

Bispham Endowed Church of England Primary School

Bispham Road, Bispham, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY2 0HH

Inspection dates 24–25 June 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | 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 | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Between Years 3 and 6, pupils do not consistently make good progress, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 and 6 fell in 2013 and were below average. Pupils do not reach the standards they are capable of.
- Teaching in Key Stage 2 is too variable. Work set is not always challenging enough, particularly for the most able. Marking does not always provide pupils with clear steps to improvement or the chance to correct errors.
- Achievement in mathematics is held back because mathematical activities do not offer enough chances for pupils to apply their skills by solving real-life problems.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write regularly, at length, and for a range of purposes, including across other subjects.
- Leaders are yet to ensure that teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics and writing.
- Teachers and subject leaders do not have enough opportunities to observe good and better teaching practices within school and in other school settings so that good practices are effectively shared among staff.

The school has the following strengths

- Effective leadership is ensuring that the school's dip in attainment in 2013 has been rapidly reversed.
- Improvements in teaching and achievement are evident across the school and notably in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, where pupils achieve well.
- The teaching of early reading is consistently good. Achievement in reading in Key Stage 2 is improving.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils behave well. Their safety is assured through good care, guidance and support.
- Attendance has risen significantly and is above average.
- Good partnerships within the locality help to enliven pupils' learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons or parts of lessons including two jointly observed with the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with two groups of randomly selected pupils, the headteacher, middle leaders, representatives from the school’s governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents on site, and also scrutinised the 62 responses to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered the surveys of parental views conducted by the school.
- Twenty inspection questionnaires completed by school staff were also considered.
- Inspectors conducted reviews of work in pupils’ books from different classes.
- They also considered a wide range of documents, including the school’s records of current pupil progress, the school’s self-evaluation document, planning and monitoring information, anonymised records of staff appraisals, and records of behaviour, attendance and safeguarding information.

Inspection team

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Jeremy Barnes, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Sheila Mawer | Additional Inspector |
| Sheila Loughlin | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is average. This is extra funding provided by the government to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those cared for by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is slightly above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also slightly above average.
- The school provides breakfast for all pupils, and a range of lunchtime and after-school enrichment activities.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- The school has experienced considerable staffing disruption since the last inspection. There has been a significant number of staff who have had long-term absence within the last two years.
- The school therefore has an interim arrangement with two middle leaders sharing the role of the deputy headteacher during the summer term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, especially in Key Stage 2, by making sure that:
 - pupils of all abilities are provided with work that meets their varying needs and abilities, particularly to challenge the most able pupils
 - teachers' marking consistently provides clear steps for improvement to pupils and gives pupils the time needed to correct and learn from their mistakes
 - pupils are equipped with the skills needed to get on with their learning without continual adult support and to decide things for themselves so that learning can proceed at a good rate
 - opportunities are provided for teachers and subject leaders to observe good and better teaching practices within school and in other school settings and to ensure that good practices are effectively shared among staff.
- Raise pupils' achievement, particularly between Years 3 and 6 in writing and mathematics, so that progress is consistently good by making sure that:
 - pupils are given interesting and challenging mathematical activities that enable them to apply their skills to solving real-life problems
 - pupils are given the opportunities to write regularly, at length, and for a range of purposes, including as part of work across the subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils requires improvement because too few pupils are making good progress in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2. Between Year 3 and 6, pupils' progress is too variable between year groups and, as a result, from their previous starting points, pupils do not reach the standards they are capable of by the time they leave Year 6.
- Children usually start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are a little below those typical for their age. They are generally confident and eager young learners. Children make good progress due to good teaching and an exciting range of activities on offer, especially in the outdoor areas. Improvements to provision in the last two years mean that the proportion of children achieving skills above those typically expected by the start of Year 1 has increased. They are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Good progress continues through Key Stage 1. Following a dip in attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2013, the decisive and effective actions of leaders have led to rapid improvements in attainment. Currently in Year 2, an above average proportion of pupils are working at levels higher than those expected for their age, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Achievement in Key Stage 2 requires improvement. In Year 6 in 2013, the standards reached in national tests fell and were below average, particularly in mathematics and writing. Although most pupils made the expected rate of progress from their previous starting points and reached the nationally expected Level 4, too few did better than this. The proportion reaching the higher Level 5 was much lower than average in mathematics and writing.
- The school is working hard to accelerate progress and raise standards, especially across Key Stage 2, and, although progress is now improving in all year groups in Key Stage 2, it is improving at a quicker rate in Years 5 and 6 than it is in Year 3 and 4. More pupils are doing increasingly well due to improvements in teaching. Even so, leaders are well aware more needs to be done to address the inconsistent progress evident in Key Stage 2 and in mathematics and writing.
- Achievement in mathematics is improving. Pupils have a good understanding of mathematical computation; written calculations are clear and accurate. Even so, pupils do not have enough chances to use and apply their skills to solve real-life, challenging mathematical problems. This holds back achievement, particularly the older pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment.
- Although some improvements are also evident in pupils' writing skills, pupils do not make consistently good progress because they are not given enough opportunities to write for a range of purposes, often enough or at length across the subjects, to ensure their writing skills develop at a good rate.
- Most pupils achieve well in reading. In 2013, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 reaching the expected standard in the screening check of their understanding of the sounds that letters make (known as phonics) was slightly above average, especially the boys. Standards in reading currently in Year 2 are above average. They have risen quickly because of improvements to the teaching of reading, good quality support for those who need it and a good level of challenge, including for the most able. Slightly more than half of the year group are working at an above average level of attainment. The school's records of pupils' progress in reading through Key Stage 2 and inspection evidence confirm that more pupils are now making good progress and more are attaining levels above those expected for their age than previously.
- The most able pupils are also now making better progress. More pupils are on track to make better than expected progress. However, their achievement is not yet good because they are not provided with work that is challenging enough, especially in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well due to careful support and a well-informed understanding of the pupils' individual needs.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium funding make good progress. In Year 6 in 2013, the overall attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in reading, writing and

