

Bocking Church Street Primary School

Church Street, Bocking, Braintree, CM7 5LA

Inspection dates 1–2 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The progress that pupils make in Key Stage 1, and in mathematics in Key Stage 2, is not yet good.
- There is too much inconsistency in the progress that pupils make from one class to the next and between mathematics and English.
- More-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged, so too few of them make as much progress as they should.
- Teachers' marking does not show pupils clearly how they can improve their work, nor do pupils always receive adequate advice on how to check their own work effectively.
- Not all teachers' subject knowledge is secure and, consequently, they do not always set work at the right level of difficulty for pupils, especially in mathematics.
- Subject leaders do not have enough responsibility for leading improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- School leaders do not check on the performance of the school, especially teaching and achievement, rigorously enough to ensure that important weaknesses are corrected as quickly as possible.

The school has the following strengths

- Across the school, the topics and themes studied by pupils have the potential to interest pupils. Many pupils participate enthusiastically in sporting activities.
- Pupils' moral, social, spiritual and cultural understanding is well developed.
- Children in the Reception class achieve well as a result of effective teaching.
- Pupils have a well developed understanding of what is right and what is wrong. They feel safe in school and their behaviour and attendance are good.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons and part lessons, six of which were observed jointly with the school leaders. In addition, they listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils in lessons, at lunchtimes and at playtimes. They also interviewed groups of pupils. Inspectors looked carefully at pupils' work and at displays in classrooms.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including the school's own data about pupils' current and recent progress, planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.
- Meetings were held with three members of the governing body, and senior and subject leaders. One inspector held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- The views of 35 parents were analysed through the Parent View website. Inspectors also took account of additional comments made by parents whom they met informally at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in questionnaires returned by 21 members of staff

Inspection team

Stephen Palmer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Ladner

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are both well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is higher than average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than average. This is additional government funding for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school shares the site with the Edith Borthwick Special School.
- The school has worked in partnership with the Teachers' Alliance, an organisation which offers targeted training to teachers to improve their skills. Two teachers are qualified by the National College for School Leadership to offer advice and guidance to colleagues in other schools.
- 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, particularly in Key Stage 1 and thereby pupils' achievement by:
 - developing teachers' subject knowledge, especially in mathematics, so that their expectations of what pupils can achieve are realistic but challenging
 - providing harder activities for the most-able pupils so that they reach higher levels and make faster progress
 - ensuring teachers give pupils more effective advice on how they can improve their work in all subjects
 - improving the consistency of teaching across the school by sharing good practice, so that more teaching is good and pupils' achievement improves
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring:
 - subject leaders lead improvements in their subjects more effectively
 - senior leaders check the performance of the school and its teachers rigorously and check more closely on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and the progress they make over time.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils, particularly the more-able, do not make consistently good progress in mathematics across all year groups. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain levels that are still only average despite entering the school with skills and knowledge that are in line with those typically seen in this age-group. By the time they leave Year 6, standards are still only broadly average overall and weaker in mathematics than in English. This does not represent good progress.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013, although pupils had made progress in writing which was better than national averages, the progress they made in mathematics, especially the more-able pupils, was significantly worse. Progress in reading was only in line with expectations. Information on the progress of pupils currently in the school indicates they make variable progress between classes and across subjects.
- In Year 6, pupils' progress in reading and writing is stronger than in mathematics. The standards they have reached in reading are higher than national averages, and in writing are broadly average. However, in mathematics the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was well below average.
- Pupils in receipt of the pupil premium generally make faster progress than other pupils and catch up from their lower starting points by the time they leave. In 2013, the Year 6 pupils who were eligible for support through the pupil premium had reached similar standards to those of their classmates. As eligible pupils move up through the school, the gap between their achievement and that of their classmates narrows so that, by Year 6, these pupils reach standards which are as the same as those of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least as much progress as their classmates, though from their different starting points.
- By the time they reach Upper Key Stage 2, most pupils are fluent readers, and read widely for a range of different purposes. Their progress is monitored well, and they are encouraged to read at home.
- Pupils achieve well in a range of sporting activities; their levels of skill have developed markedly as a result of good use by the school of the primary school sports funding.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been good enough to ensure pupils make rapid progress, especially in mathematics and within Key Stage 1. Teachers do not always have the level of subject knowledge needed for them to be able to set realistic but challenging tasks for pupils. Although teaching is improving, some teaching is still failing to engage pupils' interest fully, and this slows their progress.
- Although school leaders have ensured that teachers now have adequate information about pupils' abilities to plan to meet their needs, teachers do not yet consistently set tasks at a suitable level of difficulty.
- Sometimes the work set by teachers is too hard for the pupils, and as a result the pupils become

confused and lose confidence. In other lessons the work is too easy for some pupils, particularly the more able, who therefore do not make as much progress as they should.

