

Bathford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Dovers Park, Bathford, Bath, BA1 7UB

Inspection dates 6–7 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
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.

- This successful school lives up to its mission to ensure that all pupils 'Grow, care, serve, share'. This means that all pupils flourish and grow as individuals who are highly valued and extremely well supported.
- All staff and governors share the headteacher's uncompromising drive for excellence and very high expectations. As a result, all aspects of the school's work have greatly improved since the previous inspection.
- Leaders know the school very well and have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for further improvement.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. All pupils, including the most able, those who are supported by the pupil premium, the disabled and those who have special educational needs, make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 6 and Year 2 are above average.
- Teaching has improved and is now never less than good; much is outstanding. Teachers plan work to challenge pupils of all abilities and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teachers use information about pupils' progress very well to identify those in danger of falling behind and give extra support when it is needed.
- Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and give pupils clear advice on how to improve it. Pupils also regularly evaluate their own and each other's work against challenging 'steps to success'.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and want to do well. They are very enthusiastic learners. However, they do not always take sufficient pride in their handwriting and the presentation of their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding because teachers have very high expectations of how they should conduct themselves in and around the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is also outstanding. As a result, pupils feel extremely safe and very well looked after by staff.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well through the broad and balanced range of subjects taught. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils relish taking on extra responsibilities in school. Their attendance is now above average.
- Children get off to an excellent start in the early years and make rapid progress. This is because they experience a wide range of exciting and enjoyable learning activities.
- Governors are highly committed and contribute well to the school's work. They share the passion for excellence with adults and pupils in school. They support and challenge leaders in equal measure.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 12 lessons. They gained other evidence on the quality of teaching by looking at the work in pupils' books and talking to pupils about their work. The headteacher jointly observed two of these lessons with the inspectors. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school, attended assembly and looked at a range of documentation, including: the school's view of its own performance and development plan; policies and information about pupils' performance, attendance, behaviour and the quality of teaching; safeguarding information; and the governing body minutes.
- Inspectors considered the questionnaire returns from 13 members of staff.
- Inspectors took account of 73 responses by parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to parents informally.

