

Beenham Primary School

Mt Pleasant, Beenham, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 5NN

Inspection dates 24–25 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- During a period of high staff turnover, leaders have been unable to ensure teaching is consistently good. This is slowing down the progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The achievement of the pupils requires improvement.
- Teachers do not always accurately assess pupils' work, especially in mathematics. This sometimes leads to an over generous view of progress. Teaching requires improvement.
- In Year 1 to Year 4 there are not enough opportunities for pupils to deepen their learning in mathematics by solving problems. Pupils' learning is sometimes superficial as a result.
- The teaching of phonics in Year 1 does not build quickly enough on the good start children make in learning to read in the Reception class. This slows down progress, especially for those pupils who are less fluent.
- The school's strategies to manage the challenging behaviour of a very small number of pupils are not as effective as they could be. Behaviour overall and the school's procedures to ensure pupils are safe, therefore, require improvement.
- Some leaders do not have a clear enough role in improving the quality of teaching in school. Improvements in teaching are not always made quickly enough. Overall, leadership and management require improvement.
- Partnerships with parents are not as strong as they could be. Parents do not have as much understanding as they could about what the school does and how it helps their children learn.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have an excellent understanding of British values and what it means to live them.
- The conduct of the vast majority of pupils is very good. Pupils feel safe.
- Progress and provision in the Reception class is good.
- Strong teaching in Year 5 and Year 6 results in good and rapid progress for this group of pupils.
- The school's curriculum is innovative and provides many interesting experiences for children.
- Governors are effective. They understand the school well and challenge school leaders appropriately.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector made 10 visits to classrooms to observe pupils' learning. The headteacher accompanied him on some of these visits. The inspector also spent time examining pupils' work books. He also observed other aspects of the school's work, including an assembly where the children practised songs for their school production.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, including the Chair, as well as with teachers and school leaders. The inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- Pupils took the inspector on a tour of the school. The inspector also met with a group of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, listened to Year 1 pupils reading, and spoke to individuals in their classrooms about their work. He spent time in the dining hall and on the school playground where he also spoke to pupils.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the school gate. He also considered the 39 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and three letters sent by parents. He also met with a parent. The inspector also reviewed 16 questionnaire responses from staff.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information relating to pupils' achievement, the school's review of its work and plan of action. He considered records relating to behaviour and attendance and checks on teaching, as well as school documents relating to safeguarding. The inspector also considered the school's website.

Inspection team

Martin Marsh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- A below average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after. In the 2014 Key Stage 2 statutory assessments, there were four eligible pupils.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small minority speaks English as an additional language.
- There are before-school clubs and a range of after-school clubs, but these are not managed by the school and were not visited as part of this inspection.
- The school has four classes: a mixed Year 5 and Year 6 class; a mixed Year 3 and Year 4 class; a mixed Year 1 and Year 2 class; and, a Reception class. The Reception class is full time. A small number of Year 2 pupils are taught in the mixed Year 3 and Year 4 class, and a small number of Year 4 pupils are taught in the mixed Year 5 and Year 6 class.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school appointed two teachers new to the profession in September 2014. Both are no longer at the school.
- The headteacher is a Local Leader in Education (LLE). She is not currently providing support to other schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - managing challenging behaviour more effectively to reduce interruptions in some lessons
 - building stronger partnerships with parents so they have a better understanding of the school's work and how their children are being taught
 - developing the roles of school leaders so they have an even greater impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement in Year 1 to Year 4 by:
 - strengthening the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they represent) in Year 1 to build more quickly on the skills children acquire in the Reception class
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to solve problems in mathematics in Year 1 to Year 4
 - ensuring assessments are accurate, especially in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leaders have been unable to maintain consistently good teaching due to the high turnover of teachers in the Year 1 and Year 2 class and in the Year 3 and Year 4 class. This has slowed the progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 to 4. Additional measures the school has put in place to minimise the impact of this, for example the headteacher teaching more, have stopped the rate of progress from slipping further. Nevertheless, the pupils' rate of progress does require improvement.
- The school has a very small number of pupils whose behaviour is challenging. The high turnover of staff and the inconsistencies in the quality have resulted in more frequent interruptions to pupils' learning in lessons. While the school is now tackling this issue and pupils say behaviour is getting better, a significant proportion of parents and some school staff rightly expressed concerns that this has not been addressed more quickly and more effectively.
- The roles of leaders, including middle leaders, in improving the quality of teaching are not always clearly defined. They do not, therefore, influence improvement enough. When checks on the quality of teaching are made they are rigorous and teachers value the extended discussion that follows. Leaders and governors ensure that teachers are appropriately rewarded through their pay for their performance.
- The school's partnerships with parents require improvement. Some parents are unhappy about some aspects of how the school is led and managed. The school has run sessions for parents to explain to them what it does and the reasons for its actions. At the end of topics, parents are invited into school to look at what pupils have been doing. Parents appreciate this, but the school has correctly identified that it still has more to do to engage with a greater proportion of its parent community.
- The headteacher, along with the governors, shows great commitment. Together, they know what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching and are prepared to make difficult decisions to bring this about. They have ensured that pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education over a number of years.
- The school's information on pupils' attainment and what was seen in pupils' books confirms that the current pupils in Year 6 are on track to do well. This, together with the good provision in the Reception class and the strengths of the experienced senior and middle leadership and governors, shows the school has the capacity to improve.
- Governors and school leaders have ensured the extra funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent effectively. They understand how the progress of eligible pupils has slowed in line with their classmates in Years 1 to Year 4 because of the inconsistencies in teaching. Governors know the impact of the extra adult support for this group of pupils in classes. The strong focus on school and personal values linked to British values contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils understand, for example, that some pupils have difficulty managing their behaviour. 'Some pupils have problems and though it sometimes upsets us we understand it is not their fault,' was one pupil's comment. They also have a good understanding of different faiths and cultures. This indicates the school is successful in fostering good relations and tackling discrimination of any sort. Equal opportunities are promoted effectively.
- The curriculum is innovative and provides a range of opportunities which spark pupils' interest. The requirements of the new National Curriculum are generally met, although there are not enough opportunities for pupils to solve mathematical problems. Pupils enjoy the range of trips they go on. Year 6 pupils talked about the outdoor activity trip to Wales. Younger children learn well through the weekly Forest School. The inspector saw pictures of how children used various items of forest foliage to create pictures. The children were still talking about this in the afternoon and enjoyed looking at the pictures of what they had done. This developed both children's creativity and their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- The school uses the extra funding for sport effectively to employ a sports coach to teach pupils generic skills so they can be ready to play a range of different sports. Take up of before- and after-school clubs which have an aerobic element is good. About a quarter of the school's pupils attend a judo class run by an external provider once a week, before school, in the hall. This makes them alert and ready for the day ahead and 'keeps us healthy'.
- Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements. Staff are well trained to recognise signs of possible child abuse and procedures to record incidents and take appropriate action are effective.
- The local authority has given a sound level of support to the school. They understand the impact the high turnover of staff has had on the school. They are currently exploring with the school and within the local

