

Bunbury Aldersey Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Bunbury, Tarporley, Cheshire CW6 9NR

Inspection dates	26–27 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Almost all pupils make good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. As a result, they leave the school well prepared for Key Stage 3.
- Senior leaders supported by the Interim Executive Board (IEB) have used the pupil premium well to eliminate the achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and their attitudes to learning are outstanding. Relationships between pupils and their peers and teachers are characteristically warm and friendly.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is well taught. Last year, the attainment of all pupils in the Year 1 phonics check was high.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is strong. This ensures that pupils learn in a safe and secure environment.
- The headteacher is scrupulous and gracious in her approach to others. She has united the staff behind her vision to further improve this good school.
- Senior leaders and the IEB have worked effectively to promote improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is rigorous. Teachers know their pupils well and have high expectations of them.
- Children make good progress in the Reception class. This ensures that they are well prepared for Key Stage 1.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress of some pupils in writing is being hindered by weaknesses in their spelling and the quality of their handwriting.
- Occasionally, teachers set tasks that are pitched too high. When this happens, pupils' progress slows.
- The management of the staff's personnel records is inefficient and does not reflect the school's good practice in other aspects of administration.

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Bring all teaching in the school up to the standard of the best by:
 - ensuring that the activities pupils are given to do are pitched at the right degree of difficulty, so they provide an appropriate level of challenge for all abilities
 - making sure that pupils' spelling is accurate and their handwriting neatly presented.
- Review administrative systems so that they reflect the good practice that exists in the school by:
 - making sure that staff personnel files are well organised and the information is kept securely in one place.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher brings a quiet authority to her role. She is gracious in her dealings with others and gives generously of her time to support her colleagues and pupils alike. She has united the school community behind her vision for improving the school, which focuses on the formation of the whole child, spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually.
- In her relatively short time in post, and ably supported by her senior team, she has brought about significant improvements in pupils' welfare and safety. As a result, the shortcomings found by inspectors at the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. Pupils are safe and systems for assuring pupils' health and safety are secure.
- Senior leaders' management of teachers' performance is rigorous. They monitor the quality of teachers' classroom practice and evaluate teachers' wider contribution to the life and work of the school. Those teachers who met the inspector expressed the view that leaders' and managers' approach to performance appraisal is supportive and used to identify their training needs. Nevertheless, performance management is also used to hold teachers robustly to account for the quality of their classroom practice and pupils' outcomes. This in turn provides a firm foundation for leaders and members of the IEB to make secure decisions about teachers' pay progression.
- Senior leaders have introduced a pioneering approach to assessing pupils' attainment and progress within the new National Curriculum. Working in partnership with local schools, they have devised a method of assessing pupils' attainment and progress for English, mathematics and science. External consultants have been employed by the school to check the reliability of teachers' assessments. As a result, senior leaders are confident in the assessment information they have, which shows pupils are achieving well and making good progress.
- Pupils have dedicated lessons in literacy and numeracy. They are introduced to other subjects, for example geography, history, science and religious education, through a series of cross-curricular themes. Along with dedicated sports and music lessons and a variety of trips and after-school clubs, pupils receive a broad, balanced and enriching curriculum, which prepares them well for the transition from one key stage to the next.
- Senior leaders' use of pupil premium funding is effective. For example, disadvantaged pupils are given extra help to accelerate their progress in reading. Some pupils receive individual support from teaching assistants. This helps to build pupils' confidence to 'have a go' at challenging activities in lessons. As a result, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils making and exceeding expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics is similar to that of all pupils nationwide.
- The sports premium is used effectively by senior leaders to improve the school's facilities and increase pupils' participation in extra-curricular sport. For example, in the last academic year, every pupil had the opportunity to participate in at least one after-school sport tournament. The list of diverse sports includes athletics, basketball, cricket, football, gymnastics, handball, hockey, netball, rounders and rugby union. The funding has also been used to increase staff's expertise in this area of the curriculum, in order to improve provision for sports teaching in school.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. The curriculum fosters pupils' understanding of other faiths which are part of the rich tapestry of British society. For example, pupils are taught about the beliefs and practices of Islam, Judaism and Hinduism; this teaching is enriched by pupils' visits to a mosque and a temple. Pupils learn about their own faith and are afforded time in assemblies and during worship to reflect on its relevance to their own lives. For example, in one act of worship, pupils were captivated by the presenter's mime of the parable of the 'Lost Sheep' and how this relates to the school's philosophy that everyone matters. The school's new behaviour policy, which emphasises the positive behaviours expected of pupils, promotes an understanding of what is right and what is wrong. Taken together, these learning experiences enrich pupils' personal growth and reinforce what it means to be a good British citizen.
- The diocese and local authority recognise the strengths in the senior leadership team and, in particular, that of the headteacher. Consequently, her expertise is put to good use in mentoring newly appointed senior staff in local schools and leading on curriculum initiatives.
- The very large majority of respondents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to other parents. Furthermore, most parents feel that their child is safe and well looked after in

