and listened to pupils read. In addition, they observed sessions where phonics (letters and the sounds they make) were being taught.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, representatives of the governing body, including the Chair, a representative from the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors took account of the 40 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, parent view, and held informal discussions with parents and carers in the playground and over the telephone.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school’s own information on pupils’ current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors also took account of the 14 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Emma Merva, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Westall

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The largest majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average. In this school the additional funding supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is also above the national average.
- The school provides a sports club twice a week in the mornings.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school currently has two teachers on maternity leave. Their classes are being covered by temporary staff.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement, by:
  - ensuring that marking is consistently effective in guiding pupils on how to improve their work and correct their mistakes
  - using assessment data to set more ambitious targets for each year group
  - giving pupils more opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects
  - improving the ability of staff to teach phonics in order to help pupils make better progress in reading.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels, by:
  - rigorously monitoring and analysing the quality of teaching and learning, and using the results to improve them
  - developing the roles of those responsible for different aspects and subjects, so that they fully understand how to monitor and improve teaching and learning
  - improving the governing body's ability to monitor, support and challenge the school's work effectively.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is not consistently good enough across the school, especially in mathematics and writing, to help pupils reach higher standards in Year 6. Therefore, pupils' attainment remains broadly average in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typical for their age. They make good progress and are well prepared to start Year 1. They are helped to settle quickly into the school routines.
- In 2013, pupils in Year 1 did not do as well as Year 1 pupils nationally in the national phonics screening check. The results for those who retook the check in Year 2 were in line with the national average.
- The school's own data show that pupils' progress is beginning to improve. The vast majority of pupils are now making at least the progress expected nationally and working at the levels expected for their age, and sometimes above them. However, pupils' books show that the improvement is not consistent across the school.
- In 2013, the gaps in attainment between Year 6 pupils who were eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils were wider than those found nationally in reading and writing, and similar in mathematics. They were over two terms behind their classmates in mathematics, four terms in reading and three terms in writing. However, school data and pupils' work show that eligible pupils are now making at least expected progress and the gaps in their attainment are closing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, as do the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, because they are well supported by additional adults in their lessons.

### The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of their pupils' work rate or presentation. Consequently, pupils do not take enough pride in their work. Teaching is not good enough to ensure that pupils can achieve well by Year 6.
- Assessment procedures are not strong enough to give a consistently accurate view of pupils' progress, and assessment information is not used well in planning. Additionally, pupils are not always asked questions that stretch their thinking skills enough to help them make good progress.
- The quality of teachers' marking is too variable to drive good or better learning. Marking lacks focused advice or targets to help improve learning, and pupils are not routinely expected to correct their mistakes.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is good. Activities are well planned and engage the interest of children. For example, Reception children thoroughly enjoyed and were excited by their learning as they identified different minibeasts using visual equipment.
- Where teaching is effective it motivates pupils to learn, develops their understanding well and

creates enjoyment in learning. This was clear, for example, from Year 2 pupils' books, which showed that their writing improved as they worked together to write about a windy day.

- Pupils with disabilities or special educational needs, those supported by the pupil premium and the small number who speak English as an additional language all benefit from more regular help and guidance. Additional adults are well briefed and used well to support learning, including for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. These pupils, in particular, benefit from their input.
- Although the teaching of reading requires improvement, pupils enjoy the chance to read on their own or to an adult. Sometimes pupils struggle to read, because they lack the basic phonics skills to help to decipher the words. Staff are not all trained well enough in using phonics to provide consistently good support to all pupils.
- Homework is set regularly across the school. However, the marking and checking of homework are inconsistent and this limits its effectiveness in consolidating or improving pupils' learning.

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

### **requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' books do not consistently demonstrate pride and care in their work. Nor do they behave consistently well in lessons. This is because earlier and secured learning is sometimes repeated, or their work is not well enough explained to them, and they become bored.
- Pupils understand what constitutes bullying and are well informed about different types of bullying including cyber and racist bullying. They say bullying is uncommon and know where to get effective help when it occurs. They are helped to understand bullying through assemblies. School records show that incidents of bullying are rare. There have been no recorded incidents of racism as the school logs show.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe at school and know how to stay safe, for example when using computers. Parents overwhelmingly believe that the school cares for their children well. Parents and staff also believe behaviour is good.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are positive. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children share resources well. Pupils in all year groups get on well together, including in the playground. The playground 'buddies' take their responsibilities seriously. They help to make playtimes happy, social occasions for everyone.
- Pupils enjoy school. School leaders have worked well with parents to improve attendance. Consequently, attendance is now above average.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, including by undertaking an analysis of pupils' books, has not been rigorous enough to improve the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Strategies have been introduced to address all of this, but they are too new to show clear impact.
- Leaders have also recently improved the regularity of collecting and analysing data about pupils' attainment and progress, and are sharing the information with teachers and governors. As a

result, teachers are now making better use of the information in their planning, so that work is better matched to pupils' different levels of ability. Still more remains to be done to use the information to identify and tackle underachievement.

- The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. However, the school's management structure is not sufficiently robust to ensure that those who lead and manage different aspects and subjects fully understand and fulfil their responsibilities. For example, the sharing of good practice in teaching has not, until recently, been a priority.
- The management of teachers' performance is now beginning to be used more effectively to hold teachers to account, including by setting targets to improve pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development suitably through activities, assemblies, trips and visits. It does not promote literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects well enough.
- The primary schools sports funding is being used to provide regular sports activities led by external sports coaches. Pupils have equal access to all sports activities on offer. It is too soon to analyse the impact of the new initiatives, but pupils enjoy the opportunities that have been provided for them, and the numbers taking part in the different activities, though relatively small, are growing.
- The pupil premium funding is starting to have an impact on narrowing the attainment gap between pupils who are known to be eligible for this funding and other pupils.
- The local authority has provided well-chosen support for the school. This includes support with self-evaluation and the checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments.
- Parents who gave their views are supportive of the school. They enjoy the opportunity to attend homework drop-ins and the weekly reading programme, 'magic Mondays'.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The newly appointed chair of governors is taking rigorous action to make the governing body more effective. As a result, governors have recently become more directly involved in the school's work. For example, they visit regularly to ascertain the quality of teaching, marking and achievement. This is helping them to provide more informed and effective challenge and support.
  - Governors fully understand the new performance management system and are making sure that pay rises and promotion are linked to classroom performance. They manage the performance of the headteacher and have set very rigorous targets to secure improvement.
  - The governors have a clear understanding of the amount of additional money provided through the pupil premium and sports funding, and are aware of how it is being used. They are also beginning to monitor the impact of the spending.
  - They ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements, including risk assessments. Governors ensure policies are kept up to date and attend regular training to help them hone their skills.

## 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>	115159
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	431616

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	190
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Father Mark North
<b>Headteacher</b>	Geraldine Denham-Hale
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 September 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01621 782626
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