authority how to address issues to do with teacher recruitment in the area.

■ The governance of the school:

The governance of the school is effective. Governors fully understand how the quality of teaching in two of the classes is not as strong as it has been in the past. This has led to them making taking appropriate action, including supporting the head teacher's decision to do more teaching.

- This measure has contributed to recent improvement in Year 3 and Year 4, especially in pupils' behaviour. Governors also understand the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress and so they know how the school compares to others.
- Both in the discussion with the inspector during the inspection and in the minutes of meetings, governors demonstrate their strong commitment and the seriousness which they take their responsibilities. They challenge school leaders, as needed, and get fully involved in the school's work through, for example, regular Governors' Days. They are prepared to support school leaders if a teacher is not performing well enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. The inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that sometimes lessons are interrupted to manage the behaviour of a very small number of pupils. This slows down the pace of lessons and pupils lose concentration and so do not learn as well as they could. Pupils spoke very maturely about this to the inspector and how the behaviour of a few sometimes makes them unhappy. Some parents also indicated this sometimes upset their children.
- The conduct of the vast majority of pupils is very good, both in lessons and around the school. They are very polite and courteous and are proud of their work and their school. Behaviour in the Year 5 and Year 6 is exemplary. Pupils work very hard, have excellent attitudes to learning and typically finish their work to the highest standards. Pupils are well supervised during break times and adults play with pupils and talk to them during this time.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. The Year 6 pupils spoke to the inspector about how they are 'buddied' with new children in Reception class and how much they enjoyed this. They indicated that they check their buddy is getting on well throughout the year. They are also proud to serve on the school council and elected members talked about the climbing fort they helped to fund. At the end of lunch break, pupils willingly tidy up play equipment to get ready to go back into lessons in the afternoon.
- Pupils say that overall they are happy and enjoy coming to school. Attendance historically is above average and pupils are typically punctual, well prepared and ready for school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. The inspector's discussions with pupils indicated that bullying was rare. Some said that a small number of pupils were sometimes rough at play or aggressive and said 'bad things'. This sometimes made them feel frightened and upset. On occasions, some pupils said this is not always dealt with quickly enough by adults.
- While some parents who responded on Parent View indicated that they had concerns about how bullying was managed, the inspector could not find any evidence to support this view. The pupils understand that there needs to be an element of persistence for it to be bullying. They know about how they can be bullied on the internet and when using a mobile phone, because the school's anti-bullying weeks promote safety when using electronic media. Safety online is also reinforced when pupils use the internet in school. The use of prejudice-based language is rare and pupils know it is wrong. Pupils generally feel safe in school.
- Procedures to ensure that visitors on site have the appropriate checks before coming into school are effective. The school ensures that teachers are kept informed of information related to keeping children safe from possible abuse.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because there is too much variability in Year 1 to Year 4. This is affecting negatively the progress of pupils.
- While pupils make a good start learning to read in the Reception class, the teaching of phonics is not as

systematic in Year 1. The lowest ability, in particular, do not always get the extra help they need to become fluent readers. The teaching of reading is stronger at Key Stage 2 where it is promoted well by teachers. Pupils routinely are given challenging texts to consider. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 read avidly and have well developed skills in understanding different types of text.

