

# Beck Row Primary School

The Street, Beck Row, Mildenhall, Bury St Edmunds, IP28 8AE

## Inspection dates

11–12 June 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, particularly in writing and mathematics and in Years 4 and 5.
- Pupils do not get enough chance to practise writing across a range of subjects. Pupils' experience of science is limited.
- Until recently, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have not been achieving sufficiently well.
- Teachers do not show high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve, particularly in writing.
- Teaching assistants are not used effectively to support learning in lessons.
- Teachers' marking is not effective in helping pupils to improve their work.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are improving but are not consistently positive, particularly when teaching does not stimulate or interest them.
- The new senior leadership team is not yet complete. Some leaders do not have fully clear roles and responsibilities in order to ensure their work has maximum impact on improving teaching and pupils' achievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving. The new headteacher is giving staff a very clear steer on what still needs to be done.
- Pupils in Year 6 and children in Reception are now making better progress. Good support is helping pupils to improve their reading skills.
- Pupils of Gypsy/Roma and Traveller heritage attend frequently and achieve well.
- Gaps in attainment between pupils supported by additional funding and other pupils are reducing.
- Higher expectations and better procedures have helped to improve pupils' behaviour and attendance. Pupils feel safe and secure in most situations.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 13 lessons, three of which were seen together with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the school’s senior and subject leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 22 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were 36 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of school documents, including records of the school’s checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, the headteacher’s termly report to the governing body and records relating to behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and the tracking of pupils’ progress. They also looked closely at pupils’ written work for the current school year and listened to pupils read.

## Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Richard Johnson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Beck Row Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils are from White or White British backgrounds. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic groups. A substantial proportion of the pupils, particularly in the younger classes, come from families serving at the adjacent United States Air Force Base. These pupils often stay in the school for relatively short periods. A small number of pupils come from families of Gypsy/Roma or Traveller heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs has declined and is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is broadly average. This additional funding is for pupils who are known to be eligible to free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school shares premises with a community centre and a private pre-school. They are managed and inspected separately.
- The school has experienced some disruption in leadership recently. The previous headteacher left in July 2013 and the current headteacher took up post in January 2014, following a period of interim leadership. A new deputy headteacher is due to take up post in September 2014.
- The school is supported by the headteacher at Barrow Church of England Primary School, Bury St Edmunds, who is a National Leader of Education.

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

- Improve teaching further by ensuring that:
  - teachers across the school show consistently high expectations by setting work that builds on what pupils already know and can do, and adjusting it if necessary during lessons
  - pupils produce a consistently high quality of written work
  - teaching assistants are used effectively to support learning
  - marking gives pupils clear guidance on how to move their learning on, and teachers check to make sure they respond accordingly.
- Improve achievement, particularly for pupils currently in Years 4 and 5, by ensuring that:
  - pupils have more opportunities to develop their skills in writing in different subjects
  - pupils experience a wider range of activities through subjects such as science.
- Build on the recent improvements in pupils' behaviour by:
  - closely monitoring pupils' attitudes to learning within lessons
  - building on pupils' improved confidence in adults' ability to ensure their safety and security.
- Improve leadership and governance by ensuring that leaders' roles and responsibilities are clear and fully developed.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' progress varies too much across the school to support good overall achievement. While recent changes are clearly contributing to better progress in Year 6, it has been slower in Years 4 and 5 for some time and requires further improvement.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs have typically made inconsistent, and sometimes limited, progress. Much has been done this year to improve the way these pupils are catered for. As a result, their current progress is improving, although not yet good.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is broadly average. Current school data suggest that the recent trend of improvement is being sustained.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 was well below average in 2013. However, pupils are making better progress this year, particularly in reading and writing. Progress in mathematics is not quite as strong, but the school is now involved in a project to boost achievement in mathematics. Intensive staff training is helping to support this work.
- Current standards in Year 6 are showing further improvement and are broadly average. Some pupils are working at the highest level (Level 6) in mathematics and writing. However, not enough has been done to promote all pupils' skills in writing through different subjects.
- Children start in Reception with skills and understanding that vary considerably. In 2013, they were broadly typical for their age. Despite some instability in the teaching this year, children have made at least the progress expected and standards are broadly average as they prepare to enter Year 1. Staff assessments of children's knowledge and skills are thorough and accurate.
- Year 6 pupils supported by pupil premium funding in 2013 were around two terms behind their classmates in mathematics, one term in writing and half a term in reading. Across the school, eligible pupils benefit from well-focused support and now make progress at least in line with their peers.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils attaining the expected standard in the screening check in phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) exceeded the national average in 2013. Effective teaching of phonics is contributing to improved reading skills.
- Pupils from military backgrounds make similar progress to other groups, and attain similar standards. Pupils of Gypsy/Roma or Traveller heritage are supported well, attend regularly. They attain much more highly than similar pupils nationally by the end of Year 6.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Weaker teaching in the past has affected learning and progress. Leaders have acted resolutely to tackle weak teaching and it is now more effective. However, while teaching is now good in some age groups, inconsistencies remain and not all pupils are making the progress they should.
- Teachers do not always show high enough expectations. Pupils' written work, for example, has often been untidy and of poor quality. However, the written work in books shows recent improvements, particularly for the older pupils.