mathematics was about a term behind their peers. This gap is narrower than the gap seen nationally between these two groups. School data and inspection evidence show that gaps in attainment across the school continue to close. Although this demonstrates that the school is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, variances in achievement across the year groups and subjects show that their efforts are not yet wholly successful.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although there have been some improvements in teaching, between Years 3 and 6 not enough is consistently good or better to enable all groups of pupils to achieve well, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Improvements to teachers' planning reflect a greater focus on providing work for different ability groups. However, learning activities are not always matched well enough to the varying abilities of groups of pupils. Middle-attaining pupils sometimes dictate the pace of learning. This means that activities for most able pupils lack enough challenge to ensure they achieve well.
- There have been improvements to the quality of marking and some good examples can be seen. For example, pupils' attainment is clearly and accurately evaluated; pupils are given clear steps for improvement and are given the time needed to correct mistakes. However, these practices are not yet consistently evident and so some errors in pupils' work are repeated, especially in writing. Good marking practices, for example, are not yet shared effectively among staff.
- The teaching of reading has improved and is typically good. Effective teaching of phonics and early reading means that pupils make good progress as they move through Key Stage 1. Pupils benefit from confident and knowledgeable staff who work well together to carefully assess pupils' skills and understanding. Pupils report that they 'feel like good readers and enjoy reading'. Opportunities for older pupils to read more regularly in small groups, guided by their teacher are helping to speed up progress in Key Stage 2.
- The teaching of mathematics and writing, while improving, is not yet consistently good. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical problem-solving skills widely by completing interesting, challenging or engaging tasks. Achievement in writing continues to be hampered because pupils are given too few opportunities to complete extended pieces of writing across the subjects and to write for a range of purposes.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is good. In Nursery and Reception classes activities are exciting and motivating; expectations of what children can achieve are high. Children were seen correctly constructing number sentences to 100, some involving multiplication, sustaining their attention over long periods and making good progress as a result. In Key Stage 1, teaching ensures that pupils are fully involved with learning that is focused very clearly on sharp learning objectives that meets pupils' varying needs.
- Some teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. For example, a Year 6 class were fully immersed in a scientific investigation testing out their own theories regarding the effect of air resistance on falling objects. Carefully planned, well-organised and challenging activities ensured their progress was good.
- Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is held back because some pupils do not use their own initiative when in need of help. For example, pupils ask if they are allowed to use a particular word in their writing, rather than deciding for themselves whether this would improve their work. Pupils wait for the teacher's assistance to check a spelling instead of using their initiative and finding a dictionary. This slows the pace of learning and hinders their progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils listen respectfully to staff and each other, and maintain positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Senior staff and governors set high expectations of pupil behaviour and ensure the whole school remains focused on continually improving it. Leaders are assiduous in managing any incidents of

disruptive behaviour, maintaining accurate and meaningful records. Systems designed to promote improvement in behaviour are effective. When needed, pupils can go to the 'Blue Yard', where skilled support from well-trained staff offer effective support and guidance.

