

Brimscombe Church of England VA Primary School

Brimscombe Hill, Brimscombe, Stroud GL5 2QR

Inspection dates	15–16 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, teachers and the governing body have worked together effectively to address all of the areas for improvement raised at the last inspection. As a result, teaching and achievement are now good.
- Progress and achievement in English and mathematics is now the same or better than in similar schools nationally.
- Subject leaders have good knowledge of how well pupils are progressing. They use this information to plan improvements across all year groups.
- The school quickly identifies pupils who are not making expected progress. Additional support addresses this, enabling pupils to catch up.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability, or who are disadvantaged, make similar progress to others.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development are excellent. They show excellent attitudes to their learning, and a high level of respect and concern in their relationships with others.
- The school ensures that pupils feel cared for and valued and are helped to be kept safe. Attendance is above average.
- The subjects pupils study engage them well, and contribute effectively to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. Children enjoy their learning, and make good progress.
- The governing body works very closely with the headteacher and staff. They regularly find out how well pupils are progressing, and use this information to provide a good level of challenge and support to leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Older pupils do not achieve as well in mathematics as younger ones do. Achievement in spelling, punctuation and grammar is not as strong as in other areas of English.
- Homework diaries do not explain to parents how homework supports learning in school.
- Record keeping for incidents of poor behaviour and welfare concerns is not detailed enough for leaders to quickly monitor overall progress.
- There is not enough detail in some policies for parents and staff to understand school procedures.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management, by:
 - strengthening systems for recording and tracking incidents of poor behaviour and welfare concerns, so that leaders can monitor pupils' progress
 - ensuring that policy documents contain enough information so that parents and staff can understand procedures, to enable them to contribute fully to the pupils' education.

- Improve outcomes to outstanding, by:
 - improving the quality of teaching in mathematics, spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - ensuring that parents understand how homework relates to and extends learning done in school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Through good leadership the headteacher has ensured that all the areas identified at the last inspection have been successfully addressed. She has created a very positive culture and ethos within the school, where pupils feel included and valued, and are expected to reach their potential. She has been well supported by an effective governing body, a strong teaching team and sound advice from the local authority.
- The headteacher has created an effective leadership team. All teachers have contributed well to the improvements that have taken place, by ensuring that there is consistently good or better teaching across all classes. They have spent lots of time looking at good practice in other schools, and talking together about what the best teaching methods are for Brimscombe School. They all keep a close eye on rates of progress, and share responsibility for making improvements when required.
- The headteacher and the governing body have an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The quality of teaching and the impact of this on learning are carefully monitored. Teachers feel that the arrangements for how their performance is managed, and the opportunities available to them for further training, both contribute effectively to improving standards in the school. The governing body ensures that any salary increases are linked to performance.
- Teaching is planned in a way that makes sure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain, and that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are well met. Learning covers the full range of subjects that pupils are required to know about. The school provides many after-school activities, including drama, sewing, chess and a range of sports clubs. A variety of trips are run, including a residential outward-bound trip for the oldest pupils. The school has strong links with a school in The Gambia. The pupils enjoy looking after a range of school animals, including four goats.
- The school is very committed to equal opportunities for all pupils. This is reflected in the pupils' positive views of the school.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is good. Parents and pupils are involved in identifying targets for pupils to work towards. Individual plans are produced to help pupils achieve these. The school has good links with external agencies such as educational psychologists and speech and language therapy services, which provide specialist input when required.
- Pupil premium funds are used well. Some of this money has increased learning opportunities for individual pupils, such as the purchase of a laptop, or to join in with an after-school activity. Other funds have been used to extend learning for groups, such as the purchase of online mathematics software, which can be accessed from school or home.
- The additional sports funding has been used to employ specialist coaches, who run physical education lessons for all pupils. The impact of this has been very positive, raising both the skill and enjoyment levels for pupils. The coaches have also supported the school to join in with more competitions involving pupils from different schools.
- Parents are very positive about the school's work. One parent commented on the really good support the school had given her child, saying that they have been aware of every aspect of her needs, not just the academic ones.
- The school now has a good system in place to monitor pupils' academic progress. However, information about incidents of poor behaviour, or concerns raised about a pupil's welfare, are not recorded in a way that make it easy for leaders to monitor. This makes it hard for them to maintain good oversight of this area of their responsibility.
- While the school has all required policies in place, these do not always include enough information so that parents and newer members of staff can understand the school's procedures. This can make it hard for everyone to work together in a similar way, in the best interests of the pupils.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Since the last inspection there have been some changes in the membership of the governing body. Governors have reviewed their effectiveness, which has included looking at the structure of how they operate, and have completed a skills audit. This has helped them become more focused on school improvement, and provide the right level of challenge and support to leaders.
 - Governors have a detailed and accurate knowledge of pupils' progress and attainment. They know how well different groups of pupils are performing. They have an accurate view on the quality of

teaching. Their knowledge is based on regular observations of teaching, looking at pupils' work, discussions with teachers, and scrutinising reports and records provided by the school.

