

Bisham CofE Primary School

Church Lane, Bisham, Marlow, Buckinghamshire SL7 1RW

Inspection dates

16–17 March 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet reliably good. Leaders have only recently ensured that teachers introduce consistent methods and approaches.
- The systematic teaching of writing, phonics (letters and the sounds letters make) and mathematics is not well established. As a result, pupils make inconsistent progress.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply and consolidate their mathematical or writing skills.
- Teachers do not consistently use assessment information well to plan pupils' learning, in order to accelerate their progress and close gaps in earlier learning.
- The impact of teaching assistants' support on pupils' learning is not consistently good.
- The school's wider curriculum and teachers' leadership roles in different subjects are not developed well.
- Some pupils do not take pride in their work, or show enough respect to all adults in school.
- Pupils are not prepared well for life in modern Britain. They do not learn well about Britain's rich cultural heritage and different lifestyles.
- The interim executive board does not have reliable plans or methods for checking the impact of leaders' actions on pupils' outcomes.

The school has the following strengths

- Since she joined last September, the clear vision and experience of the executive headteacher is inspiring fresh confidence in pupils, parents and staff.
- The interim executive board has dealt comprehensively with safeguarding issues raised by the last section 5 inspection. Safeguarding procedures are reliable. Pupils are kept safe and feel safe.
- Children in Reception Year receive a good start to their education.
- Disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have special educational needs or disability and the most-able pupils make good progress. These pupils' individual needs are met well.
- Teaching is improving securely throughout the school. No inadequate teaching remains. Evidence of good teaching is emerging.
- Parents support the school well by ensuring pupils' good attendance and punctuality.

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?

- Improve teaching, particularly in writing, phonics and mathematics, so all pupils make consistently good progress by ensuring:
 - teachers make effective use of assessment information to plan the next steps in learning which pupils require, bearing in mind pupils' previous achievement and expectations for their particular ages
 - pupils are taught the fundamental skills they need systematically and reliably in key stages 1 and 2
 - pupils have opportunities to master mathematical knowledge and skills, for example by applying these to solve mathematical problems and conduct investigations, not only in their mathematics work
 - pupils have systematic opportunities to develop and consolidate their writing skills, including in subjects other than English
 - teaching assistants are better able to support pupils' progress, particularly when working away from the teacher.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring all pupils develop good habits for learning, including concentration, pride in the quality and amount of work they produce and respect for all staff.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring:
 - the leadership of the wider curriculum is well organised and efficiently undertaken
 - pupils' experience of life in modern Britain is extended to reflect its richness more fully, including through the curriculum and the resources pupils use, such as those in the school library
 - governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress throughout the school, to hold the headteacher to account for continuing improvement
 - the school's improvement plans show clearly how governors will check the school's improvement, particularly the impact of leaders' actions on pupils' outcomes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Until recently, senior leaders' efforts to establish consistently good teaching were hampered by frequent staff changes. Since January, with a permanent teaching team in place, senior leaders have moved quickly to promote increasing consistency, although this is not yet well established.
- Together, the experienced executive headteacher and head of school promote a clear vision for the best achievement for every pupil, supported enthusiastically by the whole staff team.
- The headteacher's evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is honest and accurate. Linked well to this analysis, a practical plan with ambitious timescales sets out clearly the work that leaders and staff need to do. The work detailed in the plan is on track, but much remains to be accomplished. Furthermore, how governors will check leaders' progress in implementing the plan is unclear.
- Senior leaders check teaching and pupils' progress regularly, discussing their findings with teachers to agree any action needed. The quality and consistency of teaching is improving steadily as a result. The headteacher ensures that teachers' performance management objectives are firmly linked to their pupils' achievement. It is too soon to evaluate the impact of these recent developments on pupils' outcomes over time.
- The influence subject leaders have on pupils' achievement is not well developed. Some recent initiatives are beginning to have an impact, but these are limited in their scope. Last term, the phonics leader reorganised the teaching of phonics, introducing new resources and providing relevant training for all staff. The mathematics leader recently introduced a systematic policy for teaching calculation across the school. The physical education leader has worked closely with a specialist teacher to enrich the sports curriculum and develop colleagues' knowledge and skills. This last initiative has made good use of additional government funding for sport.
- The leadership of the wider curriculum is not well organised and pupils' books show that the full range of national curriculum subjects is not covered comprehensively. Furthermore, pupils have limited opportunities to consider life in the wider United Kingdom. Major festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year are marked, but the varied cultures of modern Britain are not well represented in the curriculum, in the resources pupils use, for example in the library, or in displays around the school. This limits pupils' cultural development.
- The leadership of the head of school as special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is a strength. The SENCo has reviewed the specific needs of all pupils who require additional support or intervention to learn well, and monitors their progress closely. This includes pupils who find it hard to concentrate or follow the guidance of adults in school. Clear plans are in place for each pupil, with relevant targets and support. The SENCo works well with external agencies and ensures good communication between home and school. The SENCo has provided effective initial training for teaching assistants. However, more development is required to ensure these staff meet newly raised expectations for their role well, especially when working away from the teacher.
- Leaders ensure that the pupil premium is used well. (The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be entitled to free schools meals and those looked after by the local authority.) The SENCO checks the progress of these pupils regularly and makes prompt adjustments to the support they receive, whenever necessary.
- The spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is a strength. Pupils' prayers, displayed in the entrance area, set a tone of warm Christian welcome which is evident throughout the daily life of the school. Teachers use the school's rural setting well to provide opportunities for pupils to wonder at the beauty of nature, for example by listening intently in the 'quiet garden' or observing seasonal changes. All the adults in school model firm attitudes of courtesy and respect. This sets high expectations to which most pupils respond well and ensures all pupils are treated equally.
- Pupils are taught well about right and wrong, and have valuable opportunities to reflect on the consequences of their actions if mistakes are made. The fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, respect and individual freedom are promoted well, including through activities such as school- and class-council discussions.
- The headteacher ensures that teachers at this small school have regular opportunities to work in partnership with colleagues in other schools, including good schools. This is supporting the professional development of Bisham staff well and accelerating the introduction of effective policies, for example in assessment.

