

# Birkenshaw Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Station Lane, Birkenshaw, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD11 2JE

**Inspection dates** 19–20 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- In Key Stage 2, not enough pupils make good progress from their different starting points in reading and writing because teaching of these skills is not as strong as in Key Stage 1.
- The attainment of pupils in reading and writing by the end of Year 6 is too low.
- By the end of Year 6, gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school are still to be closed.
- Teaching in Key Stage 2 does not ensure that enough of the most and less able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least good progress.
- At times staff are not clear enough about how well pupils are doing in their work in order to give them the best improvement advice and most challenging activities.
- Leaders have not improved the quality of teaching and achievement in reading and writing in Key Stage 2 quickly enough.
- Middle leaders' skills have not been effective enough to ensure improvements in reading and writing in Key Stage 2.
- Governors are not clear enough about how well leaders' actions to improve the school are working. Governors have not ensured performance management is used well enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- The early years provision is good because children are taught consistently well and make good progress from their different starting points.
- Achievement in all subjects in Key Stage 1 accelerated in 2014 to well above that seen in other schools nationally. This shows the leaders' ability to improve teaching and achievement in the school.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics across Key Stage 2 from their different starting points.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and to each other. They respond very well to staff and their attendance is rising well.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and staff keep a close watch on pupils throughout the school day. School records, staff, pupils and parents confirm pupils are kept safe.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are given a wide range of ways to develop their skills for living in modern Britain.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 20 lessons, one observed jointly with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors observed pupils at lunch and break times, visited the breakfast and after-school clubs, and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and school leaders. Two meetings were held with governors; one separately with the Chair of the Governing Body and the other with six governors. A meeting was held with the local authority representative.
- Inspectors took account of the results of the school's own surveys of parents', staff' and pupils' views and the responses from 29 staff to the inspection questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the 69 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors spoke to parents in the playground.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included information about pupils' progress, the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school improvement plan, and records of activity undertaken by the governors. The work in pupils' books and records relating to the quality of teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Jonathan Woodyatt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Lomas	Additional Inspector
Simon Bramwell	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school changed from a nursery and first school to a primary school in 2012. The first group of Year 5 pupils started in that year. This group became the first group of Year 6 pupils in 2013.
- The school is much larger in size than most other primary schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is lower than that found in most other schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is lower than that found in most other schools. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The early years provision comprises a Nursery and two Reception classes. Children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis, either in the morning or afternoon.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and middle leaders have all changed since the last inspection.
- There have been significant changes in other staffing.
- There have been a number of changes in the membership of the governing body since the last inspection.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club run by the school on the site.
- The school is part of the Ten Primaries Partnership, a voluntary group of local schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve teaching so it is at least good, in order to accelerate achievement, in reading and writing in Key Stage 2 for the most and less able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and to close gaps in attainment for disadvantaged pupils by:
  - ensuring staff provide the best written or verbal feedback to ensure pupils can quickly make improvements and reduce the frequency of mistakes
  - ensuring staff monitor pupils' work closely in lessons and quickly step in to help them when they get stuck
  - making sure that all work provided for pupils by staff is precisely suited to their different levels of skill so that they can make the best progress.
- Improve leadership and management to good by:
  - ensuring middle leaders have the knowledge and skills to monitor and scrutinise the school's work, including the quality of teaching, and can use this effectively to improve the school's performance, especially in Key Stage 2
  - ensuring governors are clear about how well leaders' actions to improve the school are working
  - making sure performance management is used effectively to improve teaching standards.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Senior leaders gather and monitor a wide range of appropriate and detailed information about the performance of the school, which is also made available regularly to the governors. Senior leaders base their well-thought-out plans on this information and use it well to check how aspects are improving, such as the quality of teaching. While accelerated improvements in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and good progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 demonstrate the capacity to secure improving standards there have not been sufficient improvements in reading and writing in Key Stage 2.
- More needs to be done to hone the skills of the middle leaders in order to drive standards further in Key Stage 2. The recently appointed middle leaders have a rapidly growing knowledge of the performance in their areas of responsibility because the headteacher provides opportunities for them to develop the necessary skills, such as monitoring how well pupils are learning. However middle leaders have not secured good achievement in reading and writing.
- Staff are increasingly responding to the high expectations set by the leadership team for the standards of teaching and learning. Staff benefit well from training and opportunities to work alongside other teachers in the partnership established by the headteacher, in order to help them improve their skills, for example in reading and writing. However, pay for staff has only recently been linked closely to school improvement targets. Consequently, leaders have missed this opportunity to drive teaching standards up further over time.
- The headteacher has clearly set out to make this school the best it can be and this drive and ambition percolates through her leadership team and through the positive attitudes of staff, parents and pupils. The headteacher has overseen the change from a first school to a primary school, especially the challenge of introducing new Year 5 and Year 6 classes. She has developed her leadership team and managed staff changes over the last two years.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders ensure there are displays around school and assemblies promoting important values, such as rewards for attendance and good behaviour. The school's own Christian values are made clear, such as on the website. Trips and visits by speakers foster good relationships. An outside remembrance area decorated with poppies ensures topical issues are considered. Pupils visit local courts, join the school council to discuss their concerns and attend the primary parliament to help learn effectively about these aspects of living in modern Britain.
- The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of opportunities for pupils to become proficient in skills, such as computing and sport. Pupils were observed using 3D software to create and manipulate model buildings to print on a 3D printer for a city project.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is used well to provide outside specialist coaches who train staff and oversee competitions. Staff were observed delivering well planned and resourced sessions in the school that engaged pupils well and boosted their health and welfare.
- The curriculum offers opportunities for pupils to enhance their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics if they fall behind in their learning, such as in small group or one-to-one tuition with support staff. This demonstrates the school's commitment to tackling discrimination. However, inconsistencies in teaching mean that not all pupils get an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The local authority recognises that the headteacher is ably skilled and has overseen the change to a primary school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The Chair of the Governing Body, and the governors, has been hugely instrumental in ensuring the school has been able to make the necessary changes to become a primary school. Governors have endeavoured to employ staff with the necessary skills and diligently ensured financial resources have been available for this. Evidence from the consistent improvements in Key Stage 1 is testimony to their skills in overseeing these substantial changes.
  - The headteacher provides the governors with a clear view of the performance of the school, including performance data. However, governors are not sufficiently skilled to understand clearly how well the school is performing and the quality of teaching, as they have previously over-relied on the headteacher's conclusions.
  - Governors, helped by the local authority, ensure the performance management of the headteacher is linked well to appropriate targets. However, governors have only recently established a thorough process to reward good teaching and to tackle underperformance.
  - Governors make sure the school uses the primary school sport funding well. However, governors are not clear enough about where the gaps are between the attainment of those supported by the pupil