- The governing body keeps a close eye on all aspects of finance, ensuring that all funds are well used and that they have a good impact on pupils' learning.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff have regular training in relation to safeguarding. The staff know the pupils well, and ensure that all members of the team know of any concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Typically, pupils really enjoy their learning, getting engrossed and being delighted to find out new things and learn new skills. Teachers regularly give pupils the opportunity to work together. Pupils do this very well, sharing ideas and providing support to each other. Teachers help pupils learn by good use of questioning, either to clarify the pupil's understanding or to provide a further level of challenge. Relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils themselves, are excellent. This supports a very positive climate for learning in all classes.
- An assessment week is run every six weeks. Teachers set tasks during this week to see how well pupils are progressing. This enables teachers to keep a close eye on the progress of every pupil. If pupils have not made expected progress they are given an intervention plan. Time is set aside every day for pupils to work on these plans. This enables pupils to catch up quickly.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of how teachers let them know how well they are doing, and how to improve their work. This is the same in every class. As well as providing good feedback to pupils, teachers allocate time for pupils to practise things they have got wrong or have misunderstood. This might be during 'early work' time at the start of the day, or at other times. Pupils told the inspector that teachers are very good at setting work at exactly the right level, that is, not too hard and not too easy.
- Pupils develop their literacy skills well. The good teaching of sounds and letters effectively helps pupils develop their reading and writing skills. Pupils read confidently and accurately for their ages. A group of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils enjoyed reading a play script of 'Rumpelstiltskin'. Each child was able to follow the script, and read their part accurately and with expression when it was their turn. The teacher's good use of questioning helped pupils understand some of the more complex vocabulary.
- The teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar is less effective. Pupils find this work not as engaging, and are not as well motivated to try as hard as they do in other lessons.
- The school has high expectations of behaviour and achievement. Generally work is pitched at the correct level for each pupil. Teachers and teaching assistants allocate their time well, making sure that different groups understand what they are doing, and are working to a good standard.
- Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons. They are given a good range of activities. Pupils in Year 5 were able to accurately draw a pie chart using a protractor, transferring information from percentages to degrees. However, some pupils in Year 3 found creating a line graph too difficult, and were not given help quickly enough for them to make progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They demonstrate high levels of self-confidence, which enables them to work on their own when required. They regularly show delight in doing well. Their workbooks demonstrate the strong effort they put into their work, and the pride they feel about it. Pupils work very effectively together, showing impressive amounts of care and concern for each other. Most-able pupils are sometimes asked to help less-able pupils. They do this very skilfully and tactfully.
- Pupils see the school council as an effective means of influencing decision making. Representatives are elected by pupils, and are held in high regard by their peers.
- The pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They take part in regular lessons that help them understand the potential risks of the internet. The school helps them make healthy food choices at lunch times. Pupils told the inspector that they really like the school, and they all know which member of staff they would talk to if they were upset.

- The physical environment of the school is very well presented and cared for. Displays give clear messages about the importance of keeping safe and healthy. Pupils' achievements are celebrated.
- Pupils' learning is linked to the school's Values for Life. Each term one value is focused on. During an act of collective worship the pupils were asked to think about the value of forgiveness. The headteacher told them about a bomb attack which killed a young woman. Pupils very maturely shared their thoughts about how the father had been able to forgive the bomber. All pupils were then able to sit in silence, reflecting on this situation.

