

# Bentley Heath Church of England Primary School

Widney Close, Bentley Heath, Solihull, B93 9AS

**Inspection dates** 25–26 June 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b> <b>2</b>
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	Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- School leaders and staff work together well to establish an environment in which pupils are keen to learn and eager to do well.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have taken a determined and effective approach to improving areas they have identified for improvement. Standards in writing have risen sharply this year and gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils have closed.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is good and this has led to pupils making good and some excellent progress in these areas.
- Teachers use questions effectively to make pupils think, deepen their understanding, and make good progress in their learning.
- Teachers prepare interesting lessons that engage pupils' interest and motivate them to do well.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and courteous to each other and adults. This helps make school a safe place in which pupils feel comfortable.
- Senior and subject leaders check teaching regularly. They identify areas for improvement and provide prompt support when needed.
- Governors know the school very well. They ask searching questions of the headteacher and other leaders, holding them to account for the school's improvement. They act quickly on any areas of their own performance they feel they need to develop.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not provide enough challenge for all groups of pupils.
- Marking of pupils' work does not always give pupils enough advice to help them improve and pupils do not always act upon teachers' comments.
- The provision in the early years requires improvement. There are no detailed plans to ensure improvement in the early years takes place quickly.
- The quality and use of learning resources in the early years does not provide good opportunities for children to make choices or learn effectively through investigating and exploring.
- There are not enough planned opportunities for children in the early years to develop basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics across all areas of learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 17 lessons. Five of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher or the assistant headteachers. In addition, inspectors looked at wall displays in classrooms and around the school to get an overview of the quality of the school's curriculum. In addition to observing learning sessions in the early years, an inspector paid 'drop-in' visits to groups to get an overview of provision in Nursery and Reception.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at the work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's own judgements on its strengths and weaknesses, and the data it collects on pupils' progress. Documents detailing the school's arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed and discussed.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders, subject leaders, teaching assistants and pupils.
- Questionnaire responses from 30 members of staff were analysed.
- Inspectors took account of the 120 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also took into account the results of parents' views gathered through the school's own recent questionnaire. Inspectors took account of three letters received from parents.

## Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Pippa Jackson-Maitland

Additional Inspector

Sarah Noble

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Bentley Heath Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school on 1 December 2013. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be a good school.
- The academy is a stand-alone academy. The governing body is the responsible body for this school and is solely responsible for governing the school.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Children attend Nursery part time and Reception full time.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have 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 in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There is a breakfast club before school each morning. This is managed by the governors and was included in the inspection.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to raise pupils' progress and attainment, particularly in writing by:
  - raising teachers' expectations and the level of challenge for pupils of middle ability
  - ensuring that marking is of a consistently high quality to help pupils improve their work and that they always act upon the advice given.
- Improve provision and achievement in the early years by:
  - ensuring children have frequent opportunities to develop their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics in all areas of learning
  - improving the learning environment so that children can learn more effectively through investigating and exploring
  - drawing on the school's subject leadership expertise to plan in detail for the improvement of the early years and to check the impact of the actions taken.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The leadership team and governors have high levels of ambition for the school. They set aspirational targets for the work of all staff and keep a close check on how well staff and pupils are doing. They have created an effective staff team and a stimulating curriculum which focuses on providing well for pupils' personal development as well as their academic progress.
- Regular checks are effective in maintaining the good quality of teaching. Senior and subject leaders observe lessons, check the work in pupils' books and use ongoing assessments of pupils' progress to build a detailed profile of teaching. They use the information well to provide support to help teachers improve their skills when needed.
- Leaders set challenging targets for the work of teachers and these help improve teachers' performance. The procedures of managing the quality of work in the school extend to all adults, including teaching assistants and other support staff. Robust checks on all adults help keep the school functioning at an effective level.
- Good use of the pupil premium has helped close gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils this year. Qualifying pupils receive small group or one-to-one support in reading, writing and mathematics. Good use of funding enables qualifying pupils to be fully included in all school events, after-school clubs and visits. This encourages their positive attitudes to school and learning.
- Leaders spend the primary physical education and sport premium effectively. All teachers benefit from specialist training to improve their skills in teaching physical education. A strong focus is placed on widening the range of activities available to encourage all pupils, including those reluctant to join in, to enjoy sport. Lunchtime staff and older pupils have been trained in leading playground games to keep pupils active and occupied during break times. The subject leader is starting to check on teaching in physical education to evaluate on the impact of training. Leaders have noted an increase in the number of pupils taking part in sporting activities and success in sports competitions.
- The school places a high priority to safeguarding and child protection. Thorough checks are made on all adults coming into contact with pupils. All relevant safeguarding policies are in place and up-to-date. Training for all adults on child protection and first aid is up to date. The school has good induction procedures on safeguarding for new staff and visitors. Staff are vigilant and know what to do if children share sensitive information.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well through lessons and the daily life in school. High quality school assemblies make a significant contribution to this area of pupils' development. The school celebrates pupils' achievements so that they in turn appreciate their own successes and those of others. Pupils develop a deep understanding of what behaviour is acceptable and what is not and show high levels of respect and courtesy for others. Pupils respect diversity, as seen in the way they work and play together.
- The school promotes British values well throughout the curriculum and through school life in general. Pupils are taught to understand how democracy works through elections for the school council and visits to the House of Lords. They clearly understand the need for laws and rules and how these protect an individual's right to be part of a safe community. Pupils learn respect for each other and for the world's major faiths in assemblies and religious education lessons. The school prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- The school is good at celebrating diversity and any form of discrimination is discouraged. The school encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to others, whatever their background or ability. Staff ensure that all pupils are included in school activities so they have an equal opportunity to succeed, but sometimes work lacks challenge for a few pupils.

