

Bedford Drive Primary School

Bedford Drive, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead, Merseyside, CH42 6RT

Inspection dates

29–30 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement. Over time, the standards pupils reach by the end of Key Stage 1 are below those expected for their age in writing and reading.
- For a number of years, too few pupils have reached the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement because teaching is not consistently good enough across the school to accelerate pupils' progress.
- In some classes, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough.
- Some teachers' marking does not consistently help pupils to know what they need to do to improve their work and, where it does, pupils do not always respond to the advice given.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and develop their skills in English and mathematics across other areas of the curriculum.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Targets and timescales in plans for improving the school's effectiveness are not yet sharp enough to enable leaders to check if actions taken are having enough impact.
- Governors have not consistently held school leaders to account for the school's performance compared with national benchmarks.
- The early years provision requires improvement because not enough children make better than expected progress from their starting points.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders have been successful in raising standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 so that, in 2014, the school met the government's floor standards.
- The gaps in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils compared to other pupils are closing.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has improved. As a result, pupils' performance in the national phonics screening check was broadly in line with the national average last year.
- The headteacher and governors have taken effective action to eradicate inadequate teaching.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they feel safe in school. Pupils get on well together around school and on the playground, and in class they are eager to learn.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read. Some lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2 read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised during lessons and separately with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors considered 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own surveys of parents' and pupils' views. Responses to a questionnaire completed by 18 members of staff were considered.
- Meetings took place with a representative from the local authority.
- A meeting was held with three governors, including the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body.
- A range of school documents was examined. These included the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school's development plan, information about the quality of teaching in the school, data on pupils' progress, records of pupils' attendance, behaviour records and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Neil Dixon, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pamela Davenport	Additional Inspector
Lenford White	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average size primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for the pupil premium funding is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school offers flexible, part-time nursery provision. Children attend the Reception class full time.
- The school has experienced some turbulence in staffing since the previous inspection. A number of teachers, including members of the leadership team, have joined the school within the last six months.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of teaching on pupils' learning so that pupils make faster progress and achieve well by:
 - ensuring that pupils have opportunities to develop and practise their skills in English and mathematics across all areas of the curriculum
 - raising expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving
 - ensuring that marking shows pupils exactly how to make their work better and that pupils consistently take note of and respond to the advice given.
 - ensuring that the progress made by children in the early years is checked carefully so that learning activities are consistently matched closely to their needs and abilities.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that targets for improving the school's effectiveness are clear, measurable and ambitious
 - ensuring that leaders make regular and rigorous checks on the impact of actions taken to improve achievement
 - improving governors' effectiveness in knowing how well the school is performing compared with other schools nationally.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because school leaders have not raised levels of pupils' achievement consistently across the school. As a result, not all groups of pupils achieve as well as they should.
- Improvements have been made since the last inspection and school leaders demonstrate the capacity to improve the school further. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated and pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014 improved significantly.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have successfully created a culture within the school in which pupils feel safe and well cared for and where good behaviour both in and out of lessons is the norm. The school provides a high level of support for its pupils and their families, and arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- School leaders, including governors, have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas to improve and have established plans for improvement. However, these plans do not always have sufficiently clear and measurable targets for success. Leaders do not check rigorously enough that actions are having the desired impact on the quality of teaching and learning, and so the pace of improvement is not as fast as it should be.
- The leadership of teaching is improving. Senior leaders, a number of whom are recent appointments, check regularly on the quality of teaching and learning and make sure that the good practice evident in school is shared. This is helping to improve the current quality of teaching in the school.
- The school's processes for managing teachers' performance are thorough and have been effective in eradicating inadequate teaching. Teachers' targets are linked to pupils' progress and staff are provided with training to improve their skills and practice.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide extra teaching for those disadvantaged pupils who were not making fast enough progress to catch up to the same standards as other pupils in school or nationally. As a result, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving year-on-year, although their attainment still lags behind that of other pupils.
- The primary school sports funding is used effectively. Pupils have access to a range of sporting activities and staff have received training to increase their confidence in teaching different aspects of physical education and games.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn to respect and appreciate different religions and cultures, treat each other with respect and understand different points of view. The active school council models democracy well and pupils are fully involved in organising fundraising events and raising awareness of different charities. This work contributes to pupils' being well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school's support for new pupils and families for whom English is an additional language is of a high quality. Induction materials in a range of languages have been produced. This reflects the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils and families.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils through a topic-based approach that is enhanced by a range of visits, such as trips to a local farm and to the theatre, and visitors coming into school, such as to celebrate Chinese New Year or to support a topic on robots.
- The school's local authority advisor visits the school regularly and provides effective guidance and support. This has helped the headteacher to tackle serious weaknesses in teaching over time and to secure improvements through some significant changes in staffing and leadership.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school is improving. Following the previous inspection, the appointment of new governors with a range of skills has strengthened the governing body. Governors play an active role in school life through regular visits to school in their roles as governors linked to different year groups.
 - Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have provided effective support and challenge for school leaders in improving the quality of teaching and attainment. However, they are not yet as effective when holding school leaders to account for the school's performance compared with national benchmarks.
 - Governors effectively check the use of additional funding, such as pupil premium and the sport premium, to ensure it has the maximum impact on improving outcomes for pupils.
 - Governors have not shied away from making difficult decisions to improve the quality of teaching. They have an accurate view of current strengths and weaknesses in teaching across the school. They have