- The 'Getting it Right' programme encourages pupils to take pride in, and show respect for, their school. As a result, pupils learn in a clean and tidy environment and resources are looked after well. In some lessons in Key Stage 2, pupils are not always ready for learning with the correct equipment and pupils speak of occasional low-level disruption by a few pupils that affects their learning.
- Whether responding through Parent View or speaking to inspectors, a large majority of parents agree that pupils behave well. Although a small minority express some concerns, any worries from pupils or parents are dealt with swiftly and sensitively.
- The school's work to keep the pupils safe and secure is good. Staff are vigilant in promoting safe practices; the safeguarding and well-being of pupils is given high priority.
- Systems and procedures for managing safety are robust. Almost all parents who responded through the Parent View survey agreed that their child was looked after well. Supervision is good throughout the school day and pupils speak of a happy school both indoors and outside.
- Attendance has significantly improved and is now above national, including pupils supported through the pupil premium. Weekly attendance rates and improvements made are reported in 'Headlines', the school's weekly newsletter to parents. Better attendance is helping to improve pupils' achievement.

The leadership and management are good

- Effective leadership and management are driving school improvement forward at a good rate. Despite additional challenges arising from a significant level of staff absence over a period of two years, senior leaders have maintained a resolute and effective focus on raising achievement across all key stages.
- Strong improvements are evident in several key areas, especially in achievement and teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Effective support and guidance to teachers have resulted in good teaching in these key stages and, teaching in Key Stage 2, although still not yet consistently good, is also improving. Most pupils are now achieving well in reading including in Key Stage 2. Attendance has also risen significantly.
- The headteacher leads with strong determination and by example. Parents speak very highly of her commitment to pupils and their families, and pupils and staff echo this. Senior leaders, who although in temporary positions, have already demonstrated the ability to improve teaching, and as a result ably support the headteacher.
- The leadership of teaching is good. Teachers are challenged to improve their own classroom performance and to raise pupils' achievement. This is reflected in very detailed performance management procedures in place and higher expectations of teacher performance. Pay awards are only granted where pupils are making good progress.
- Leaders ensure that the quality of teaching is accurate and effectively checked. Coaching and mentoring of staff has led to better teaching. Occasionally, however, leaders' checks on teaching in the classroom places too little emphasis on how well pupils are learning over time and this sometimes means that teaching does not improve as quickly as it could.
- Subject leaders, who have willingly accepted more responsibilities in the face of staff absences, contribute well to school improvement. Their impact is evident, for example in improvements to teaching, and particularly reading, in Key Stage 1. However, there are not enough opportunities for subject leaders to observe the best teaching practice in other schools and settings and to use this to share good practice among school staff to improve teaching even further.
- Leaders check carefully that the pupil premium is used to good effect. Pupils' achievement, as a result, has improved quickly and eligible pupils are now making good progress.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy a range of sporting activities and competition, cultural and community events, and a wide

range of extra-curricular activities, for example a large choir and a thriving programme of sporting activities led by talented staff.

■ The school is a key part of the community, promoting productive and sustainable partnerships, which benefit learning and opportunities for pupils. A commitment to the performing arts, for example, is assisted by a partnership with the Royal Ballet, which has led to highly enjoyable experiences for pupils.

■ Good use is made of the primary school sports funding to further enhance staff training and to improve pupils' participation in sport by providing a wider range of sporting activities such as sustained good performance in the Blackpool School Games across a range of disciplines.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are very skilled and knowledgeable, and display a commitment to improve the school, offering support and challenge in equal measure in order to hold the school to account. Together with the headteacher, they responded swiftly and decisively to raise pupils' achievement following the dips in attainment in 2013.
- They have a good understanding of how well the school performs, including in comparison to other schools, asking questions about pupils' progress, gaps in learning and standards. They are fully aware of how the primary school sport and pupil premium funding is allocated and consider its impact on pupils' progress increasingly carefully.
- Governors know about the school's priorities, and that achievement and teaching are improving but are still not consistently good in Key Stage 2.
- Governors have ensured that arrangements to manage the performance of staff means that staff only receive pay awards when targets for their own and pupils' performance have been met.
- Their vigilance in ensuring the safety of pupils is good, and they fulfil their statutory duties with regard to safeguarding.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 119411 |
| Local authority | Blackpool |
| Inspection number | 427411 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 462 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Tony Edmonds |
| Headteacher | Jo Hirst |
| Date of previous school inspection | 17 May 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01253 354672 |
| Fax number | 01253 596732 |
| Email address | admin@bispham-endowed.blackpool.sch.uk |

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