- Although teachers check pupils' work frequently, the marking does not always give pupils advice on how they can improve. Pupils in some classes know what their targets are, and therefore know what they need to do to achieve well, but this is not the case in all classes. Although it is school policy, not all teachers ensure pupils are given opportunities to assess their own learning and, when they are, not all do so effectively because they are not always given necessary guidance by teachers.
- The teaching and learning of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is managed well. Accurate records of progress are kept, and the effectiveness of the extra support offered to these pupils is closely monitored. As a result, these pupils make progress which is at least similar to that of their classmates.
- Classroom displays and other resources are attractive and celebrate pupils' achievement. They are used well by some teachers to show pupils how they can get information without relying on the teacher.
- The well-designed and resourced indoor and outdoor play areas in the Reception class give children frequent opportunities to develop their learning through well planned play activities and to discover things for themselves. Adults check how well children are doing regularly and use this information to plan activities that will help each child make good progress.
- Teaching assistants are effective in supporting individuals and small groups, particularly the less-able pupils. They use questions and comments to clarify pupils' thinking and to help them persevere with their tasks. As a result, less confident pupils are able to practise new skills in the knowledge that support is there if needed, and so make better progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes towards learning are good. They are keen to learn, and want to get on with the challenges set for them. A number of Key Stage 2 pupils commented that they sometimes get frustrated when teachers' explanations go on for too long, and that they would prefer to be actively undertaking much more quickly the challenges set for them, and therefore make better progress. They take pride in their work which is well presented in their books.
- The management of pupil behaviour in lessons is good. During lessons observed, there was no disruption, and very few instances of pupils not giving full attention. Discussions with pupils verified that typically there is very little disruption in lessons.
- Behaviour around the school and at playtimes is good. There are good relationships between pupils and with adults. This creates a settled, calm environment in which learning can take place.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good, and that it has improved considerably over the past year. The very few incidents of poor behaviour are logged, with records of interviews with parents, the actions taken to improve behaviour and their impact.

- Pupils confirm that no pupils make racist or homophobic comments, and this view is backed up by the school's records as well as comments from parents, who also agree that behaviour is good.
- The school helps pupils to make better relationships with each other with events such as 'Friendship Week', as well as with systems such as 'Truly Trusted', in which Y6 volunteers take responsibility to help younger children at playtimes.
- There is a dedicated support worker for pupils with low self esteem, who works effectively to support individual families as well as with the pupils in school. As a result, these pupils are better prepared emotionally to take on the challenges of school life.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils learn about safety on the roads, as well as how to stay safe when using the internet.
- The school has effective systems to improve attendance rates. As a result, attendance is better than the national average, and has improved over time. Pupils arrive at school punctually, and are ready to learn at the start of lessons.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- School leaders do not check on the performance of the school rigorously enough to ensure that important weaknesses are corrected as quickly as possible. Until recently checks on the quality of teaching have not taken into account how well pupils are learning over time.
- Plans for improving the effectiveness of the school correctly identify targets for success, the personnel responsible for making each improvement and the deadlines by which actions should be completed. However, the broad scope of issues in these plans has meant that the most important weakness, the teaching of mathematics, is not emphasized sufficiently.
- Systems to check on the progress of all pupils are now more effective, and leaders can identify which pupils need support to prevent them from falling behind.
- Subject leaders know about the progress being made by pupils, and offer advice and organise training to improve teachers' skills. However, they are not held sufficiently to account for leading improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Children make good progress because the lessons are well planned, and there is a wide range of resources to support their learning. Adults check frequently and carefully on what children know and can do, and adjust activities to take account of this.
- The topics that pupils study as they move through the year groups are planned carefully to help pupils to increase their knowledge about the world and develop their skills in dealing with new problems. The school aims to promote within these topics attitudes and skills such as team working, leadership and independent thinking, some of which were evident in activities in school. For example, an assembly presented by pupils in Year 5 about their work on 'The Titanic' and 'The Tudors' helped pupils develop self-confidence, organisational skills, creativity and teamwork. Pupils' awareness of the moral, social and cultural aspects of life is adequately developed.

- Primary Sports funding is used appropriately to increase the range of activities available to pupils, such as archery and tennis. It has also increased participation in sports, and is promoting healthier lifestyles.
- The school has used the two teachers who are ratified through the National College for School Leadership to offer advice to colleagues in other local schools.
- The local authority supported the school following the previous inspection and has helped to improve the effectiveness of teaching and to help draw up a suitable action plan to deal with the identified weaknesses. The local authority has continued to check on the school's improvement, and acknowledges that, while there have been improvements, there are still weaknesses in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, especially in mathematics
- While most parents are supportive of the school, there were a number who voiced concerns about the quality of teaching, especially for the more able.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Since the last inspection the governing body has undergone a review. As a result, there is a new chairman as well as a number of other new governors.
- Governors recognise that previously they had not challenged leaders sufficiently about the performance of the school, and that they were too reliant on information provided by leaders.
- Through training, they are improving their skills in scrutinising the data about the performance of the school so that they are now more able to question and challenge leaders about this. As a result, they now have a greater understanding of the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils.
- Governors manage the performance of the headteacher appropriately, and are aware of the systems used by school leaders to check on the performance of teachers. They are fully aware of the need to match teachers' performance with their pay rises and promotion.
- Governors ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively, and are aware of the progress being made by eligible pupils when compared with other pupils.
- The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet current national standards.

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	114809
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	442009

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barry Smith
Headteacher	Rosalind Welch
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2013
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