premium and others in the school. Although governors have very recently recruited staff to target improvements, pupil premium funding is not being spent as well as it should be to close gaps.

- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements.

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

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They conduct themselves well in and around school. They are courteous to others and choose to behave well because they are clear about the school's systems for rewards and sanctions.
- Pupils frequently demonstrated to inspectors the positive attitudes encouraged by the school. These attitudes ensure they engage well in their classroom learning, and records show they routinely complete tasks outside of their classrooms, such as homework. Scrutiny of their work books in Key Stage 2 showed that occasionally their attitudes to presentation of their work, such as accuracy with spellings and neatness in writing tasks, were not quite as good as they could be.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, they are punctual and their attendance has improved to better than that in other schools over the last year. Recent improvements have been boosted by the headteacher securing more support from specialist attendance staff and ensuring parents have a clear understanding of the importance of regular attendance. The breakfast and after-school clubs provide helpful support for families every day of the week.
- The school's records show that behaviour is typically good. There are no homophobic bullying incidents recorded, while the number of racist and other bullying incidents is very small. Pupils and parents told inspectors that bullying is rare in the school. Pupils explained clearly to inspectors that they were aware of the different types of bullying. There have been no permanent exclusions and the very few fixed-term exclusions indicate the school's effective robust response to dealing with any bullying.
- In lessons pupils respond fully to requests from staff and lessons are rarely interrupted by misbehaviour. Occasionally, pupils lose focus on the tasks they are working on and the pace of learning slows, sometimes because they have to wait too long for the next task or have got stuck. However, they quickly settle back to their work when asked.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils apply well the skills they learn in order to keep themselves safe. They explained to inspectors which parts of the playground different groups of pupils could play safely in. They knew where staff were if help was needed and pupils said staff were good at looking after them
- Pupils told inspectors about learning how to keep themselves safe, such as when using computers. They demonstrated a good understanding of how to assess when things could be unsafe, such as stopping playing football when visitors were close by.
- Almost all staff, pupils and parents agree pupils are kept safe at the school.

