

# Beckington Church of England First School

Beckington, Frome, Somerset, BA11 6TG

**Inspection dates** 9–10 September 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- The key to the school's outstanding performance is the relentless pursuit of excellence by leaders and governors.
- The headteacher is an outstanding leader. Teamwork among all leaders and staff is excellent. Staff have the full confidence of parents and carers, working very effectively with them in supporting pupils' learning.
- Systems for checking and evaluating the school's work are outstanding. Staff and governors are highly reflective. They continually evaluate the success of strategies for raising attainment, swiftly adjusting them when necessary.
- All pupils, including those with specific needs or talents, achieve exceptionally well. Attainment by Year 4 pupils is high compared to that of most pupils of this age.
- The school strives to ensure that pupils attain highly in all subjects. During the inspection this was observed in computing, design and technology and physical education.
- The school provides exceptionally well for children in the Reception Year. Children make excellent progress in their academic and personal development.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff have consistently high expectations and skilfully enable pupils of all abilities to make excellent progress. Teaching assistants support learning exceptionally well.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding in class and around the school. Their outstanding attitudes to learning are a significant factor in supporting their rapid progress.
- The school's outstanding work to keep pupils safe and secure is evident in the rigorous implementation of safeguarding procedures.
- The governing body is exceptionally well organised to carry out all its duties effectively. Governors are very knowledgeable and provide an excellent level of challenge and support for school leaders.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. In particular, school staff, the local church and residents work exceptionally well together to foster pupils' understanding of community life.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons or parts of lessons of which six were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition the inspector made a number of other short visits to group or individual activities to help pupils who are at risk of underachieving to catch up. The inspector also heard a sample of pupils read, scrutinised a sample of pupils' written work and visited some extra-curricular activities.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and staff including senior and middle managers. A conversation was held with the school's self-evaluation partner.
- The inspector took account of the 27 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school were also spoken to.
- Responses from the nine staff questionnaires were analysed.
- The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents including the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to planning and monitoring and safeguarding were also looked at.
- During this inspection, the inspector asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement for children who are looked after, those eligible for free school meals and the most able pupils. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of support services.

## Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Beckington is a smaller than average-sized first school in which pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The majority of pupils who attend come from the village, but an increasing proportion travel from the surrounding area.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is low. The very large majority of pupils are from White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well below average. This funding is to provide extra support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after.
- Leaders work closely with the Frome Community Learning Partnership, cooperating with other schools in development and support work.
- The school does not make use of any off-site training.

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

- Build on and extend the procedures in place to fully embed the new programmes for subject content and for checking pupils' progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school benefits considerably from the shared vision, determination and expertise of leaders and governors. Outstanding teamwork, exceptional commitment to the school and great enthusiasm have ensured that they have achieved their goal. The school is especially well placed to maintain its high-quality education.
- The headteacher's excellent approach has fostered a strong level of trust among all associated with the school. Staff are confident innovators and share ideas for enhancing pupils' progress. This, together with their willingness to acknowledge when things are not working well and changing them, has a very positive impact on school improvement.
- All teachers, including middle leaders, make an excellent contribution to the leadership of the school. Staff continually discuss how well pupils in their class are achieving and so all teachers are exceptionally well informed.
- Checking and analysing the impact the school's work has on pupils' academic and personal development is outstanding. As a result, priorities for improvement are very swiftly and speedily addressed. The same rigour is applied to judging the impact of additional funding; for example the pupil premium.
- Outstanding management of teaching performance is underpinned especially well by external monitoring and support to enhance the quality. Staff value the headteacher's excellent support for their training and development. For example, all staff have attended briefings for teaching the new content of English and mathematics courses.
- The school is well on the way to adapting the content of subjects and the checking procedures to meet current requirements. For example, in mathematics, activities have been designed to promote deep understanding and pupils' use of their skills in different situations. Similarly, in computing, pupils are already getting to grips with programming. Nevertheless, there are a few aspects that are still developing. For example, ensuring that British values and discouragement of extremist behaviour are more explicitly promoted in personal development activities.
- The school makes excellent use of its partnership with a range of other schools and organisations to enhance pupils' education and well-being. For example, the sports funding is used to facilitate work with local sports clubs and many groups within the Beckington community. Its partnership with schools in the Frome Community Learning Partnership plays a significant role in improving the quality of education at Beckington. Excellent practice seen at Beckington is shared with local schools.
- The local authority holds the school in high esteem providing 'light touch' and proportionate support. It recognises the impact of the school's excellent partnership work with other educational establishments from its highly skilled workforce.
- The local authority does not hold school leaders or governors sufficiently to account for the performance of those pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding; nor does it provide sufficient information to help judge the school's performance against local and similar schools. This aspect is covered by the school commissioned self-evaluation partner who also provides relevant information on pupils' progress. The partner's challenge and advice are used to very good effect in this and other aspects of the school's work.
- The school has an outstanding partnership with parents and carers. Staff and governors work very effectively with them in supporting their children's learning. Parents and carers have total confidence in staff and very much value the time staff are willing to spend discussing any concerns.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet current requirements. Policies and procedures are rigorously applied. Both staff and governors are very well trained, for example in child protection and the vetting of staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The Chair of the Governing Body provides excellent leadership. New arrangements for the constitution of the governing body have been used to exceptionally good effect. As a result,

