

Bishop Parker Catholic Primary School

Barton Road, Milton Keynes, MK2 3BT

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils make good progress from Nursery onwards and nearly all groups achieve well. Attainment in Year 2 has risen to above average.
- Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading has been above average for the last two years.
- Although current Year 6 pupils' attainment is at the level expected for their age, these pupils have made good progress from their starting points.
- Most teaching supports pupils' progress well. Staff's effective use of methods, resources and interesting topics ensures pupils enjoy their learning.
- Since the previous inspection, teaching has been adapted to cater more successfully for groups of pupils who require extra support to learn well.
- Pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, demonstrate positive and mature attitudes. They concentrate fully and work well together with minimal supervision. Their good behaviour and respectful cooperation with staff ensure that activities nearly always run smoothly.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their high attendance.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and are well aware of the potential hazards in their daily life outside school.
- Leaders and governors have taken swift and successful actions, including through the use of external consultants and training, to raise pupils' achievement, particularly in Key Stage 2.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More able pupils sometimes do not make the progress of which they are capable when the work they are set is too easy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 18 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Two of these lessons were observed together with the headteacher.
- Samples of pupils’ work in writing were analysed. An inspector listened to a sample of Year 2 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with school staff, a group of pupils, three governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 questionnaires completed by staff. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for them to be published. However, inspectors took into account the results of the school’s own recent survey of parents’ views. They also spoke informally to some parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the work in pupils’ books; monitoring records; consultants’ reports; the school improvement plan; the school’s own data on pupils’ attainment and progress; and policies, procedures and practice relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Derek Aitken, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ruth Hill

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- Pupils come from a number of backgrounds. Black African and White British pupils form the largest groupings, followed by pupils of Italian heritage. A very few pupils who have just come to the United Kingdom are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- More pupils than is commonly the case join or leave the school before the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for certain groups such as those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery unit and one Reception class.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement by making sure that teachers use assessment information sharply to ensure that more able pupils are consistently provided with challenging work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Almost all groups of pupils achieve well. Pupils do particularly well in Key Stage 2.
- Attainment has risen considerably in both Year 2 and Year 6 in the last two years.
- The levels of skills and aptitudes of most children when they join Nursery are below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils join Year 1 with average attainment.
- In 2013, most pupils were successful in the Year 1 screening check for phonics (the sounds that letters make) as were all Year 2 pupils who did not make the required standard in 2012.
- In 2013, the attainment of Year 6 pupils was above average in reading, including at the higher Level 5, and average in mathematics and writing. The proportions of pupils who made or exceeded the progress expected of them compared favourably in reading, and were at least comparable in mathematics and in writing.
- Year 6 pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding in 2013 were, on average, working one term behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics but their attainment was similar to that of all pupils nationally.
- Attainment in the current small Year 6 class is, overall, at the level expected. Nonetheless, most pupils have made good progress from their starting points in Year 3. In mathematics, they plot coordinates accurately and draw correct inferences to identify patterns or sequences in shapes. In other year groups, attainment is above average in reading and slightly above in mathematics and in writing.
- Pupils' writing skills have improved considerably since the previous inspection. Year 2 pupils demonstrate good control of letter formation, spacing and punctuation. Older pupils benefit from an increased range of opportunities to practise their spellings and to write for various purposes in different genres and across subjects.
- Well-targeted support enables disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to achieve well. Staff and pupils work successfully together to help new arrivals settle quickly and to enable them to make the same good progress as their classmates
- Across the school, the progress of more able pupils is less consistently good as they are not always challenged sufficiently to extend their skills fully.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good over time. Warm, respectful relationships and teachers' interesting use of a range of methods and resources, including new technology, capture and sustain pupils' engagement in their learning.
- Children's interests are built upon carefully. This was observed in a Reception lesson when the finding of a caterpillar was captured on video and prompted a lively discussion between staff and children.
- Early reading skills are taught well, including by teaching assistants who have been specially trained for this purpose. This ensures that Year 2 pupils read competently and their carefully chosen books provide them with ample practice in revising common words and key sounds. Older pupils are effectively helped to improve their examination technique through the analysis of test questions.
- Pupils are routinely encouraged to work hard. Tasks, activities and support programmes for pupils are usually well thought out, as staff have improved their assessment practice and their analysis of the needs and progress of groups. Any misconceptions pupils have are usually dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Teachers' careful linkage of themes and topics across a range of subjects enables pupils to make useful connections in their learning. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils, for example, were

observed to be developing an accurate understanding of negative and positive temperature values in their mathematics and Italian lessons.