strengthened their procedures to ensure that any increases in teachers' pay are linked to their performance, and to reward performance that is particularly effective in raising levels of achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. They say that poor behaviour in their school is very unusual and that everyone in their school gets on well together. This can be seen at break and lunchtimes, where pupils mix well together.
- Pupils talk confidently about the ways in which they feel behaviour is improving. They particularly like the 'zone' system for monitoring classroom behaviour and say this helps to make sure that everyone tries their best and works hard in class.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive, as can be seen in the range of attractive displays of art and written work in classrooms and around the school.
- On occasions where pupils do misbehave, incidents are dealt with in a calm and effective manner by the staff and, as a result, pupils' learning is not affected.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in the school and can explain how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when using the internet.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of different forms of bullying, including name-calling and homophobic bullying, and say that incidents of bullying in their school are rare: one pupil proudly described the school as being 'a bully free zone'. Pupils are confident that the adults in school would deal effectively with any problems or concerns that they may have.
- School leaders are working hard to improve attendance, which has been stubbornly below average. These efforts are beginning to prove successful and attendance is rising steadily. At the time of the inspection, attendance was close to the national average level, and better than at the same time the previous year. This is giving pupils a better chance to succeed as they are not missing so much learning.
- Parents' comments and responses to the 'Parent View' online survey and a parental survey conducted by the school show that the large majority of parents are pleased with the standards of behaviour and safety in the school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because, although inadequate teaching has been eradicated and there is some strong teaching in some classes, it is still not consistently good across all subjects and all classes.
- Teacher expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. The work set by staff does not always ensure that enough pupils, especially the most able, achieve as well as they should in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Where teaching has the most impact on pupils' learning, activities are set that are appropriately challenging. Teaching uses questioning skilfully to check on pupils' learning and adapt their teaching accordingly. This was evident in mathematics in Year 6, where pupils worked together with enthusiasm and determination to tackle increasingly complex mathematical problems.
- The teaching of phonics has improved. Teachers ensure that phonic activities are matched to pupils' needs, based on secure assessment of pupils' phonic knowledge, and this ensures that pupils' learning moves on at a good pace.
- Pupils' books show that the quality of marking and feedback has improved overall, but is not yet consistently strong across the school. Where marking is most effective, comments ensure that pupils know how to improve their work. However, in some classes, pupils do not always respond to their teachers' advice and this means that even the better quality marking has less impact on pupils' achievement than it should do.
- Inspection evidence from observing lessons, scrutiny of pupils' books and discussions with pupils shows that there are few opportunities for pupils to practise and develop the skills that they have learnt in

mathematics and English in other areas of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils do not consolidate these skills as quickly as they could do.

- The large majority of teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning by providing focused support for small groups or individual pupils. In particular, the support for disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is very effective and helps to ensure that these pupils achieve well from their different starting points.
- Good relationships between pupils and adults are a strong feature of the very large majority of lessons. This helps to create a positive climate for learning within the school. Teachers are enthusiastic about teaching and ensure usually that the activities they plan engage their pupils.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement. The progress made by pupils across the school is uneven. Attainment rose in Year 6 in 2014 so that an average proportion of pupils attained the expected Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, results in reading and writing in Year 2 were below average.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check rose in 2014 to be in line with the national average. This is because school leaders have ensured that the teaching of phonics has improved and consequently pupils are making rapid gains in their phonic knowledge.
- Since the time of the last inspection, boys' achievement has improved strongly in Key Stage 2 in reading and mathematics, and is improving in writing.
- In 2014, too few pupils reached the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence shows that the level of challenge expected of the most able pupils is inconsistent between classes and year groups, which means the most able pupils make faster progress in some classes than in others.
- Evidence from the school's tracking data, scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of learning show that progress for pupils currently at the school is improving overall, although there are still inconsistencies across subjects and year groups. Particularly effective use of regular assessment to identify pupils' specific learning needs, and resulting well-planned activities, are successfully accelerating the rates of progress made by pupils in Years 5 and 6 and, as a result, their attainment is rising.
- In 2014 at the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils were about one term behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with other pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils in the school were about two terms behind in mathematics and reading, while in writing it was closer to three terms. However, these gaps are closing quickly and have halved in the last two years, reflecting the school's effective use of the pupil premium funding and success in promoting equality of opportunity. Current school data records show that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is accelerating.
- Because their needs are identified quickly, and caring and effective support is provided promptly, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least the same progress as similar pupils nationally and achieve well, given their different starting points and abilities.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Most children start in nursery with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age, particularly in speaking and listening. By the time children leave the Reception class, many have made the progress that is expected of them and are ready to start in Year 1, but too few have made more than the expected amount of progress.
- During adult-led activities in which staff work with groups of children on literacy and mathematics, staff generally make a good contribution to children's learning, although the most able children are not always challenged to make as much progress as they could do. Where teaching has the most positive impact on children's learning, such as in the teaching of phonics, productive activities are planned that accurately match children's individual learning needs.
- Staff have worked hard to create a bright and welcoming learning environment, and good use has been made of the limited amount of outdoor space available, particularly that used by the Reception class children. However, limitations on space do mean that groups of children have to be taught in the corridor when engaged in focused activities. Leaders are hopeful that the planned new school building will provide more usable space for group-work.
- The early years leader took up her post in September 2014 and has quickly and accurately established a

picture of strengths and weaknesses within the early years phase. She has put in place actions to ensure that the assessments of children's progress made by staff are more consistently accurate and recognises the need to further ensure that assessments are used consistently well to plan for children's learning across all areas of the curriculum.

- The staff are very caring and establish warm and friendly relationships with the children. This ensures that the children behave well, feel safe and gain confidence. Children quickly learn to play and work together happily. Good systems are in place to make sure that children are looked after well and are kept safe and secure.

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	104988
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	453421

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	402
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian John
Headteacher	Rebecca Bridges
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2013
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