Beckington benefits from a high level of expertise across important areas of governance. 'Expert' governors produce easily understood reports; for example in analysing information on pupils' progress. Consequently all governors are exceptionally well informed about how well pupils' achievement compares with that in similar schools nationally. Formal procedures that set targets for teachers are exceptionally well focused on expectations of pupils' high achievement and staff needs. Through their regular checking of pupils' progress and highly focused and regular visits to the school, governors are very well informed about teaching quality. Governors are very well placed to reward good performance and to provide an outstanding level of support for leaders. Governors' relentless pursuit of value for money has a very positive impact on the school's work, for example, in the allocation of pupil premium funding to meet the specific need of every pupil who receives it. This varies from extra social and emotional support to exciting activities or greater support for learning, which are highly effective. Governors are very creative in topping up the sports funding in a range of ways. They monitor and evaluate its use thoroughly to ensure it has a very positive impact on pupils' performance and well-being. For example, pupils have won competitions in gymnastics.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They listen to instructions carefully, respond positively to questioning and carry out their tasks quickly and quietly. There is no low-level disruption.
- Pupils' commitment to learning is exemplary. Pupils know staff want them to do their best. When they have successfully completed their work pupils consistently look for ways to do better. Pupils set high standards for themselves. This was clearly evident in the excellent quality of homework seen in the Years 3 and 4 pupils' investigation of heroes.
- Behaviour in assemblies, lunchtimes and at playtimes is exemplary. Relationships with pupils and adults are excellent. Pupils are uniformly polite and helpful. The school is a very happy and harmonious place to be. This, together with pupils' excellent attitudes, ensures attendance levels are above average. Unauthorised absence has significantly decreased.
- Pupils take great pride in their school and are very keen school councillors or members of the eco committee. Pupils value the opportunities to take part in village life, for example at church services or the village fete. This gives them an excellent awareness of how they can contribute to the community.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They develop a very strong capacity for reflection such as by focusing on their place in the wider world. Pupils are well aware of the Christian heritage of the nation and an understanding of different religious beliefs and backgrounds is fostered well, for example through links with a school with a more diverse pupil community.
- The school is strongly committed to discouraging discrimination and fostering good relationships. The different cultures and customs of the very small minority of pupils in school are embraced and celebrated. This helps pupils develop a strong tolerance and respect for others.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Security of the school building and grounds is very good. Pupils are very aware of how to move round the school or play safely. They develop a good awareness of safety in other situations, for example, when cycling, swimming or playing sport.
- Pupils' knowledge of internet safety is very secure. Pupils themselves helped produce a leaflet for parents and carers on this aspect. Pupils are very confident to approach any adult if a pupil or another person says or does anything that might concern them. They report bullying is extremely rare and always dealt with swiftly and successfully.
- On the few occasions when any pupil finds good behaviour difficult, excellent support is provided to ensure their behaviour improves quickly.

**The quality of teaching is outstanding**

- Teaching is uniformly outstanding. All staff have an excellent awareness of the stage at which each pupil is working and the best way in which to help them learn. There are exceptionally good transfer arrangements between classes, especially for those at risk of falling behind. Learning is always especially well planned for the different ages and ability in each class. All parents and carers spoken to during the inspection praised the individual attention their child receives.
- Checking how well pupils are progressing is continuous throughout learning activities. Staff intervene very swiftly when pupils find work difficult or easy. Consequently the level of challenge or support is swiftly adjusted. In an excellent Year 1/2 session on storytelling, immediate adjustments were made to tasks for pupils with learning difficulties.
- Marking is very helpful and pupils are appreciative of the advice given and opportunities to discuss this with staff. Older pupils become very skilled at checking how much they have learned in a particular activity. The feedback they give to their teachers is used very effectively to help plan future work.
- Checks for each year of a pupil's progress ensure they successfully build up the skills and knowledge required by the end of a phase. Staff have yet to agree a system that will allow them to quickly identify the rate of progress pupils make across the year.
- Highly skilled teaching assistants contribute very effectively to learning, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. These pupils receive excellent support both in class and in special activities to help them catch up.
- The teaching of phonics is very well organised to provide work that is set at the right level. As a result, all pupils learn exceptionally well, even when they initially find learning difficult.
- Teachers' encouragement of pupils to do their very best and pupils' determination to succeed enhance the learning of the most able pupils. Staff recognise intuitively when these pupils are ready to move on further. The success of their strategies is evident in the rate at which pupils' learning targets change from week to week.
- Teachers have adjusted their practice exceptionally well in conforming to new requirements for teaching different subjects. They ensure pupils have an in depth understanding of important skills and knowledge and apply these well in a range of different situations. As a result, many of the tasks for the most able pupils are set in the context of investigative work.
- Staff use their expertise to excellent effect in different year groups. Pupils receive expert teaching in French, music and computing. The coaching skills of teaching assistants ensure pupils' excellent learning; for example, in gymnastics and dance.