■ The leadership of subjects and other key areas of the school's work is mostly effective. Well-chosen programmes of professional development and checking the impact of improvement initiatives have resulted in reading, writing and mathematics being taught well throughout the school. The school has had a recent focus on improving outcomes in writing and making sure attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others are closed. These initiatives have been effective. Standards in writing at the end of Year 6 have improved and are now close to those in reading and mathematics. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils has caught up with other pupils. However, there is still some improvement required in early years; plans for improvement are insufficiently detailed and there is a lack of monitoring to check the impact of initiatives to develop the provision further.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is good. Governors check the quality of their work and quickly act on any findings to make sure they have the skills and expertise to carry the full responsibility for the effectiveness of the school.
- Governors challenge leaders and hold them to account for the school's performance. They have regular meetings with senior staff to discuss how the school is progressing and the progress made towards any current improvement initiatives.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in the performance of staff and pupils through visits to the school, detailed reports from the headteacher and links with subject leaders. This gives them a clear view about the quality of teaching. They understand assessment data and are aware of how pupils' achievement compares with other schools.
- Governors set challenging targets to ensure the effective performance of the headteacher and staff. They know how good the teaching is and make sure that teachers' pay increases are linked to competence and their impact on pupils' achievement. The governors tackle underperformance effectively. Pay rises are not awarded when teachers do not meet their targets.
- Governors make sure that all statutory requirements are met, including those relating to safeguarding.

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

**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils believe behaviour to be good. Attitudes to learning are positive and pupils want to do well. Behaviour during lessons is good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils are attentive and interested in their work. They work well in collaboration with each other and as a result, good learning takes place.
- Pupils respond well to the school's expectations of good behaviour and conduct themselves well at all times. Break and lunch times are calm and orderly, with pupils showing good relationships with each other. Pupils help each other out at recreation times, with older pupils working as playground leaders, organising and leading games.
- Attendance is above average. The number of pupils who are away from school regularly is very low. Pupils arrive to school on time for a prompt start to the school day. Those who attend the breakfast club are well looked after and prepared well for the day ahead.
- Pupils are mostly proud of what they do. However some work, particularly that of younger pupils, is not as neat or tidily presented as it should be. Pupils do not consistently act upon comments in teachers' marking and do not always correct their work, or put teachers' suggestions, such as making their writing neat, into practice in their work.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in and out of school. The school makes sure that pupils develop a good understanding of internet safety.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying and know what to do if they ever need help. They say bullying is very rare but believe adults would deal with any incidents effectively. School records show that there is little bullying or incidents of racist abuse. Any incidents are fully investigated and resolved so the school is a safe place for pupils.

- Staff training on child protection is up to date and adults are vigilant. Staff have a good knowledge of child protection procedures, know what to look out for and are ready to intervene if necessary.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Effective teaching of English and mathematics enables pupils to make good progress in these subjects. Reading is taught well. Teachers in Key Stage 2 plan opportunities for pupils to read in literacy lessons and so build on the good outcomes of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) tests in Year 1. Pupils learn to understand and interpret what they read with great clarity and so become competent readers. They develop a love of reading. They read widely and often, explaining clearly what kind of books they like to read and why.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to write regularly and in a range of different subjects and styles. They are encouraged to redraft and correct their work until they are happy they have written the final and best version. Teachers have worked hard at improving writing this year. They make sure that pupils have the required vocabulary and knowledge of grammar to make their writing accurate. As a result, standards in writing have risen sharply this year, especially at Key Stage 2.
- Pupils are taught effectively to solve problems in mathematics. They are given opportunities to devise their own strategies and are then expected to explain how they solve the problems and why they use the methods they develop. This helps pupils build a deep understanding of how to use their mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers make lessons interesting to capture pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Pupils like most subjects but they particularly like mathematics and science because of the variety in the ways they learn. Pupils are encouraged to take some responsibility for their own learning through assessing their own work and that of their classmates.
- Teaching assistants are effective in helping pupils make good progress. They receive support and training to be able to do their jobs effectively. They help disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and help pupils in danger of falling behind catch up so all groups make the same good progress.
- Teachers are good at asking questions to encourage discussions and extend pupils' learning. Questions are planned carefully to make pupils of different attainment think at a level they can manage. Teachers ask searching questions that make pupils think carefully and come up with the answers for themselves.
- Teaching in the early years requires improvement. Adults have not created a stimulating environment in which children are able to learn effectively through exploring and investigating exciting learning situations.
- Teachers mark work regularly, and some marking indicates clearly how pupils can improve their work. However, the school's policy is not consistently followed in all classes; some marking does not include comments that give pupils precise feedback to improve their work. Teachers do not always make sure that pupils act upon these comments and learn from the mistakes they make.
- Some groups of pupils, such as those of middle ability, are not given sufficiently difficult work to make sure that they reach the highest levels they are capable of achieving. Some tasks are not structured to move these pupils on to the next steps in their learning quickly enough.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Children start school in early years with skills and knowledge above those typical for their age in all areas, but relatively weaker in writing and in mathematics. By the end of the Reception Year, attainment is above average in all areas, but particularly good in personal, social and emotional development. Children make expected progress overall; but in Nursery they make slower progress than in Reception.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average in reading and mathematics. In 2014, results in