## **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, pupils in Key Stage 2 have not been taught well enough over time in order to ensure they achieve as well as they should especially in literacy. Teaching is much more successful in the early years and Key Stage 1 and so pupils' learning and progress over time in literacy and mathematics is at least good. However, the quality of teaching and learning is not consistent across the school and requires improvement in Key Stage 2.
- Staff check how well pupils are doing during lessons using a number of different ways. For example, staff go round and see for themselves or ask pupils to say how they think they have done. Armed with this knowledge, inspectors observed staff re-shaping pupils' tasks and activities well, such as in mathematics. However, at times, the checks made by staff in Key Stage 2, and very occasionally in Key Stage 1 and the early years, are not thorough enough for staff to understand clearly where pupils had got to or what had caused them to get stuck. This hinders staff from making the best improvements to pupils' skills.
- Evidence from pupils' books shows staff have a clear system in place for marking and providing useful guidance for pupils on how they can improve their work. However, too much work is not marked, especially in Key Stage 2, and sometimes incorrect answers, such as spellings in writing, are overlooked. Consequently, staff miss opportunities to accelerate pupils' learning because staff are not clear enough

about the best work to provide pupils with next.

- The headteacher has provided more training for teachers and some teaching has improved. Close scrutiny of the records of the quality of teaching confirms this. As a result the most able pupils benefit from the opportunity to reach the highest levels in mathematics. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' current work shows pupils are benefitting from improved staff skills, including in reading and writing in Key Stage 2, though work is not always closely matched to pupils' skills and abilities.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from the guidance provided by support staff. However, day-to-day teaching in Key Stage 2 does not challenge these pupils well enough in reading and writing.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sound they make) has improved. This ensured more pupils did better in the national screening check of pupils phonics skill carried out in Year 1 than in other schools in 2014. This is an increase from previous years and confirms the effectiveness of leaders in improving staff skills in this aspect. Reading, homework and opportunities to read are increasingly being established throughout the school, building effectively on pupils' phonics skills.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- By the end of Year 6 in 2014, pupils made good progress in mathematics from their different starting points and reached levels similar to those of pupils in other schools. However, not enough pupils made the progress expected of them in reading and writing, including the most and the less able. The attainment of pupils in reading and writing was too low. Overall, pupils did not achieve well enough in Key Stage 2.
- Some of the most able pupils reached the highest Level 6 in mathematics, indicating the improving level of challenge in teaching in this subject in Key Stage 2. However, these pupils did not achieve as well in reading and writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium in Year 6 are typically half-a-term behind others in the school in reading and writing and mathematics. They are a term behind non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in mathematics and about two terms behind non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in reading and writing. Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress from their different starting points to other pupils. Pupils supported by the pupil premium in Key Stage 1 are typically three terms behind others in the school and half-a-term behind non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Disabled pupils, and those who have special educational needs, make similar progress to others nationally in the early years and Key Stage 1. They receive additional support from staff within the school and other agencies, as required, which is suited to their needs. This demonstrates the school's commitment to providing equal opportunities although this is not always fully achieved as these pupils do not achieve as well as they should in reading and writing in Key Stage 2 due to teaching not meeting their needs as well as it should.
- Children achieved well by the end of the early years and very well by the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014 compared to other schools nationally, due to better teaching. Children make at least good progress in each of these stages over time from their different starting points. As a result, pupils, including the most and less able, left Year 2 in 2014 having reached high standards in their reading, writing and mathematics.

### The early years provision

### is good

- The early years' leader has created a nurturing environment and deployed staff well so children are kept safe and are happy. Staff have established effective routines in order to ensure children can quickly settle in when they start at the provision. Children quickly learn how to get on well with each other and behave well.
- Children start in the Nursery with knowledge, skills and understanding that are mostly typical for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning because the teaching is consistently good, which ensures good gains in learning. Children enter Reception having improved their skills well.
- School records show that up to a third of children are new to the school when they join in the Reception Year. Children start in Reception with skills that are typical for their age, a growing proportion have skills above this. By the end of Reception, they have continued to make good progress from their different starting points due to effective teaching. They are well prepared for their learning in Year 1 because they have improved many of their skills, for example in phonics, numbers and literacy.
- Information provided by the school shows that more children, including those that are most able, less able, disabled and those with special educational needs reached a good level of development at the end of

Reception in 2014 than in other schools and in the previous year. This demonstrates year on year improvements in how well they learn and make progress in the provision and the effectiveness of the leaders.

- Regular physical education activities ensure children are active and develop skills which boost their health and well-being. Group activities and opportunities to share tasks contribute well to developing their social and emotional development. The school's Christian ethos and values ensure each child is valued by staff, which leads to the children's happy, contented and positive attitudes.
- Children in the Nursery show very positive attitudes when they choose their own learning or learn with an adult. Inspectors observed the children's enjoyment while taking part in a number recording activity where they collected different numbers from resources in the classroom. Consequently, children make good progress and learn well in the Nursery.
- Children making play dough biscuits in Reception displayed their developing competencies and skills when they clearly articulated their ideas, followed complex instructions and described to the inspector why they were doing things, for example, children reminded the inspector that 'they were only pretend'.

## 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>	107730
<b>Local authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	448348

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	459
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Neil Auty
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rebecca Martin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01274 335400
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