**The achievement of pupils is outstanding**

- The skills and knowledge of children entering Reception are at typical levels for this age, but tend to be slightly lower for boys. Children make an excellent start to their education. The large majority reach a good level of development by the time they move into Year 1.
- In all year groups, both boys' and girls' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is outstanding. As a result, by Year 4, attainment in these subjects is much higher than usually seen at this age. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future education.
- The excellent achievement of the most able pupils ensures a significant minority of pupils attain standards normally reached by Year 6 pupils. For example, their understanding of mathematics enables them to quickly decide the method needed to solve problems.
- From Reception, the acquisition of important reading skills, including phonics (the sounds letters make in words) is rapid. Results in the Year 1 phonics screening check are consistently above average. Almost all Years 1 and 2 pupils use their phonics skills exceptionally well to build new words. By Year 2, even lower-attaining pupils read fluently and accurately and with good understanding. Year 2 pupils greatly enjoy reading; their attainment is well above the

national average. These skills are especially well extended in Years 3 and 4 where pupils confidently use their reading skills to acquire information.

- From Reception, pupils become skilled at writing well-organised stories or recounts. By Year 2, pupils' handwriting and punctuation are very good as is their grammatical awareness. Pupils spell most words accurately although sometimes they spell hard words phonetically.
- Pupils master the mechanical skills of English at a young age. As a result, older pupils are free to concentrate on the quality of language, introducing features such as connectives, clauses and varying sentence order. Their writing is always well suited to the format, such as for poetry or instructions. Pupils' stories are highly enjoyable, as in the excellent ones of 'A Voyage'.
- Pupils' writing skills are used to very good effect to support their learning in other subjects, for example, when writing instructions for, or evaluations of, design and technology work. Recounting events in history or describing a route for geographical work are equally good.
- The school has fully embraced the new mathematics programmes. As a result, pupils use their skills very effectively in other subjects. There is a very strong emphasis on using number lines in the younger classes. By Year 2, pupils have an excellent knowledge of place value and how to work with 10s and units.
- By Year 4, pupils are not afraid to take risks and learn quickly from their mistakes. They work quickly and accurately with a wide range of measures and information. They recognise patterns and identify which methods to use.
- Pupils acquire an excellent range of generic learning skills and achieve equally well in other subjects. Pupils excel in dance and gymnastics and their performance in competitive sport is exceptionally good. They have won local competitions in football. In tag rugby, pupils' skills resulted in an invitation to perform at half time on the pitch during a professional rugby game at Twickenham.
- Pupils become very skilled at using a wide range of computer programs, even programming their own games. They use these to excellent effect in design and technology and were runners up in a competition to design and make model Formula 1 cars. Testing out and adjusting the speed and aerodynamics added considerably to their awareness of forces.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well. Pupils who are in danger of falling behind are especially well supported and these pupils' achievement is outstanding. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make rapid progress and most reach the levels expected for their age by the time they leave.
- The achievement of the small number of disadvantaged pupils in receipt of extra funding is excellent and very few do not reach the expected levels in English and mathematics by Year 4.

### The early years provision

**is outstanding**

- The early years teacher is an exceptionally skilled practitioner. Her leadership and organisation for this year group are exemplary, because she consistently looks for the very best ways to help children learn. Consequently the range of activities for this age group is especially well designed.
- Children make excellent progress. The less able, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, begin to catch up with their peers. The most able children do equally well, easily exceeding the levels expected for this age. Their writing in particular is of the quality normally seen at the end of Year 1.
- The Reception space is especially well designed to enhance learning at every opportunity. From the start of induction procedures there is a very strong emphasis on children learning to communicate, read, write and count. Children starting school are confident and very ready to learn. During the inspection, children demonstrated a high level of concentration, perseverance and thirst for knowledge.
- Teaching, including that provided by the early years teaching assistant, is outstanding.

Excellent checks on learning mean that staff have an extremely good awareness of the level at which each child is working. Activities for new learning, such as for phonics, are especially well targeted at children's needs. Learning is great fun so children develop extremely positive attitudes.

- As in the rest of the school, monitoring of children's progress in each activity is exemplary. Checks and recording of achievements are continuous. The strong emphasis on discussing things with children improves their language skills and encourages them to push themselves even further.
- The resources available for children to choose when working alone are very thoughtfully prepared to help them acquire a range of skills. For example, the construction material helps children recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes. Resources for building patterns encourage learning of number bonds to 20.
- Very good attention is paid to children's security and safety. The outdoor facilities encourage lots of exploration and discovery, especially of growing things. Community links lead to very exciting visits, for example, to see new born lambs.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to work alongside staff in supporting their children's learning. They help to assess children's progress through work undertaken at home. Parents and carers are highly appreciative of this.



## 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>	123742
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	448534

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

<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	79
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steven Farndale
<b>Headteacher</b>	Claire Chantler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3–4 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01373 830438
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