

# Bulmer St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Road, Bulmer, Sudbury CO10 7EH

<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 May 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Not enough of the most able pupils are supported to achieve well by the end of Year 6.
- Changes in the teaching staff and in the leadership have led to inconsistency in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The senior leadership team is new and school improvement plans are not fully in place.
- By the end of Year 6 pupils' progress in writing and mathematics is not as good as it is in reading.
- Teachers' expectations of what can be achieved by pupils are not high enough and teachers' planning is not effective in supporting good progress for the most able.
- The role of subject leaders is not developed well enough to support the rapid improvement that is required.
- Early years provision does not make good use of the outdoor area to promote purposeful learning.
- The presentation of pupils' work varies considerably from class to class and subject to subject.
- The teaching of phonics is not consistently good.

### The school has the following strengths

- The interim headteacher and the deputy headteacher have a clear vision of how to improve the school and are beginning to accelerate pupils' progress throughout the different classes.
- There is some strong teaching in all key stages.
- Pupils behave well. They are kind, caring and polite.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is good.
- Governors are highly committed and have the necessary skills to improve the school further.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good.
- Safeguarding is effective and pupils feel safe.
- Music and sports are a particular strength of the curriculum, and pupils reach high standards in both areas.

## Full report

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

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make consistently good progress by ensuring that:
  - suitable activities are planned in lessons so that the most able pupils are challenged to achieve well
  - teachers have high expectations of pupils' presentation and quality of work in all subjects and only accept work that is the pupils' best effort
  - pupils who are not making enough progress are quickly identified, and that teachers adapt their plans to be more effective in helping pupils to catch up.
  
- Strengthen the impact of leaders, including governors, to improve the school's overall effectiveness to at least securely good by:
  - developing a new school improvement plan, with clear targets for rapid improvement within a measurable timescale and ensuring that all staff are behind the vision for improving outcomes quickly
  - developing a senior leadership team that shares responsibility for improving the school through actively challenging and supporting the staff
  - developing the role of subject coordinators so that regular monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment takes place across the school and there is greater use made of accurate assessment of pupils' abilities to inform strategies for improvement.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years by:
  - developing the outdoor learning environment to provide a range of more purposeful activities
  - improving the consistency of phonics teaching by providing high-quality training and support for all staff
  - providing more opportunities for parents to be involved in the learning of their child during the Reception Year.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Over the last two years, since the last inspection, there has been considerable turbulence in the leadership of the school. There have been four literacy subject leaders and the interim headteacher has been in post for just four weeks. This turbulence has led to not enough progress being made on some of the key issues identified at the last inspection, such as ensuring that pupils make consistently good progress, that teachers provide work that challenges the most able and that they have high expectations of pupils' presentation of their work.
- The local authority and governors have acted decisively to remedy this. A school improvement board has been put in place which meets regularly to monitor school performance on a detailed level. This board has been providing challenge and support over the last year and has undertaken a range of activities to keep teaching and learning on track.
- The interim headteacher and the deputy headteacher have a clear vision of how to make the necessary improvements and are working on a school improvement plan that has targeted raising standards rapidly and developing consistency in the quality of good teaching. This plan is not yet complete.
- The senior leadership team is very new and this means that effective strategies for monitoring staff performance and providing appropriate challenge and support are not yet fully in place. Good progress has been made in improving standards in mathematics so that they are now much better than at the last inspection.
- Much subject leadership in areas other than mathematics is also new and this means that systems for monitoring how well these subjects are doing are at an early stage, although standards in music and sports were observed to be particularly high. Subject leaders need further training opportunities to enable them to carry out their roles fully and deepen their understanding of how to drive improvements.
- A range of professional development has taken place since the last inspection, with mixed impact. The mathematics leader has attended a series of training sessions relating to the new curriculum and strategies for developing a deeper understanding of mathematics, and this has played a part in successfully raising standards so that more pupils are now reaching the expected stage of development in mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is good. Across the school almost all are working at the expected level and some are working above it. The pupil premium grant (additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) has been used effectively to provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils through classroom activities and additional small-group work.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs or disability is good because teachers have put in place detailed plans for every pupil, identifying where extra support is needed. The progress of these pupils is checked every six weeks by the special educational needs coordinator and senior leaders.
- Leaders ensure that the additional government funding for physical education and sports is used well. Considerable emphasis has been placed on ensuring a high-quality curriculum and this leads to support for healthy lifestyles and enables the school to run competitive teams in a wide range of sports. Professional coaches lead many physical education sessions and the number of pupils attending swimming lessons has doubled. Every pupil attends at least one after-school club.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and has been particularly well designed to encourage pupils to know their local community well and to make learning relevant. Pupils talk with great enthusiasm about their visits to a local farm to take part in a real archaeological dig as part of their Roman project. The partnership with a local land owner has been used effectively to provide opportunities for learning outside, such as building shelters in the forest, an activity that supported learning in the technology curriculum effectively, so that progress for a large majority of pupils in this subject is good.
- The teaching of music is a considerable strength of the school. All pupils from Year 2 onwards are taught the violin, the flute or the clarinet. The quality of the school choir is excellent and it recently won its class in the Sudbury Music Festival.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. There are strong links with a range of local places of worship and the school promotes the understanding of other faiths and beliefs well. A well-planned programme has been put in place to develop pupils' understanding of British values. For example, the active school council supports pupils' learning about democracy, and visits from the local police help pupils to have an appreciation of the rule of law. Other areas are developed through a range of curriculum activities and focused assemblies.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors are experienced, knowledgeable and passionate about improving their school. They have been successful in appointing a strong staff team for every class and an able interim headteacher. In order to do this, it has meant there has been a period of instability whilst recruitment has taken place, but the foundations for accelerated progress are now firmly in place.
  - Governors carry out their statutory duties conscientiously, visiting the school regularly, getting to know pupils and providing appropriate levels of challenge and support. They ask relevant questions of leaders and know the strengths and areas for development across the school.
  - Governors receive regular reports about how well the school is doing and link the performance of pupils and the quality of teaching closely to teachers' pay.
  - Governors regularly seek the views of parents. Recent parental surveys carried out by the school are positive.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Teachers new to the school receive appropriate training, which equips them with the knowledge and skills to keep children safe. All staff are aware of possible signs of abuse, and they care diligently for pupils. Excellent records are kept to help ensure that there is good evidence to show that all safer recruitment procedures are followed appropriately. Relevant policies are maintained and staff training is regular and recorded efficiently. Recent training has helped all staff to be aware of the latest legislation with regard to potential radicalisation or extremism. Leaders work effectively with parents to ensure that their children are kept safe.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement**