Inspection team

Carol Warrant, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jenny Brookes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bathford Church of England VC Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- An average proportion of pupils are disabled or have special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority, is well below the national average.
- Children in the Reception class attend full time.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school has received support from the headteacher of St John's Primary school, a local leader of education (LLE).
- The school has a strong partnership with seven local primary schools.
- On-site pre-school and before- and after-school provision are privately managed and did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Encourage pupils to take a greater pride in their work in order to ensure consistently high standards of handwriting and presentation across the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides a very clear strategic direction for the school. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and the entire staff and governors; they share and promote his drive to improve outcomes for all pupils in the school. He has established a culture of teamwork, collaboration and high expectations. Very well focused improvements to all aspects of the school's work since the previous inspection have resulted in vastly improved teaching quality and pupils' achievement. Nothing but the very best is acceptable and, as a result, all staff strive to ensure all pupils reach their full potential.
- Senior leaders know the school very well. Through detailed self-evaluation, they have correctly identified the school's strengths and key areas for development. As a result, the school development plan focuses well on the most important areas for improvement, and progress towards achieving these is regularly checked.
- There is a relentless focus on improving and sustaining excellent teaching that results in pupils achieving high standards and making very good progress. The quality of teaching is checked regularly through a rigorous and wide-ranging programme of monitoring activities. Aspects that need improvement are identified and further training is provided. Weak teaching has been eradicated.
- The performance of all staff is evaluated annually. They are set meaningful targets linked to national expectations and the school improvement plan. Teachers' efforts to meet these targets are making a strong contribution to the rapid improvements in pupils' achievement.
- Subject leaders manage their areas of responsibility effectively. They benefit from the frequent opportunities to meet with their colleagues in other schools. This means that they can work with other subject specialists to plan learning and examine work from each school to check that their judgements about standards are accurate.
- The range of subjects taught and the way that they are organised and assessed result in high academic outcomes and excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The many opportunities to take on responsibility, consider other points of view, get involved in the community and learn about other cultures prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Procedures for the safeguarding of pupils are well organized and effective. They are regularly monitored by senior staff and nominated governors, and meet statutory requirements.
- Pupil premium funding is spent wisely to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress during their time at the school.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is used effectively. The school provides a good range of sports, including after-school clubs, and staff have improved their expertise. All pupils are involved in sporting activities, with the consequent benefits for their health and fitness.
- Parents are extremely supportive of the school. There are very good links between home and school. The school's website and regular newsletters build on the partnerships established in the early years.
- The school works closely with the local authority and has used its expertise, including that of a local leader of education, effectively. Staff benefit from collaboration with the partnership of local schools. This has resulted in improvements in many areas of the school's work, including the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide a good level of support and challenge to the headteacher and his senior leaders. They subscribe fully to his vision and the direction in which he and his staff are taking the school while rigorously holding him to account for his performance.
 - Governors have a very secure understanding of performance data and are able to compare the school's results with national data. They monitor the school's finances well. They know how the pupil premium funding is spent and ask searching questions to check the impact on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
 - Governors visit the school regularly and are involved in monitoring activities. As a result, they have a good overview of the quality of teaching, including strengths and areas for improvement. They understand the link between increases in pay and teachers' achievement of annual targets.
 - Governors ensure that the school meets all statutory equality requirements and that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
 - Members of the governing body check to make certain that procedures to keep pupils safe are followed and the school meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils know that their teachers expect nothing but the very best from them and, as a result, they want to please their teachers by behaving and working well. Their enthusiasm and enjoyment of learning contribute considerably to their rapid progress. However, some pupils need further encouragement to take more pride in their work so that their handwriting is neater and their work is better presented.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding because there are very clear and consistent expectations of how pupils should conduct themselves in school. Staff, pupils and parents agree that standards of behaviour are high.
- Pupils are polite and show consideration and respect in the classrooms, during assemblies, in the outside learning areas and the playgrounds. Playtimes are harmonious because pupils get on well together. Older pupils enjoy helping the younger ones; for example, pupils in Year 6 are effective peer mediators in the playground.
- Teachers are able to use time to maximum effect in lessons because there are excellent established routines for working together. Pupils follow instructions quickly and without fuss, and settle quickly to their work.
- Pupils enjoy being given responsibilities, such as membership of the Eco council or becoming peer mediators. Pupils in Year 6 regularly read with children in the early years. This benefits the younger children in helping to improve their reading skills, and develops the self-esteem and social skills of the older pupils.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding
- Leaders make sure the building is secure and staff are rigorously checked for their suitability prior to appointment.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school, and staff and parents agree with their opinion.
- Pupils have a very clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including how to keep safe when using the internet. They have an excellent awareness of the different forms bullying can take and say bullying is extremely rare; school records support this view. Pupils know to whom they should turn if they are worried about bullying, and are confident they will be listened to.
- The school works very closely with parents to follow up on absence, encourage the best levels of attendance, and ensure pupils are punctual and prepared for learning. As a result, attendance has improved over the last year and is now above average.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is of a consistently high quality. Teachers make sure that pupils build on their earlier learning. As a result, all groups of pupils are now making rapid progress.
- Excellent teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) in the early years and Key Stage 1 securely promotes an enjoyment of reading and skills which enable children to progress rapidly to become confident readers. In 2014, pupils in Year 1 achieved above average results in the national screening check for phonics.
- The teaching of writing, in particular, spelling and grammar, has improved significantly after being identified as an area to improve. High quality writing in a wide range of contexts is evident in lessons, in pupils' workbooks and in displays around the school.
- In mathematics, a strong emphasis is given to the development of basic numeracy skills and calculation. Pupils regularly use and apply these skills to solve problems and to understand the relevance of mathematics to everyday life.
- Expectations for what pupils can achieve are high. Teachers know their classes very well and, as a result, learning is well planned and work is pitched at just the right level for all pupils. Teachers check carefully and regularly that pupils understand the work they are given and can make the progress intended.
- Teachers establish very good relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour very well. Consequently, pupils share their ideas confidently with each other and with the adults. This, coupled with good-quality questioning and time for discussion in pairs or small groups, provides opportunities for pupils to think deeply and to develop their communication and language skills.
- Teachers encourage pupils to learn from each other and continually think about different ways to tackle

their work.

