

Biggin Hill Primary School

Old Tye Avenue, Westerham, TN16 3LY

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2
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

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good to ensure that pupils achieve well. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching between different year groups.
- Historical weaknesses in teaching mean that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This is hampering their progress.
- Too few pupils make more than expected progress or attain the higher levels in writing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write in subjects other than English.
- Pupils' written work is not always of the same good quality in all subjects. Some teachers do not insist that pupils' writing in subjects other than English is of good quality.
- Teachers do not always have sufficiently high expectations of their pupils.
- Sometimes, the work set for the most-able pupils is not challenging enough, while tasks set for some pupils are too difficult for them to complete successfully.
- Some teachers do not give pupils sufficiently clear advice about how to move their learning forward.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher provides highly effective leadership. The headteacher, senior leaders and the Interim Academy Board have secured rapid improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement since September 2014.
- Pupils' progress has accelerated across the school in the past year.
- Effective teaching in Year 6 means that most pupils are where they need to be in their learning at the end of Key Stage 2. This has ensured they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Parents comment on many improvements in the school's work. They are confident that the headteacher has put the school back on track to ensure that their children achieve well.
- Children make rapid progress during Reception Year.
- Pupils throughout the school are keen learners. Behaviour has improved substantially in the past year so that it is good. Robust safeguarding arrangements ensure that pupils are safe.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils’ learning in 18 lessons or part-lessons, including six observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, parents and pupils. Discussions were also held with the headteacher of Charles Darwin School, the Chair of the Interim Academy Board, and two other representatives of the academy board.
- Inspectors took account of 93 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). In addition, inspectors spoke with individual parents informally at the start and end of the school day. Inspectors took account of 33 staff questionnaire responses.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and considered a range of policies and documents. These included the school’s improvement plan, information about pupils’ progress, attendance records, and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils’ work provided by the school, as well as in lessons. They also listened to a Year 2 and a Year 6 pupil read.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Teresa Davies