school. The inspector would concur.

- The issues identified by inspectors at the previous inspection have been soundly addressed. The school site is securely fenced and pupils cannot access the car park.
- During the school day, visitors can only enter the building and associated grounds through reception, where they have to sign in and wear a visitor's badge. This means that uninvited visitors would find it extremely difficult to access the site.
- To minimise the risk of appointing unsuitable staff, senior leaders ensure that pre-employment checks on new staff are robust. This is reflected in the single central record of these checks, which meets statutory requirements.
- Several members of the senior leadership team and IEB have undergone safer recruitment training. This ensures that at least one member of every appointments panel, as required, is suitably trained to interview potential candidates for a role in school and assess their suitability.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The IEB is a diverse group of individuals who bring to school leadership a range of skills and abilities from the fields of education and commerce. Consequently, they are well placed to support senior leaders in their drive to improve the school and hold them to account for pupils' outcomes.
 - The IEB have worked hard to secure the school's senior leadership. They have successfully negotiated the arrangements for a federation with St Oswald's Church of England Primary School. The school's current headteacher will take the role of executive headteacher of both schools under one overarching governing body. Although, the federation is not yet fully in place, the two schools are already sharing their expertise. For example, the special educational needs coordinator from St Oswald's is working successfully in the school to improve the provision for pupils who require extra help and support.
 - Members of the IEB take a close interest in the day-to-day operation of the school. They are regular visitors and collect first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and the impact of new initiatives on pupils' outcomes. They have a good understanding of how the pupil premium and the school sport premium are being spent and the positive impact of both funding streams on pupils. Consequently, they have a range of evidence at their disposal to evaluate how well the school is doing and hold staff to account.
 - A member of the IEB has responsibility for overseeing the arrangements for keeping pupils safe and that policies related to pupils' welfare are implemented. As a result, the arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The IEB's safeguarding policy meets the requirements of the Secretary of State's statutory guidance and all staff have been trained in keeping children safe in education. All members of staff have undertaken first-aid training and several staff are qualified paediatric first-aiders. Consequently, staff are aware of the risks to pupils' health and well-being and have the expertise to deal with them effectively.
- Senior leaders' records of issues relating to pupils safety, attendance and behaviour are meticulous. They are an accurate, chronological record of the actions taken by staff in their dealings on behalf of pupils and provide reliable information, as appropriate, for other agencies.
- The school's management of the staff's personnel records is inefficient and does not reflect the school's effective practice in other aspects of administration. Career information and references for some members of staff are not stored centrally. Consequently, senior staff cannot always access information quickly, which wastes time.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Senior leaders have focused teachers' training on improving the quality of classroom practice. This has resulted in teachers adopting a range of teaching strategies in lessons to involve pupils more actively in their learning and accelerate their progress.
- Where these teaching techniques have the greatest impact on pupils' learning, teachers carefully select activities that provide an appropriate degree of challenge for pupils. These activities are neither too hard for weaker pupils nor too easy for the most able. As a result, pupils extend their knowledge and understanding, which provides a secure platform for future learning. However, there are occasions when the work pupils are given to do is too challenging, except for the most able. When this happens, some pupils make slow progress.