- The local authority has supported the school well: to establish a skilled and knowledgeable interim executive board; to ensure safeguarding concerns were resolved promptly; to secure continuing capable senior leadership; to maintain the school's sound finances; and to restore parents' confidence.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The interim executive board comprises a knowledgeable, skilled and committed group who are firmly focused on achieving the rapid improvement of the school. This has shown clearly in governors' diligent and successful approach to the recruitment of senior leaders and teachers.
 - Working closely with the local authority, governors took prompt and effective action to ensure that safeguarding issues identified in the previous section 5 inspection were fully resolved. Governors maintain a close watch on the school's safeguarding arrangements, for example through a full audit in November 2015.
 - Until recently, governors have necessarily focused on important safeguarding, leadership and staffing issues and the financial impact of the school's reduced pupil numbers. Governors are only now beginning to focus more acutely on teaching and learning. A member of the board recently attended one of the headteacher's meetings with teachers about pupils' progress, but governors are not well informed overall about teaching or pupils' achievement. Furthermore, the school's improvement plans do not set out clearly how governors will check the impact of leaders' actions on pupils' achievement.
 - Governors work closely with the local authority to ensure sound financial management of the school's resources. Governors ensure that additional government funding for sport and for disadvantaged pupils is spent effectively and closely monitored. For example, a member of the board has conducted a full review of leaders' use of the pupil premium.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's policies comply with current requirements and training is maintained well for staff and governors. All members of staff the inspector spoke with were aware of the correct procedures should any concerns arise. All the required checks are conducted and recorded when staff or volunteers are recruited. The premises are well maintained and checked for health and safety. Pupils are kept safe through attentive supervision at social times and close attention to the needs of individuals. Senior leaders work well with external agencies to support pupils and their families. A small minority of parents responding to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, or speaking with the inspector expressed concerns about the school's leadership and the management of some pupils' behaviour. These concerns were not borne out by the inspection, and the overwhelming majority of parents who spoke with the inspector were confident that their children are safe and well cared for at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been consistently good. Pupils' core skills for writing, phonics and mathematics have not been taught methodically. Teachers are now working together to organise pupils' learning systematically from Reception to age 11. There are reliable signs of early success, but this substantial undertaking remains in development.
- Until recently, teachers' expectations for the quality and amount of work pupils can produce have not been consistently high, particularly in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2. Teaching has not instilled in younger pupils consistently good habits for learning, including the capacity to listen and learn from all the adults, and good expectations for the amount and quality of work they do. Rules and expectations are now clear, but only recently applied consistently.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress reliably, using methods developed and tested in partnership with colleagues in other schools. However, teachers do not always use this information well to plan for pupils' next steps in learning, bearing in mind gaps in pupils' knowledge and pupils' different ages, particularly in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2.
- Teaching assistants support learning effectively in the classroom, where teachers provide increasingly detailed guidance. During lessons, teaching assistants speak clearly with pupils and show a competent grasp of mathematics and English grammar. Teachers deploy teaching assistants adeptly to help pupils needing support with their concentration or behaviour, allowing individuals and the class to continue learning. However, some teaching assistants show less confidence and success when working away from the teacher in newly introduced aspects of their work, such as working independently with small groups.
- Pupils are provided with limited opportunities to master mathematical skills, for example by applying these to solve mathematical problems or conduct investigations, including in lessons other than mathematics.