- Teaching of writing is typically good. Pupils have frequent opportunities to write in a range of different contexts and subjects. They enjoy writing and have a good range of skills with which to communicate clearly using good grammar, spelling and punctuation. In Year 6, pupils were observed using the passive voice in their writing. The inspector enjoyed reading some Year 5 and Year 6 pupils' 'scary' stories.
- Pupils acquire the ability to calculate well because the skills are well taught. Pupils do not get enough opportunity to solve problems in Year 1 to Year 4. This is slowing down the progress of pupils. It has contributed to the lower attainment forecasts for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 this year.
- Assessment of pupils' reading and writing is generally accurate, although pupils' work books did indicate that teachers are sometimes a little over generous in assessing pupils' writing. They are also sometimes over generous in mathematics because assessment does not take into account pupils' ability to apply their mathematics in solving mathematical puzzles and problems. Pupils listen to teachers carefully and the good range of questions that teachers use to challenge pupils' thinking is usually responded to enthusiastically. Expectations are that pupils work hard and quietly, which they usually do.
- Additional adults help pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs to take a full part in lessons. They also provide effective help outside of the classroom in the range of interventions the school runs to help pupils to catch up.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The achievement of current pupils requires improvement because progress is not consistently good throughout the school.
- Work in books and information on pupils' current attainment shows that attainment at the end of Year 2 this year is likely to be broadly average. While this is not inadequate progress, because this cohort of pupils started Year 1 at a lower level than in previous years, it does require improvement. This follows many years when the attainment of pupils has been above average at the end of Year 2.
- The 2015 end of Key Stage 2 forecasts for the current Year 6 pupils are strong, with pupils expected to reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's data are supported by what the inspector observed of what pupils were able to do, both in lessons and in their work books. This is because of consistently good teaching throughout their time in school. Progress is slower in Year 3 and Year 4 for current pupils, although it is stronger in reading and writing than it is in mathematics.
- Progress in reading requires improvement in Year 1. The provisional results on the Year 1 phonic screening check are for a much lower proportion of pupils to pass this year. This shows that pupils have not built on their phonic skills from Reception as well as they could. The provisional results show that all those pupils who took the phonic check again in Year 2 have passed. The current Year 5 and Year 6 pupils read avidly and devour books and have made good progress in their time in Key Stage 2.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is similar to other pupils. There is a gap in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils as compared to their classmates. This is due to lower starting points and a sizeable proportion having special educational needs rather their progress being slower. As with other pupils, their progress is faster in classes where the teaching is stronger. Numbers are too few to make viable quantitative comparisons.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. As with other pupils, their progress is good or better in Reception and in Year 5 and Year 6. The same is true for the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. This shows the school is generally successful in providing equal opportunity for learning for all pupils.
- The progress of the most able pupils is good. Historically, the most able pupils have nearly all achieved Level 5 or better in reading, writing and mathematics. The work pupils are capable of doing shows that the school is on course to be successful at the highest available levels. In mathematics, pupils are exposed to challenging content and are able to apply their computation skills confidently in different problems.

The early years provision

is good

- Children make good progress in the Reception class and are well prepared for Year 1. From starting points which are broadly typical for their age, most children reach a good level of development at the end of

Reception. Observations during the inspection show that some children are exceeding a good level of development in some of the areas of learning. Children were observed testing the behaviour of different types of ball on two interconnecting ramps. Despite the second ramp sloping downwards, they were able to work out the force with which they had to project different balls down the first ramp to make it go up the second ramp. They were beginning to develop an understanding of momentum and force.

- The provision, both in the classroom and in the outside area, is good. There are lots of interesting opportunities for children to learn well. These include opportunities to read and write in a range of different contexts. One group of children had left a message on the space ship they had constructed that they had all gone to Mars. On occasions although what is provided challenges children well, adults do not always question the most able pupils deeply enough.
- The behaviour of children is very good. Adults have excellent relationships with the children and the Reception class is a very happy place. Children respond to routines and showed excellent awareness of each other when they were carefully putting away equipment at the end of the day.
- Leadership in the area is good. Adults know the children well and so can plan learning which is based on the interests of the children. Visits to pre-school settings and the children's homes before the children start school enable parents to be involved from the start.
- The provision meets all statutory requirements for ensuring children's health, safety and well-being.

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	109802
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	448396

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Douglas Buchanan
Headteacher	Sue Butcher
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 September 2009
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