- When teachers use questioning effectively, they make demands on pupils' thinking and, as a result, deepen pupils' understanding. For example, in the Reception class, the teacher asked the children to explain their reasoning behind the answers they gave during a numbers game. This helped the children to make sense of their learning and the teacher to assess the children's understanding.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils in terms of both their behaviour and what they can achieve. As a result, pupils' learning is effective, particularly in reading and mathematics. Although pupils write creatively, the progress of some pupils is slow because weak spelling and underdeveloped handwriting is holding them back. Senior leaders are aware of these shortcomings and have plans in place to improve the teaching of writing so that all pupils make rapid progress.
- Teachers' marking is compliant with school policy. It is invariably of high quality and has a positive impact on pupils' progress, enabling them to learn from their mistakes.
- Pupils know what their targets are, in each of their subjects. The targets are expressed in terms of what pupils need to do to move their learning forward and are recorded on progress cards in pupils' books. This strategy enables pupils to take responsibility for their learning and has a positive impact on their progress.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils. They work with individuals or small groups to help them access the learning and overcome any difficulties.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they are well cared for and that they have someone to turn to in the event of any problem. This feeling of security enables them to grow in confidence and enjoy their learning.
- During breaktimes, pupils play well together. Their relationships are characteristically warm and friendly, not only with each other but also with the staff. Pupils are mindful of each other's needs and make sure that no one is left out; this has a positive impact on pupils' well-being and sense of belonging.
- The school's approach to teaching pupils about bullying and its impact on others is fostered through an anti-bullying programme. This programme has the thread of 'being kind to each other' woven into the fabric of the course materials. When asked, pupils are able to describe clearly the causes of bullying, including racist, homophobic and other prejudiced-type behaviour and its distressing impact on victims. Nevertheless, pupils attest to the positive impact of the anti-bullying programme on pupils' relationships. As a result, they say bullying at the school is rare, but when it does occur it is dealt with effectively by the staff.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour both in class and around the school is exemplary. In class, they have a thirst for learning. When the teaching captures their imaginations, they become engrossed in the activities they have been given to do, eager to complete their work and as a result make effective progress. Even when the tasks, on occasion, prove too challenging, pupils do not give up and display commendable tenacity in their drive to do well.
- Pupils take pride in the work they are given to do. In the books scrutinised by the inspector, work was complete and up to date.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in their above-average rates of attendance and very low instances of persistent absence.
- Pupils invariably respond, at the first time of asking, to their teachers' direction. For example, at the end of break, pupils quickly get into line, in absolute silence, so that their teachers can take them back to class and start the lesson. This pattern of immediate pupils' response to staff is also routine in lessons. Consequently, little time is lost as pupils move between activities and, as a result, time for learning is maximised.
- Pupils are proud members of the school, as illustrated by their high standards of dress and the respect they display for their learning environment, which is free from litter and graffiti.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' progress across the first two years of Key Stage 1 is good. In 2015, the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected level in mathematics and writing was above average. In reading, pupils' attainment was more impressive with a significantly above-average proportion of pupils attaining at the expected and higher levels. These attainment measures, at the end of Key Stage 1, are in line with pupils' past performance, which has been consistently well above average.
- When the assessment information is analysed by pupil groups, boys, girls and pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs attain well, exceeding the attainment of their peer groups nationwide. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment was below that of their peers in the school. However, there were so few disadvantaged pupils in the cohort that comparisons with national averages are not helpful.
- Pupils' attainment in the end of Year 1 phonics test was high last year, with all groups of pupils attaining well above the national average.
- In 2015, pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in mathematics and reading was above average. In writing, girls' attainment was above average and exceeded that of the boys. Furthermore, it was a group of middle-ability boys who under-attained. Their progress in writing was also below expectations. Senior leaders are aware of the reasons for this weaker performance of boys and are taking effective steps to address it.
- Pupils' progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 was significantly above average last year in reading. This reflects the strengths in the teaching of the subject and pupils' love of literature, encouraged by the school. Similarly in mathematics, a higher proportion of pupils from all starting points made at least the progress expected of them in this subject than is the case nationally.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils by the end of Key Stage 2, in mathematics and reading, was comparable with that of other pupils in the school, and exceeded the performance of their peers across the country. This reflects the school's effective use of the pupil premium.
- Senior leaders have taken an innovative approach to assessing pupils on the new National Curriculum. The school's current attainment and progress information is showing that at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 all pupils are making at least the progress expected of them in mathematics, reading and writing, with many doing even better than this at Key Stage 2. However, there are some inconsistencies in the proportions of pupils making more than expected progress. Evidence from the work in pupils' books indicates that weaknesses in spelling and the quality of handwriting is slowing pupils' progress in writing.