- English grammar is taught well in Years 4, 5 and 6, and teachers throughout the school provide pupils with regular opportunities to write other than in English lessons, for example in topic work or science. In the Year 2 and 3 class, pupils have recently written extensively about 'mini-beasts' in their topic books. However, there is no consistent approach to the amount or quality of writing expected, to develop and consolidate pupils' writing skills as they progress through the school.
- The teaching of phonics is well organised, including sessions to help pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 close gaps in their knowledge. Teachers check pupils' progress regularly, and adjust teaching accordingly. Relevant training is in place for staff and effective new resources have been introduced, refreshing pupils' interest. These recent changes are beginning to improve pupils' progress but are not yet well established.
- The organisation of teaching and learning in the Reception and Year 1 class is well considered. This is supporting some pupils in Year 1 who need to catch up to do so, after making slow progress during their Reception Year.
- The most-able pupils are challenged well throughout the school. These pupils are motivated by the work teachers give them, including interesting activities in Year 1 and some complex mathematical investigations in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Teachers meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs or disability and disadvantaged pupils well through thoughtful teaching and support.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school is a calm and orderly environment where the rules are clear. Staff supervision at social times is attentive, with first aid readily available. Incidents and accidents are recorded and followed up assiduously. Senior leaders provide daily reports to parents where ongoing concerns arise. Detailed risk assessments are completed for educational visits and for activities on site such as playing on the school field. Supervision is readily adapted if necessary. Pupils rightly feel safe and well cared for. Nevertheless, senior leaders are right to focus on improving the attitudes and behaviour of a very small minority of pupils who show less respect to teaching assistants and supervisors than to teachers.
- Since the last section 5 inspection, frequent staff changes in the Year 2 and 3 class have unsettled some pupils' confidence and pride in their work, linked to changing behaviour management strategies from different teachers. The work in pupils' books and pupils' attitudes observed during the inspection show that pupils are responding well to permanent staff. More work is being accomplished than previously, with greater pride being shown. The atmosphere in the classroom is calm and purposeful with pupils' individual needs being met well. However, these recent changes have yet to impact fully on pupils' achievement and behaviour.
- Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe in school and know they can rely on any adult to help them. Coordinated by the SENCo, staff provide intensive and caring support for individuals needing help to manage their feelings and behaviour. Detailed records are made of the support provided and its impact so that parents are kept well informed. The SENCo works closely with external agencies to plan and review specific strategies to support these pupils. Pupils told the inspector that they value the strategies for self-control which they are being taught and the support they receive.
- Pupils told the inspector that bullying is very rare in the school, and quickly resolved by the adults if necessary. Pupils are taught well about their rights and responsibilities, and how to manage and respond to risks online. These topics are covered regularly in assembly and during teaching.
- Healthy eating is encouraged at lunchtime, when the whole school eats happily together in the hall before going out to play. Supervisors play actively with pupils at lunchtime, to ensure a successful break.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some pupils show less respect to teaching assistants and supervisors than to teachers. For some pupils, a legacy remains of showing too little effort and pride in their work.
- Most pupils work hard and play well together. They show respect to all the adults and are willing and keen to help whenever they can, in the classroom or the playground. Pupils the inspector spoke with are proud of their school and value its family atmosphere.
- Pupils' attendance is good. Some issues with pupils' punctuality have been readily resolved by staff with the support of parents.

