

Bow Brickhill Church of England VA Primary School

Station Road, Bow Brickhill, Milton Keynes, MK17 9JT

Inspection dates 10–11 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school has managed recent changes in leadership well. Senior leaders and governors have ensured that the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and behaviour continue to be good.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average and improving.
- The interim headteacher and interim assistant headteacher have begun to make further improvements to the school in a short space of time.
- Children leave the early years being well prepared to join Year 1.
- Pupils say they feel safe. Behaviour is good and pupils are very caring and respectful to each other.
- Attendance is above average because pupils enjoy coming to school.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Parents and carers are supportive of the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some of the activities in the early years provision do not provide enough challenge for children, particularly the most able ones.
- Subject leaders do not monitor their areas of responsibility in the early years provision closely enough.
- Teachers' marking does not always tell pupils what they need to do to help them to improve their work. When advice is given, pupils do not always respond to it.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons, three of which were jointly observed with the interim headteacher. In addition, the inspector observed an assembly and saw pupils being taught in small groups.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, key staff and pupils.
- The inspector looked at a broad range of pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation that included minutes of governing body meetings, the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school's checks on teaching, curriculum and safeguarding information and the school's data.
- The inspector took into account the 16 responses from the online survey (Parent View), as well as the 16 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Sharona Semlali, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Pupils are taught in four classes which are mixed-age classes from Year 1. All of the children in the Reception class attend full time.
- The previous headteacher retired at the end of the summer term in 2014. The interim headteacher and interim assistant headteacher took up their positions at the beginning of September 2014. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body have been in their new roles since the beginning of October 2014.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils who are eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- 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 the quality of teaching by:
 - providing suitably challenging activities in all areas of learning in the early years provision, particularly for the most able children
 - ensuring that teachers' marking consistently provides clear guidance to pupils on how they can improve their work
 - ensuring that pupils are given time to respond and act on the advice given.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that subject leaders closely monitor their areas of responsibility in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Good planning has helped the new leadership team settle in well. As a result, senior leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and behaviour and safety remain good.
- The interim leaders work very closely together and have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have identified the correct priorities for the school to address and have quickly started to make further improvements in a short space of time. They have the full support of all the staff.
- The interim headteacher has strengthened the appraisal process for teachers. Their targets and rewards in salary are clearly linked to the school's priorities and the standards expected nationally.
- Teachers have good opportunities to share their good practice with each other and to observe outstanding teaching in other schools. Support is in place for those that need it. All of this is helping the quality of teaching to continue to improve.
- Subject leaders keep close checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' performance in their subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2. Their action plans identify the right areas that need improving. However, their checks in the early years are not as rigorous as the rest of the school so teaching is not quite as strong, particularly for the most able children.
- The school makes good use of the pupil premium to help those pupils that face any barriers to their learning to catch up and achieve well. Part of it is used to fund the Shakespeare for Schools Festival. This is helping the disadvantaged pupils to improve their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.
- The extra funding for sport has also been used well. Pupils have a wider choice in the range of sporting activities. More pupils are developing healthier lifestyles. For example, a group of pupils has risen to the challenge of running for about 15 minutes before school begins for 100 days.
- The school does not tolerate any form of discrimination and is fully committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all of its pupils. The school offers a wide range of clubs for boys, girls and the different age groups, including those who are in the Reception class.
- The new curriculum is motivating pupils and helping them to feel inspired about their learning. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were excited about dressing up as superheroes and designing their own character from a limited amount of resources. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed creating their own smoothies and getting their parents to give them some critical customer feedback.
- The curriculum is helping to promote British values and prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils along with parents, governors and staff have now voted on the values they consider most important, resulting in six core values they are going to concentrate on as a school community, which include respect, honesty and forgiveness.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn about and visit different places of worship. Pupils visit places, such as museums and parks, to see sculptures and artefacts. This is helping them to appreciate the different ways people live and express their ideas.
- The school successfully fosters very positive relationships with parents and carers. Responses from the parental questionnaire show that all of the parents would recommend the school to another parent.
- The local authority provides good support to the school. It has contributed to the improvements made in the early years provision.
- All statutory requirements for safeguarding are met. All staff and lead governors have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training and ensure pupils are kept safe at all times.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has planned well for the changes in the leadership of the school and in its own membership. Governors have undertaken a skills audit and have made good use of this information to allocate governors onto the relevant committees. They take part in a wide range of training that is helping them to know what is expected of them. Governors attend the annual conference run by the local authority. This helps them to have a better understanding of educational policy.
 - All governors feel comfortable in challenging and questioning each other. They confidently use a broad range of data to know how the school is performing. They make regular visits to the school and have devised their own protocols for doing this. Governors receive detailed and accurate information from school leaders and external consultants. They know what the quality of teaching is like in each year

group.