- Classrooms are stimulating workplaces. They feature bright displays of information and pupils' work from a range of subjects which are often used as a starting point for future learning.
- Teachers regularly and rigorously review pupils' progress. Any in danger of falling behind are quickly identified and given additional support to help them catch up. Teachers deploy teaching assistants very well so that the pupils who need extra help or more challenging work are able to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and give pupils useful feedback about what they have done well and what they need to improve. This is now consistent across all classes, and teachers check that pupils have acted on their advice and improved their work. There are also many opportunities for pupils to assess their own and each other's learning. This fosters a very positive learning culture where pupils benefit from each other's ideas.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Since the previous inspection, pupils in Years 1 to 6 have made rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and standards are rising. At the end of Year 2 in 2014, standards were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 was above the national average.
- School records and work in pupils' books indicate that these high standards have been maintained in 2015. A high proportion of pupils, in all year groups, are making excellent progress and are working above the level expected for their age in all subjects. The proportion of pupils making or exceeding expected progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is high. This represents excellent progress for all groups of pupils and pupils are very well prepared for their move to secondary school.
- Children in the early years settle very quickly and form excellent relationships with their classmates and adults. All children make rapid progress and a high proportion achieve a good level of development by the end of the year. They are extremely well prepared for Year 1.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the national standard in the 2014 phonics check at the end of Year 1 was above average. Pupils apply their phonic knowledge accurately when they tackle unfamiliar words in their reading books. Older pupils read widely and talk confidently and revealingly about their favourite authors and themes.
- The most-able pupils achieve well. In 2014, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics rose to above the national average. This year, there has been a substantial increase in the number of these pupils working at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school meets the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs extremely well. They make very good progress because of the early identification of their learning needs and the carefully planned support they receive from teachers and well-trained teaching assistants. The progress made by these pupils is regularly reviewed to ensure that any additional help has the maximum impact on raising their achievement.
- As a result of the effective use of pupil premium funding, disadvantaged pupils make similar levels of progress as other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The very small number of disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2014 means that it is difficult to make meaningful comparisons between their performance and that of other pupils in the school and nationally. Gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of their classmates are closing rapidly across the school.
- Pupils achieve equally well in subjects other than English and mathematics as a consequence of the way the different subjects are organised around a theme that excites and interests them.
- Pupils greatly enjoy sport and are enthusiastic about physical education. The additional sports funding is used very effectively to provide specialist coaching and to develop staff expertise. Pupils reach good standards and their skills are further enhanced in after-school activities and clubs. Pupils' experiences in physical education and sport also contribute to the development of their social skills, health and well-being.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children settle quickly, thanks to the highly creative and supportive learning spaces and well-established

routines.

- All children, including the most able, those with special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium, make outstanding progress from their different starting points. A high proportion reached a good level of development at the end of Reception in 2014 compared with other schools nationally. Children are extremely well prepared for Year 1.
- Children enjoy a highly stimulating and attractive learning environment which reflects their interests and in which they can learn and explore with enthusiasm. Every opportunity is taken to develop communication and language skills. For example, a group of children building a castle discussed at length how they were going to make a drawbridge that went up and down. Skilled questioning by the teacher developed their language skills exceptionally well while the children enjoyed great fun in their learning.
- High-quality resources and activities excite and engage the children's interests. Teachers and support staff very successfully develop children's speaking and listening skills, and extend their vocabulary. The development of children's reading skills, particularly phonics, is outstanding. Children make very good progress in working with number and solving basic problems. With highly effective guidance and direction from adults, they also make excellent progress in early writing skills. Imaginative role play and creative areas promote language and creativity extremely well.
- High expectations and very well-established routines lead children to develop excellent attitudes to learning. They work and play in harmony with one another and learn to behave extremely well. This is because the school encourages its values from a very young age. Children demonstrate a high degree of independence, which enables them to explore, investigate and experiment.
- Teaching over time is outstanding, with a good balance of activities chosen by the children and those taught by teachers and teaching assistants. Where activities are led by adults, these are well focused and delivered with enthusiasm. Observations and assessments are of a high quality and used well to plan the next steps of learning.
- Partnership with parents is quickly established; parents are encouraged to contribute to the children's learning journals and are welcomed into the classroom each morning with their children.
- Outstanding leadership of the early years has resulted in significant improvements in the quality of provision since the previous inspection. All staff work together as a team to ensure that all children have the very best opportunities to learn and develop well. As a result, children leave the early years very well prepared for Year 1.

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	109185
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	462514

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Nunn
Headteacher	Matt Stone
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 May 2013
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