- The school's clear behaviour policies ensure fair discipline, which pupils value. Most pupils respond well to the school's golden rules which promote consideration, respect, hard work and pride in achievement.
- Pupils understand the traffic light system which rewards good behaviour and warns them of the need to reflect and make a change. As a result, very low numbers of pupils spend lunchtime in the reflection room rather than playing with their friends.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- From starting points on joining the school which are usually at least typical for their ages, pupils have not made consistently good progress to achieve the standards they are capable of, particularly in writing and mathematics. Recent improvements in teaching mean this is now beginning to change.
- Over time, pupils' achievements at age 11 in writing and mathematics have trailed that in reading. In the current Year 6, most pupils are on track to attain nationally expected standards at age 11 in all three subjects. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are making similarly good progress. Nevertheless, gaps remain in some older pupils' knowledge and skills in writing and mathematics, and not all older pupils show pride in the quality or amount of work they accomplish.
- In the Year 2 and 3 class, there are also gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills, resulting from previous inconsistencies in teaching, or new pupils' standards of achievement on entry into the school. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils' progress and their attitudes to learning have improved significantly since January. However, not all pupils are on track to achieve the standards expected for their age, particularly in writing and mathematics, and some pupils continue to produce careless or incomplete work.
- Pupils throughout the school make good progress in reading.
- In phonics, a higher proportion of Year 1 pupils are on track to achieve the expected standard in the national phonics screening activity in 2016 than in previous years. Pupils in Year 1 are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, gaps remain in the phonics knowledge of some older pupils.
- The small number of pupils supported by the pupil premium makes comparison with national averages unreliable. Compared with their peers in school, these pupils are making good progress, and in some cases attaining more highly. Gaps seen previously at the end of key stage 1 between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others have reduced to a small margin and continue to close.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress due to close monitoring of their progress, which ensures well-targeted provision and support.
- The most-able pupils achieve well throughout the school, due to the challenge they receive and their very positive attitudes to learning.

Early years provision

is good

- In 2015, the proportion of Reception children who attained a good level of development was above the national average. Most, but not all, of these children were well prepared for the opportunities of Year 1.
- The very small number of children currently in Reception Year benefit from imaginative and creative activities, inside and outside. These stimulate children's interests and challenge their thinking, particularly about words and numbers. Current activities include counting and measuring, and role play relating to Major Tim Peake's adventures in space.
- Children engage enthusiastically in the activities provided. They listen well to the adults and cooperate willingly with other children. The children are taught well to use equipment and resources safely.
- Staff engage enthusiastically with the children, asking questions and checking progress. Teaching assistants work effectively with pupils individually, but lack confidence sometimes when teaching groups away from the teacher.
- The early years leader ensures intelligent use of the combined Reception and Year 1 setting, to encourage progress for Reception children while providing support for pupils in Year 1 who need to close gaps in their earlier learning. The arrangements work well due to the teacher's clear planning and frequent assessment of individual children's progress.
- Parents the inspector spoke with are delighted with their children's progress and the care and attention provided by staff. Parents are rightly confident that their children are safe and well cared for and appreciate the wealth of information they receive about the children's activities and progress. Parents

value opportunities to contribute to the children's learning records by recording achievements accomplished at home.

School details

Unique reference number	109951
Local authority	The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	10009302

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 controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Michael Clark
Executive Headteacher	Helen Daniels
Telephone number	01628 482910
Website	www.bishamcofe.co.uk
Email address	info@bishamschool.net
Date of previous inspection	23–24 September 2014

Information about this school

- Bisham is a much smaller than average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised into three classes: Reception Year and Year 1; Years 2 and 3; Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The executive headteacher, who joined in September 2015, also leads Cookham Rise Primary School, spending two days a week at Bisham. The schools are not federated and maintain separate governing bodies.
- The head of school joined in January 2016, teaching part time in the Year 2 and 3 class, and leading the school when the executive headteacher is not on site. A permanent partner teacher takes the Year 2 and 3 class on these occasions.
- Of the remaining two class teachers, one joined the school permanently in September 2015 and the other in April 2015.
- An interim executive board, instigated by the local authority, has been responsible for the governance of the school since the last full inspection.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority, for which the school receives additional funding (the pupil premium), is below the national average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and those who speak English as an additional language, are very low.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability receiving school support is broadly average. Two pupils currently have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- In 2015, pupils at the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress nationally at age 11.
- Pupils attend the Reception Year full time.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all the classes with the headteacher, heard pupils read and looked at pupils' work in their books and on display.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other leaders, members of the interim executive board, staff, and representatives from the local authority and diocese.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils, observed lunchtime, and talked with pupils and staff around the school.
- The inspector talked with parents at the start of the day, spoke on the telephone with two parents at their request and analysed the 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View).
- A range of documents were examined, including teachers' plans for pupils' learning, leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness and the school's improvement plans, documents on the school's website, governing body records and local authority reports.
- Checks were made of arrangements for keeping pupils safe and records of pupils' attendance and behaviour. The inspector scrutinised leaders' analysis of pupils' progress, and records of leaders' checks on teaching.

Inspection team

Siân Thornton, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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