- They use all of this information to hold leaders to account. Through the personnel and finance committee, governors are fully aware of the school's procedures to reward teachers or address any underperformance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite, courteous, friendly and well mannered. They care for and respect each other. Older pupils look after the younger ones. At break times, pupils of all ages play well together. They make sure that no one is left out. Pupils say, 'It's great belonging to a small school because we all know each other.'
- Pupils take great pride in looking after their school environment, as everywhere is litter free and tidy. All of their coats are hung up properly and they all proudly wear their uniforms.
- The atmosphere in the lunch hall is very orderly and calm. Pupils socialise well with each other as they eat their meals. There is good supervision, particularly for those children in the early years.
- Parents, staff and pupils are happy with behaviour. The school's documentation confirms that pupils hardly ever break the school rules.
- Pupils relish taking on different responsibilities in school. They feel that their views are heard and valued through the school council. For example, they helped to make the decision about what types of equipment they were going to buy for them to use at break times. All pupils in Year 6 have an area of responsibility. This is helping to prepare them for their next stage in education and to become responsible citizens.
- Attendance is above average because pupils are keen, motivated and want to be at school to learn.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because, on the odd occasion where teaching is slightly weaker, pupils' concentration wanes.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. This is confirmed by parents, staff and pupils. The school's procedures for checking any visitors into the building are very robust. Risk assessments are in place and sufficiently detailed.
- Pupils have a good understanding about what bullying means. They are adamant that there is no bullying in the school.
- The school teaches pupils different ways of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are well informed of where and how they can get help if they ever need it. They learn the saying, 'we all have a right to be safe'.
- In assemblies, pupils who are Junior Road Safety Officers show others how to keep themselves safe when crossing the road. Cycling 'Bikeability' training in Years 5 and 6 helps pupils to heighten their awareness of road safety.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. The school's website has useful links that gives good advice about safety when using the internet for parents and pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time is good. This helps pupils make good progress in all subjects.
- Teachers use a good range of creative learning activities that catch pupils' interest. They also ask questions in a way which encourages pupils to think more deeply, particularly the most able ones. In a Year 5 and 6 computing lesson, the teacher asked searching questions to get pupils to make significant improvements to the websites that they had created.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge enables pupils to make rapid gains in their learning. Teachers explain things clearly and take things step by step to help pupils understand new material.
- Music is taught extremely well throughout the school. Pupils from the different age groups volunteer to sing as part of the choir. Children in the early years learn to play the different instruments, such as the recorder and violin. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were all highly engaged in learning to play their own brass instruments together as a class and reading the music at the same time.
- School leaders have reviewed and adjusted the way they teach mathematics. This is helping pupils to

make better progress in this subject. Pupils are becoming more confident in understanding the number facts of addition and subtraction. Teachers ensure that pupils learn their multiplication tables. Mathematics is also well taught well in other areas of the curriculum so pupils can see the importance of the subject.

- The school has rightly had a big focus on improving pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation. Pupils enjoy doing the activities because the teachers make learning fun. The older pupils have taken part in the Shakespeare School Festival. This is where they studied characters from Shakespeare's plays and gave short performances, working with pupils from other schools. This helped them to make considerable improvements in their writing skills.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning in the classroom and with others who need the extra help in small groups.
- Work in pupils' books shows that pupils are given good opportunities to apply their written skills at length in subjects other than in English. Some marking is of high quality. However, teachers do not always give clear guidance to pupils on how they can make their work better. In some cases, where there are questions or comments, pupils do not always respond.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught well. This is seen from the way that pupils use their phonic skills to help them to read difficult words. The results from the Year 1 phonic screening check in 2014 were above the national average. In all lessons reading is promoted well. This is helping pupils to enjoy reading for pleasure.
- Homework is used effectively to extend pupils' learning. Pupils are motivated to do work at home because the projects are interesting and link well to the topics that they are learning in school.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Pupil numbers in each of the year groups are low. This means that test results can vary from year to year. However, attainment at the end of Year 6 in reading and writing is typically above average and is broadly average in mathematics. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of their education when they leave the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. This is because school leaders identify their specific needs from an early stage and strive to ensure that specialist support is quickly put into place. Close and regular checks are made on the extra help given. If the school finds that pupils are not making enough progress then extra help is either adjusted or changed. School leaders work closely with a wide range of external agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met.
- The most able pupils achieve well. They achieve results by the end of Year 6 in reading and writing which are similar to those of the most able nationally. Currently, there are small groups of very able mathematicians in some of the year groups who are being challenged to reach the higher levels in this subject. The planned activities are demanding and teachers make the pupils think hard by asking challenging questions. However, this is not always the case in the early years provision.
- The few disadvantaged pupils make at least good progress from their starting points. In 2014 end of Year 6 assessments, their attainment in writing was around four terms ahead of other pupils in the school. In reading they were just under a term behind the others in the school, whilst in mathematics they were one and a half terms in front. Compared to all other pupils nationally, they were two terms ahead in writing, and just under one term behind in reading and mathematics. School data show that the gaps are closing quickly in reading and mathematics.

The early years provision

is good

- Children enter the early years with starting points that are broadly typical for their age. The proportion achieving a good level of development in 2014 was, for the first time, above that seen nationally. This has considerably improved since the previous inspection. Children make good progress and are well prepared to join Year 1.
- Teaching over time is good. Planned activities take into account children's interests. For example, during the inspection, children were excited that 'Santa' had left his footprint in the classroom. They were extremely eager to help him find his lost presents and deliver them to the right numbers on the doors of the homes. Others were highly engaged in making presents for him.
- Behaviour is good. Children play and share the resources together well. The adults work in partnership to

ensure that all children feel safe. Children trust the adults and respond quickly to their instructions. They are very settled and familiar with the school's routines.

- Leadership and management of the early years are good. Staff make sure that children have good opportunities to explore their local environment. Children's recent exploration in the local woods stimulated them to make dens, whilst a few searched for the different types of minibeast.
- Parents are encouraged to participate in their children's learning and assessments. This is particularly evident in the high quality work produced in the home learning books and the imaginative models of the different castles and dragons. Once a month, parents have the chance to have a conversation with staff to discuss their children's work.

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	134423
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	444209

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Deborah Brownhill
Interim Headteacher	Pam McBurnie
Date of previous school inspection	1–2 December 2009
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