- Teachers' highly detailed plans and other strategies ensure that pupils who need extra help, especially pupils with a statement of special educational needs, are fully included in lessons and do not slip behind.
- Assessment information is not used sharply enough to ensure high quality provision for more able children in Nursery and Reception. More able pupils in the older year groups do not always make the progress that they are capable of. Sometimes they spend too long on undemanding tasks which do not extend their skills or provide them with enough scope to think hard for themselves.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Nursery children work cooperatively and demonstrate good levels of confidence and independence in the ways they carry out tasks.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is especially so in Key Stage 2. Pupils mature steadily and by Year 6 they are excellent ambassadors for the school. Staff have detailed behaviour plans and a flexible range of strategies for the very few pupils who require firm guidance. However, some younger pupils occasionally require a quiet word to re-focus them on their work.
- Older pupils are well motivated and self-reliant and work hard with minimal supervision. They enjoy working cooperatively and value their 'learning partner' roles.
- Pupils of different backgrounds mix well with each other. They understand the principles of teamwork, as demonstrated at play when they utilised the games areas well to exchange passes with their team mates.
- Pupils have very few concerns about behaviour and bullying and say that any minor 'fallouts' are resolved quickly. Racist incidents are rare and there have been only three fixed-term exclusions in the last five years. Attendance has been high over the last two years.
- Pupils behave well in other areas of the school such as the dining hall. During assemblies, they listen carefully to spiritual and moral messages, conveyed in texts and religious parables, and seek to apply these principles during the school day.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils appreciate the playground improvements, which have produced secure, spacious and attractively varied areas for them to enjoy a wide range of physical activities, including ball games.
- Pupils are well informed through lessons on the topic of cyber-bullying and when to make 999 calls and, through the local Safety Centre, about how to stay safe outside school, for example where there is a threat of physical confrontation. They know where they should seek advice if they need it and understand clearly the purpose of fire drills.
- The school, through, for example, its very effective use of outside agencies and the breakfast club, promotes equal opportunities well and ensures that there is no discrimination.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders reacted swiftly to a dip in attainment in 2011 and their well-focused, decisive actions have ensured that the areas for improvement, outlined in the previous inspection report, have been tackled successfully. They have used training very effectively to improve teaching and pupils' skills, especially in English. Teaching is monitored regularly and suitable actions are taken to tackle any underperformance.
- Plans and procedures for checking on the impact of the school's work, including the progress of different groups of pupils, are now more timely and rigorous. Leaders analyse data accurately and use this information purposefully to direct teaching and to plan support programmes for pupils who need extra help. Pupil premium funding is used wisely, as reflected in the achievement of this group.

- School self-evaluation is accurate because it is guided by the contributions of knowledgeable, experienced senior and middle leaders who are keen to share and to learn from best practice elsewhere. This has helped the school to successfully plan improvements to the subjects, themes and topics pupils are taught.
- Leaders set and monitor carefully suitable targets for pupils' performance. These targets were met or exceeded for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils in 2013.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well. Regular reinforcement of themes such as resilience and collaboration encourage pupils to be measured, calm and reflective in their outlook and behaviour and equip them with useful life skills.
- The first instalment of the recent national sports funding for primary schools has been spent suitably. It has been used, for example, to employ specialist coaches to develop pupils' and teachers' skills in dance, gymnastics and cricket. An increased focus on sport has improved pupils' results in a range of local competitions and aspects of healthy living are now being considered in greater detail in lessons.
- The local authority's review supported effectively the school's drive to improve teaching and to recover from its dip in performance. Support has been reduced in the last two years as the school has shown increasing capacity to direct its improvement unaided.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved since the previous inspection. Key governors demonstrate a wealth of educational and financial expertise and use their knowledge astutely to support leaders and to drive improvement.
 - They ensure that statutory requirements are met, including for safeguarding.
 - They have spent monies wisely, for example to boost pupils' early reading skills and to ensure that the pupil premium funding improves the achievement of eligible pupils.
 - Their sharp understanding of data helps them to understand how well pupils are doing and to pinpoint the aspects of pupils' skills which need further development.
 - They are suitably involved in managing staff's performance and use the information which they receive appropriately to check whether the headteacher and other leaders have fully achieved their targets before they agree to pay rises.
 - They ensure that their training is up to date to enable them to carry out their duties effectively.

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	110481
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	431038

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lina Colarusso
Headteacher	Colette Donohue
Date of previous school inspection	31 March 2012
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