Additional Inspector

Theonitsa Sergides

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school provides full-time early years provision in two Reception classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Biggin Hill Primary School converted to academy status in September 2011. Academy status was re-brokered in January 2014. It is part of the Charles Darwin Academy Trust. When its predecessor school, Biggin Hill Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged inadequate overall.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2014.
- About half of the teachers and all members of the senior leadership team have been appointed in the last year.
- The previous governing body was dissolved in January 2014 when the Interim Academy Board was established.
- Biggin Hill Primary School works closely with Charles Darwin School, which is part of the Charles Darwin Academy Trust.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement by ensuring that:
 - teaching is consistently good across the school
 - any remaining gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are rectified
 - there are more opportunities for pupils to complete good-quality writing tasks in subjects other than English
 - all teachers insist that pupils do their best when writing in different subjects
 - teachers always have sufficiently high expectations of pupils' learning, particularly the most able
 - teachers consistently set work for pupils which is at the right level of challenge for pupils so it is not too hard or too easy
 - teachers give pupils clear and specific advice about what they can do to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and academy trust have successfully steered the school through an uncertain period, including numerous staff changes at all levels of the school. Leaders have rapidly improved the quality of teaching in the past year. In so doing, they have stopped any further decline in pupils' achievement and ensured pupils make faster progress across the school.
- The school is now in a more settled phase and in a good position to secure further developments. There is a growing sense of community in the school, with all staff valued for the part they play in the school's development. The headteacher knows what needs to be done next to ensure the impetus is maintained. Staff and governors share his vision for the school's future. Staff morale has improved dramatically, and is now very good.
- The deputy headteacher works very effectively with the headteacher and other senior leaders. She makes a strong contribution to improving the quality of teaching. For example, she provides a positive role model for teachers and successfully works alongside her colleagues to improve their practice. The deputy headteacher and headteacher are well respected by staff, parents and pupils.
- Leaders are committed to ensuring that all pupils do their very best. They are very aware of gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding identified when the academy was re-brokered and are working hard to rectify the situation. Leaders ensure that the additional pupil premium funding is used effectively so that these pupils are making better progress than previously.
- Substantial improvements in the quality of teaching have had a significant effect on pupils' progress over the past year. Parents recognise the school's commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils and the sea change in the quality of teaching. One commented, 'We feel now that teachers really want to teach our children.'
- The headteacher's high expectations of all staff are balanced with encouragement, support and recognition for hard work and accomplishment. Leaders have dealt with an element of weak teaching robustly but fairly.
- Leaders have established a consistent approach to reviewing teachers' salary in relation to performance. Teachers are supported to improve their practice through a range of approaches, including training, visits to other schools and coaching.
- Middle leaders have a good understanding of their subjects and play an effective role. They know where teaching is successful because they regularly look at pupils' books and watch teachers delivering lessons. They demonstrate effective teaching in their own classrooms so that their colleagues can learn from their practice and help them to plan lessons. They contribute well to the school's development.
- The curriculum is broad and interesting so that pupils are motivated to learn. However, while pupils regularly produce good-quality written work in their English books, there are too few opportunities for them to write well in other subjects.
- The school is an inclusive community which prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Positive relationships are promoted and are very evident throughout the school. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. Teachers encourage pupils to be responsible for their actions and to understand the implications of these on the school and local community. Staff and parents point to a noticeable improvement in pupils' behaviour in the past year as a result of higher expectations.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well. They are enquiring and respectful about the different cultures and beliefs they learn about in school and listen well during assemblies. They learn about British values and history through aspects of their learning, such as Year 5 work on Oliver Cromwell and the English civil war, while elections for the school council and Year 6 prefects successfully develop pupils' appreciation of democracy.
- The school uses the primary physical education and sport premium funding well. For example, the sports leader has been funded to attend training and meetings, and to share information with teachers about teaching physical education. Membership of local sports organisations has enabled pupils to participate in competitions with other schools in the locality, such as the district cross-country competitions. Staff from Charles Darwin School work closely with Biggin Hill School. For example, senior leaders from Charles Darwin work regularly with staff at Biggin Hill Primary School to support improvements in teaching and in pupils' behaviour.
- The headteacher and Interim Academy Board give safeguarding procedures an appropriately high priority. The headteacher has made a number of changes to safeguarding procedures since his appointment which have increased pupils' safety. For example, routines for the start and end of the school day have been improved. Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and are effective.

■ The governance of the school:

- The academy trust has worked successfully and systematically to address weaknesses in the school's work since the re-brokering in the academy's status in January 2014. Members of the academy trust are highly committed to improving the school and to raising pupils' achievement, and work closely with the headteacher. Governors regularly discuss pupils' achievement in relation to other schools nationally. The trust has invested substantially in supporting pupils who have fallen behind due to historic weaknesses in teaching. The headteacher reports to governors about how additional funds are used, including government pupil premium, and how well this is supporting pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher provides governors with regular reports about the quality of teaching which are discussed during governors' meetings. They use external support, such as education advisers, to check and verify the accuracy of this information. Governors know what has been done to tackle under-performance and to recognise and reward effective teaching. They understand the school's policy for salary progression and procedures for managing staff performance. Governors gauge parents' perceptions of how well their children are learning through surveys and through discussions with individual parents. This helps them to test out the information they receive from the school and hold leaders to account for teaching and learning. Governors have sought and acted on advice from the local authority about safeguarding procedures. An individual governor has specific responsibility for checking that arrangements meet statutory requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and welcoming, and relationships in the school are very good. Pupils have great respect for the headteacher, as well as for other members of staff. They say that behaviour has improved a great deal since his appointment. This view is reflected in parental confidence in the school. Most feel pupils are well behaved. Parents say the headteacher and deputy headteacher are always available and respond quickly to any concerns.
- Pupils like learning and work hard. They appreciate the rewards given out for hard work and say that they feel encouraged to do their best. Most behave well in lessons. They are clear about how they are expected to behave and are keen to get on with the tasks set. Just occasionally, however, a small number of pupils become inattentive during lessons and so make slower progress, particularly if work is not challenging enough.
- The lunchtime break is an enjoyable time for pupils to catch up with friends and to use up some energy. Leaders ensure that the playground is well organised and appropriately supervised. Pupils are busy and active. They play sensibly with the wide range of activities and equipment provided, including skipping ropes, floor games and football.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders have strengthened systems to ensure pupils' safety over the past year, including the recent installation of school gates. Almost all parents who responded to the online questionnaire say that their children are happy and safe in school.
- Pupils know that there are different types of bullying and understand why name-calling is unacceptable. They are clear about what to do if they are worried and say that adults look after them well. School records indicate that bullying hardly ever happens.
- Pupils say that workshops on issues such as internet safety help them to feel secure. They know some of the steps they can take to keep safe, including when using the internet.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good to enable pupils to achieve well. Teachers' expectations are not always sufficiently high, especially of the most able, so that the work set for these pupils is sometimes too easy. Equally, some pupils are given activities which are too difficult for them to tackle successfully, so their progress slows.
- The teaching of writing has improved. Most teachers are knowledgeable and confident about teaching writing. They plan interesting tasks which inspire their pupils, particularly during English lessons, and help them to develop the skills to write successfully. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in a wider range of subjects.
- There are variations between teachers' expectations of pupils' writing in different subjects. Sometimes,

they do not insist that pupils' written work in some subjects is of the same good quality as that completed in their English books.

- Early reading skills are taught well. Phonics teaching is effective in Reception and Key Stage 1 and ensures pupils are equipped with the basic skills they need to read successfully. Leaders have invested in new books so that pupils in all year groups have regular opportunities to read good-quality texts. A greater focus on developing the depth of pupils' understanding of their reading means they have made better progress in reading across Key Stage 2 than previously.
- The quality of marking has improved substantially in the past year. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and most provide specific guidance about how pupils can improve their work. However, some teachers' comments are limited to encouragement and are not sufficiently clear about what pupils need to do next.
- Mathematics teaching has improved. Teachers move through mathematical topics more quickly than before so that pupils cover more ground than previously. Teachers make sure that pupils memorise key mathematical facts, such as times tables and number bonds, so that they can use these more confidently to tackle mathematical problems. They use practical equipment consistently and successfully to strengthen pupils' mathematical understanding.
- Strong teaching in Year 6 has ensured that pupils have made up for lost time caused by weak teaching in the past. Events such as the daily mathematics session before school has given those pupils who attend a valuable boost to their learning.
- Teaching assistants work effectively to support different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs. They successfully encourage pupils to explain their thinking and to have a go when they are unsure, so that pupils become more confident and resilient in their learning.
- Classrooms and other areas around the school are attractive and stimulating. This is contributing to pupils' pride in their work and in their school.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because pupils have not achieved well enough over time. In 2014, pupils' attainment fell to levels much lower than the national average at both key stages. Some pupils have gaps in the basic knowledge and skills they need to achieve well.
- Recent improvements in the quality of teaching are lifting pupils' achievement. Pupils' progress in all year groups has accelerated as the year has progressed. Information about pupils' progress and the work in their books confirms that pupils have made much faster progress this year than previously and indicates that the school is on track to raise standards at both key stages in 2015.
- Pupils in Year 6 have made rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Focused teaching has improved pupils' progress substantially. As a result, the proportion of pupils on track to achieve at least the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics is rising. Pupils in Year 6 know that they have made faster progress this year and are confident about the move to their new schools in September.
- The results of the Year 1 phonics check were above average in 2014. Effective phonics teaching in Reception Year and Key Stage 1 ensures pupils have the early skills needed to read successfully.
- In the past, teachers have given too little attention to developing pupils' understanding of their reading. This led to underachievement and low levels of attainment in reading at the end of both key stages in 2014. A successful whole-school focus on developing reading means that pupils have made faster progress in reading in all year groups this year.
- Pupils are more eager to read because leaders have introduced a wider range of good-quality books. Events such as 'reading assemblies' give pupils regular opportunities to listen to adults reading and this is contributing well to their enjoyment of books.
- In 2014, attainment in mathematics was below the national average at the end of both key stages, and substantially lower at the end of Year 2. Substantial improvements in the teaching of mathematics mean that pupils have made much faster progress in mathematics in all year groups during the past year.
- Pupils say that they like mathematics. The work in their books shows that the school's focus on giving pupils the skills and practice to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems is raising achievement. Pupils are increasingly confident when talking about their work and this, in turn, is encouraging them to tackle more challenging tasks with less adult support.
- Pupils' attainment in writing was average at the end of Year 6 in 2014. Forecasts indicate similar standards will be maintained in 2015. Pupils complete good-quality written work in their English books. However, sometimes, writing completed in other books is not of the same good quality.