The school employs a parent support advisor. She is available to work with families on request. She also runs groups for parents who require similar types of support. She is very effective in helping families access different services, and brings a variety of agencies together in the best interests of pupils. As a result the school has developed very good links with a wide variety of agencies. After working closely with a family they reported, 'this is the best the family has ever been.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The school is a very calm and orderly environment. Pupils respond quickly to adult's requests. Pupils provide excellent role modelling to one another. Records show that incidents of poor behaviour occur rarely. Pupils told the inspector that pupils do sometimes bully each other, but when this happens the adults sort it out quickly.
- Pupils settle very quickly to work at the start of every lesson. They are very keen to engage in their learning, without wasting any time. Pupils show a high level of pride in the work they produce.
- They enjoy their playtimes, which they manage with little support from staff. They happily play together, engaging in a variety of games and activities, using their own ideas and imagination.
- The inspector observed many situations where pupils were able to discuss ideas with their peers and teachers. Pupils are able to show consideration for other people's points of view, listening carefully and respectfully. This helps them develop their own learning.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and as a result, attendance levels are above average.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Attainment and progress in English and mathematics has improved since the last inspection. Standards in reading and writing are above those expected for pupils of their age, while in mathematics, standards are slightly below average for key stage 2. Attainment is below average for spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, rates of pupils meeting or exceeding expected progress are above average in all subjects. The school's own recent checks on progress show good progress for the majority of pupils.
- The progress of most-able pupils in Year 3 has been slow, but school records show that this is now accelerating. This was confirmed by evidence in their books, which shows that they are making good progress.
- Across the school, the most-able pupils make good progress. Teachers ensure that work is set at the correct level so that activities are both enjoyable and challenging, which helps the most-able pupils clarify their thinking and extend their learning.
- During the inspection a scrutiny of pupils' work indicated that over time pupils in all year groups make good progress. Books show a broad range of subjects studied, which are regularly marked. Pupils are able to write using a variety of styles and for different purposes. Pupils know what they are expected to learn, and as they get older some are encouraged to check their progress for themselves. This helps them to develop a realistic view of their abilities.
- Some additional funding has been used to support pupils' learning in mathematics. Despite this, a small group of pupils are still not making expected progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. The regular tracking of progress, and the quick response when any of these pupils make less than expected progress, has contributed to this.
- The individual planning that is carried out for pupils who have special educational needs or disability ensures that they receive appropriate teaching and support. As a result, they make good progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. The school provides effective support to this group of pupils, matched to their individual needs.

Early years provision

is good

- The leadership and management of the early years are good. The teacher ensures that her team works closely together planning for the needs of the children. Regular training is provided to staff to support this. The governor who oversees this area visits regularly and has a good understanding of the provision's strengths and areas to be improved.
- The early years provision includes a pre-school group. Most of the children from this group move into the Reception class. The pre-school group effectively prepares children to be ready for school. Children learn how to follow instructions, and how to behave in a group. They are able to listen to each other talking, and recap parts of a story they have heard.
- Recent improvements have led to most children now making good progress, and achieving a good level of development. In the phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) screening assessment, all of the children achieved in line with national expectations.
- Teaching is good. Children respond well to high expectations. They understand the routines and organisation of the classroom, which helps them be successful in the tasks they are set. During a phonics lesson all of the reception children were able to say a sound out loud, write it on their own whiteboard, and then write the words 'fur', 'hurt' and 'burn'.
- Children's learning is planned on a two-year cycle, to ensure that all important areas are covered. Each topic has a different focus, working towards developing children's literacy and mathematical skills, and the different areas of early years development. Staff continually assess children's progress through note taking and photographs. This enables the teacher to maintain a good level of knowledge about how each child is progressing.

School details

Unique reference number	115690
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10012345

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Seward
Headteacher	Karen Riordan
Telephone number	01453 882474
Website	www.brimscombe.gloucs.sch.uk
Email address	admin@brimscombe.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 January 2014

Information about this school

- Brimscombe Church of England VA Primary School is much smaller than the averaged-sized primary school.
- The school has a pre-school group, Jellybeans, which is managed by the governing body.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is lower than average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to schools for disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set out minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited six lessons. The headteacher accompanied the inspector for most of these. The inspector also carried out two learning walks, one of which was accompanied by the headteacher. He also observed a breaktime and an act of collective worship.
- He met with a group of children, the parent support advisor, teachers and the headteacher, a local authority advisor and members of the governing body.
- A number of documents were examined, including information from the school's website, records on behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, staff recruitment files, minutes from governing body meetings, pupils' workbooks, school development plans, case studies, pupil progress information and school policies.
- The inspector took account of 47 responses from Parent View, and over 20 comments made using the text facility. He also analysed 13 staff questionnaires.
- At the time of the inspection all Year 6 pupils were away from school on a residential field trip.

Inspection team

Andy Lole, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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