- Teaching assistants do not support pupils' learning well. In some lessons their time is not used effectively, and they do not contribute enough when pupils would benefit from their help.
- When teachers ask pupils questions in lessons to check their understanding, they do not always use pupils' responses to adjust the difficulty of the tasks set to maximise learning.
- The way pupils' progress is checked, to inform the support and guidance needed, varies across the school. Some effective practice in Years 5 and 6 leads to good support being provided for any pupils who need it, but this is not always the case in other year groups. Similarly, some good practice in marking shows pupils the next steps they need to take to move their learning on, but this is also inconsistent.
- Children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is typically good. The classroom and outdoor environments are stimulating, while activities provide appropriate challenge and engage children's interest.
- Pupils supported by pupil premium funding benefit from increasingly good adult support. Support is now linked more closely to individual pupils' specific learning needs because their progress is tracked more precisely.
- In some lessons, learning is effective. In a mathematics session in Year 6 on multiplying fractions, pupils were initially challenged by an intricate method of displaying their calculations. This supported rapid understanding when a more direct calculation strategy was introduced. The work catered for pupils of all abilities, so all groups were involved and made good progress.
- Effective teaching of reading skills means that pupils make mostly good progress in reading.

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

### **requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistently good. At times, they disengage and are reluctant to offer their ideas when teaching does not interest or stimulate them. Until recently, pupils have not taken enough care over their written work.
- Currently teaching is motivating pupils better and increasing their enthusiasm for learning. This contributes strongly to their improving progress.
- Leaders have recently taken decisive action to tackle isolated behavioural issues that disrupted learning in the past. Inappropriate behaviour has declined significantly and pupils are now rarely excluded from school. Effective behaviour management systems ensure a more consistent response to issues. The school has improved playground supervision. Few parents report current concerns about behaviour.
- Pupils eagerly undertake responsibilities within class and outdoors, so contributing to the smooth running of the school community.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe, confident that adults will respond quickly if any difficulties arise.
- Pupils have a good appreciation of a range of risks, and recognise that bullying may take many forms. Older pupils, in particular, are well aware of the dangers relating to cyber-bullying, for

example. Bullying is rare, and most pupils are confident that any problems will be addressed by the school, although some still feel that adults could take more action to prevent issues from arising in the first place.

- Attendance has improved steadily and is now broadly average. The school has a rigorous approach to following up absences. The attendance of pupils from Gypsy/Roma or Traveller families is much higher than usually found.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- Leaders and governors are ambitious and want the best for pupils. They have introduced many innovations to improve teaching and learning. These recent improvements are making a difference, but have not yet had a sustained impact upon pupils' achievement.
- Since the last inspection, there have been numerous changes of staff, including leaders at all levels. The senior leadership team is not yet complete, and its roles and responsibilities are not yet fully established. Several subject leaders are too new to have had a significant impact on improving teaching and learning.
- The curriculum meets pupils' needs. Work in literacy and numeracy is appropriately given a high priority, and improving teaching and standards in mathematics is a key area for development. However, pupils' writing skills are not yet developed effectively through different subjects such as history or geography, and science is relatively underdeveloped.
- The headteacher is taking the right action to address significant weaknesses in teaching and achievement. The school is now in a more secure position, particularly in relation to behaviour and attendance, and achievement is improving. Leaders have an accurate overview of the quality of teaching, based on the monitoring of lessons and reviews of pupils' work.
- Following recent improvements, the school's systems for managing staff performance have improved and are now rigorous. Teachers are set more aspirational targets, underpinned by better training. There is now a closer link between teachers' performance and their pay rises and promotion.
- The school's view of itself is accurate. Improvement plans identify the correct priorities. All weaknesses are being addressed.
- All staff are monitoring the impact of pupil premium funding more closely. Additional teaching is provided in English and mathematics to help any pupils at risk of falling behind. The primary school sports funding is being used appropriately to train staff and give pupils a wider range of activities. As a result, more pupils are now participating in sports.
- The local authority is working closely with the school to support improvements and provide training.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted well. Cultural development is not as strongly established. Leaders have started to use partnerships with other schools more effectively to share teachers' skills and so benefit pupils' learning. Links with parents are strengthening, following some past discontent.

**■ The governance of the school:**

- Governors have responded well to the challenges facing the school. They have appointed potentially strong senior leaders. They bring expertise and commitment to their role, and help to ensure clear direction for the school through their good contribution to self-evaluation and development planning. Records of meetings show that they hold leaders to account for the effectiveness of pupils' education.
- The governors have benefited from focused training on analysing data, and know how pupils' performance compares against similar schools nationally. They are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and promoting good relationships. They have a good understanding of the current quality of teaching and now link pay to teachers' effectiveness.
- Governors understand the impact of spending decisions, including the use of pupil premium funding to close gaps in pupils' attainment.
- Governors ensure that all their statutory duties are met, including the procedures relating to safeguarding pupils, which are currently being revised.

## 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>	124541
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	442061

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	184
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sarah Stevens
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Nicholson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 October 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01638 713001
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