the Year 1 phonics screening check were above average. Based on standards on entry to Year 1, pupils achieve well through Key Stage 1. Inspection evidence, including school assessments, book scrutiny and lesson observations, show that attainment continues to be above average. Attainment in writing, although still broadly average, is improving year on year. Writing is not always well presented and handwriting is often untidy. Pupils occasionally make unnecessary spelling mistakes.

- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2. Overall attainment at the end of Year 6 has been above average year on year. Attainment in mathematics and reading are consistently above average, but in writing it has been broadly average. The school has focused on improving writing so that this year sees a sharp rise in the quality of pupils' writing. Pupils are on track to achieve above average attainment in writing, as well as in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects. The artwork on display is exceptionally good for pupils of this age. The school has a strong tradition of musical achievements, with different instrumental groups and an excellent choir. Pupils do very well in competitive sports.
- The most-able pupils do exceptionally well. The percentages of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading and mathematics are above average and broadly average in writing, although this proportion is set to increase significantly this year. This is because they attempt work at a highly challenging level, which moves them on rapidly.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics through effective and targeted support. In 2014, they did not achieve as well as they should have, but this year progress of these pupils has improved so that they make the same good progress as their classmates.
- The 2014 test results indicated that disadvantaged pupils did not progress as well as other pupils, and failed to close the attainment gaps. In mathematics they were just over two years behind other pupils in school and almost four terms behind other pupils nationally. In reading they were two and a half terms behind others in the school and a term behind others pupils nationally and in writing they were about five terms behind the others in school and a year and a term behind other pupils nationally.
- This year, disadvantaged pupils are doing much better. They are making as good and sometimes better progress than other pupils. In Year 6, attainment gaps in reading and writing have closed and these pupils are above where they are expected to be nationally for their age. In mathematics, their attainment is higher than it is expected to be nationally, but there is still a gap of about a term with other pupils in school. This is because of the high proportion of pupils on track to achieve the highest Level 6.

### **The early years provision**

### **requires improvement**

- Adults give children opportunities to learn through investigating and exploring, but these are limited due to the lack of stimulating and exciting learning resources. The indoor and outdoor areas are not well enough resourced to enable children to learn on their own, following their own trails of enquiry. Resources, particularly indoors, do not support children in making choices in their learning or solving problems for themselves. All equipment is laid out for children, which further limits opportunities to children to select resources for themselves.
- There is not a high enough focus on developing communication, language and literacy or mathematics across other areas of learning. There is a lack of displays that help create a language and number rich environment, especially in the Nursery. Displays lack phonics and sound charts, number lines or dedicated writing areas to encourage the graded development of high quality independent writing when children are working on other areas of learning.
- Teaching requires improvement. The questions that adults ask children are not effective in exploring children's understanding or helping them develop their lines of investigation and enquiry. Children can do more in literacy and mathematics than is currently asked of them. Adults' expectations for what children know, understand and can do are too low due to a lack of planning against the Early Years Foundation Stage progression of skills and knowledge.

- Planning for learning is not detailed enough to help children build on their good entry baseline or clear about what each child should be doing next, particularly in child-initiated learning times. Consequently, children’s learning during these times is not yet consistently good.
- The focus on children’s attainment and progress is more evident in Reception, where many children already meet or exceed the Early Learning Goals. The learning environment in Reception does allow for exploration and investigation, but there are still missed opportunities to enrich the learning areas further.
- Leadership and management of the early years require improvement. There are no detailed plans for improving the early years and so no one is checking that the actions being taken are having a positive impact on moving provision to good.
- Children behave well in Nursery and Reception. They get on well with each other and work diligently in small groups. They quickly respond to adults’ requests, for example to come together as a group. They listen politely to adults and to each other. Adults are vigilant in regard to safety; children are safe and secure during all activities.



## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140462
<b>Local authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	450370

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	455
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andy Carswell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Williams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected as an academy
<b>Telephone number</b>	01564 772132
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