Early years provision

is good

- The early years setting provides a safe and nurturing environment where children learn well. Effective teaching ensures that all groups of children, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress.
- Children enter the Reception class having attended a number of local nurseries. On entry, children's skills and abilities are typical for their age. However, the school's monitoring records show that in particular years some children's development is below what would be expected. For example, in September 2013, a number of boys entered the Reception class with physical development and aptitude for the expressive arts below what would be considered typical. The early years staff took action to address this and adjusted the curriculum to accelerate children's development in these areas.
- The early years team engages well with parents. The weekly 'stay and play' sessions enable parents, and in some cases grandparents, to join in learning activities with their children and gain experience of the techniques used in school, which can then be reinforced at home. This effective partnership working has a positive impact on children's progress.
- Relationships between the children are positive. They play and work well together, are able to take turns and sit quietly on the carpet, when the teacher is leading whole-class activities. An example of the latter was a short mental mathematics activity when the children had to listen and count the treasure being dropped into the tin chest hidden behind the pirate ship's sail. The children found this activity engaging. They displayed positive attitudes to learning and demonstrated their developing knowledge of number sequences and place value.
- The indoor classroom and outdoor area are colourful, inviting and well resourced. They are an Aladdin's cave of interesting objects, which stimulate children's imagination and pique their curiosity.

- Wall displays are used by the children as effective learning resources. For example, one boy was observed using the numbered apple pictures to help him with sequencing numbers.
- Adults who work the early years form a cohesive team. They work well together, using their knowledge of each child to set interesting and yet challenging activities to move the children's learning on.
- The early years leader keeps a detailed record of each child's progress, using evidence from photographs and examples of work. The inspector's scrutiny of this evidence shows that children's early writing and understanding of number is developing well.
- The early years leader manages the provision effectively. She is well organised and has a secure understanding of how well each child is doing. She uses this knowledge to adjust the curriculum, as appropriate, to maximise each child's development. As a result, the children make good progress and are well prepared for the more formal approaches to learning they will meet at the start of Key Stage 1.

School details

Unique reference number	111344
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10010176

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Appropriate authority	The Interim Executive Board
Chair	Mrs Sheila Loughlin
Headteacher	Mrs Fiona Todd
Telephone number	01829 260524
Website	www.bunburyaldersey.cheshire.sch.uk
Email address	head@bunburyaldersey.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 February 2015

Information about this school

- Bunbury Aldersey Church of England Primary School is smaller than average.
- The school is located in Bunbury Village, Tarporley about 13 miles south-east of Chester city centre.
- The school was founded in 1594 by a member of the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers, one of the twelve Great Livery Companies of London.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage with few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- A well-below-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs supported by the school is just over half the national average.
- The number of pupils with an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.
- The school met the government's floor standards for 2015, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teachers and pupils during lessons, examined the work in pupils' books and scrutinised a number of school documents and policies.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and her senior colleagues to discuss how well the school is doing, paying particular attention to achievement, the quality of teaching, attendance and behaviour.
- The inspector met with the teacher responsible for early years, the Chair of the IEB and a representative of the Church of England Diocese of Chester, and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector had separate meetings with one parent and the Chair of the Parent Council.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils, attended a whole-school act of worship and observed the pupils at playtime.
- The inspector reviewed the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe.
- The inspector took into account 109 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Charles Lowry, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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