- Until recently, the most-able pupils in the school made too little progress to achieve their full potential. The proportion achieving the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1 were much lower than the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014. At the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion was lower than average in all three subjects, substantially so in reading. Improved teaching means that more pupils are on course to achieve the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015. However, work is not always challenging enough for these pupils to make fast progress.
- Until recently, teaching did not meet the needs of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs sufficiently. In the past, they made slower progress due to ineffective teaching. As with other groups, these pupils are making better progress now due to improved teaching, and similar progress to their classmates. Teachers and teaching assistants are much clearer about pupils' needs so that they are well supported during lessons and their needs are met well.
- In 2014, there were gaps in the attainment of pupils eligible for support from pupil premium and other pupils nationally at the end of Year 6. Attainment in reading was about a year behind their peers nationally in reading and mathematics and about eight months behind in writing. When compared with their classmates, the gaps were smaller, at around 10 months in mathematics and six months in reading and writing. The proportion making expected progress was below other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, and similar in writing. The proportion making more than expected progress was similar in reading and writing, and below others in mathematics. Better teaching over the past year has ensured that these pupils are catching up with where they need to be in each year group. They make similar progress to their classmates and increasing numbers are making more than the progress expected in reading, writing and mathematics.

The early years provision

is good

- Effective leadership of early years over time has ensured that most children make consistently good progress. The proportion of children on track to achieve a good level of development in 2015 is in line with the national average for 2014.
- Children start in Reception with knowledge and skills which are lower than those typical for their age. They make good progress across all areas of learning so that most are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- The classrooms are bright and well organised. Clear routines contribute to children's confidence. For example, children chatted together about the picture timetable on the whiteboard, looking forward to lessons and events later in the day.
- Good relationships ensure that children are safe and that they feel secure. Children enjoy learning and cooperate with each other well. For example, children worked successfully together to complete a jigsaw.
- Children behave well. Those who find it difficult to behave well are skilfully supported and included, so that they make similar progress to their classmates.
- The quality of teaching in the Reception classes has been consistently good over time and continues to be effective. Teachers focus appropriately on developing and reinforcing basic literacy and mathematical skills. For example, regular reminders about the key features of writing, such as full stops and finger spaces, mean that children are confident about writing. Fun games and activities enable them to practise and strengthen their number skills.
- Leaders have introduced effective systems to record and check children's progress. This is giving teachers a more accurate view of children's learning and means they can identify children who need extra help quickly.
- In the past year, leaders and teachers have developed the outdoor areas to support children's learning more fully. The outdoor areas are tidy and attractive, and children clearly enjoy their time outside. Parents are pleased with the way their children have settled into school life and feel that teachers are interested in their views.

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	137244
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	462614

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	377
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Spencer Roberts
Headteacher	James Ellis
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01959 575846
Fax number	01959 571682
Email address	admin@bigginhill.bromley.sch.uk

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