- Teachers do not help the most able pupils make enough progress. Planning for lessons does not provide opportunities for the most able pupils to be challenged and deepen their learning. This means that not enough pupils reach the higher stages of development by the end of Year 6. In addition, other pupils are not stretched enough, or given enough support, so that they make better than expected progress as they move through the school.
- Not all teachers insist that pupils' work is well presented; as a result, there is variation in the quality of work between classes and in subjects. On some occasions, teachers do not challenge pupils when work is untidy; often when this happens, a ruler is not used to underline the titles and crossing out is done in a haphazard way.
- Overall, however, teaching in all areas of the school is improving. New appointments are beginning to have considerable impact so that rates of progress are increasing across the school. In the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6, a very effectively planned mathematics lesson provided pupils with the opportunity to work in depth on a complex problem related to drawing building plans to scale. Expectations were high for what was to be achieved and skilful support was provided for those pupils finding the task difficult.
- All classrooms have a positive atmosphere. Good relationships in class mean that when pupils are given new tasks, they are not afraid to try hard or to make mistakes.
- Teachers ensure that work is linked effectively to real-life situations wherever possible. In the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4, letter-writing skills were being developed effectively. Pupils were being supported to imagine they were Prince Caspian in Narnia writing home about their feelings. These developing letter-writing skills have been used to write for real to the village council, a partner school in Africa and to the headteacher.
- Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' progress in class and are deployed well. They work with pupils of all abilities and show a good range of skills. They have a good understanding of the aims of the lesson and how to support pupils to achieve their personal targets.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) across the different ages is inconsistent. Some aspects are good, such as the clearly structured programme that is in place, but there are times when aspects, such as the pronunciation of sounds, are not as clear as it should be and pupils are not given enough time to practise the sounds that they are learning.

- Pupils of all ages enjoy reading and can talk confidently about the books they have chosen. Pupils in Year 1 read to the inspector with great enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment. They could talk about the characters in their stories and what might happen next. Older children often choose challenging books and many read regularly at home. The school library contains a large number of good-quality, interesting books and is greatly appreciated by the pupils.

## 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 in all classes have positive attitudes to learning and develop good levels of confidence. This starts in the Reception class, where children are often called upon to make presentations to the whole school.
- An effective programme of activities in class, supported by high-quality assembly time, provides pupils with excellent support to think about how to be kind and caring to one another. They demonstrate this well to one another, around school, through charity work and through involvement with the local community.
- Pupils use resources and equipment sensibly and take responsibility for their learning in the classroom when given independence. They work well in the outdoor environment and can be trusted to work on activities in the woods, taking sensible precautions to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils talk confidently about how safe they feel at school. They say that the adults look after them well and that they know how to stay safe when using the internet. They have had visitors talk to them about using the internet correctly and have carried out learning activities in class.
- Pupils spoken with could not recall any incidents of bullying. During discussions, one pupil said, 'We are one big, happy family and we look after each other'.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have impeccable manners when speaking to adults and behave in a calm way when moving around school. The inspector saw pupils in the first class (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) taking turns using play equipment, helping one another solve problems and showing excellent concentration when the teacher was talking.
- Pupils behave well around the school and in lessons. The inspector saw no evidence of any misbehaviour at all and parents agree that good behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils know one another well and older pupils always show consideration for the younger pupils, for example, during football at lunchtime. Everyone is included and the older pupils make sure that the younger ones get lots of touches of the ball.
- Attendance is above average and shows just how much pupils enjoy coming to school. There are very few pupils who are persistently absent and the school has strong links with external agencies to support any pupils who have specific challenges.

## Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Over time, pupils' achievement in mathematics and writing has been consistently lower than in reading. In 2015, the achievement of pupils in mathematics at the end of Year 6 was well below the national average and broadly in line for reading and writing. Whilst many pupils reached the expected level in reading and writing, too few reached the higher levels in writing or mathematics. This is because expectations are not high enough for what the most able pupils can achieve.
- Analysis of current school assessment information shows that more pupils are now on track to reach the expected stages for development in mathematics, and the number on track to reach the higher standards is increasing.
- In key stage 2, pupils make good progress in reading. In 2015, every pupil in Year 6 made expected progress and many made better than expected progress.

- Pupils in Year 2 in 2015 made expected progress from their different starting points in reading and writing, so that most achieved the expected level, but achievement in mathematics was lower.
- Analysis of school assessment information for current year groups shows that this situation is improving so that more pupils are working at the expected level and the proportion working at the higher level is increasing. There is, however, considerable variation among year groups. Some groups of pupils who have fallen behind in their learning, or needing to catch up from a low starting point, do not always make the accelerated progress that they require.
- The number of pupils at the school supported by the pupil premium is too small for any comparison with national standards. However, the school's information shows clearly that there is no gap between the achievement of these pupils and that of others in the school for reading, writing or mathematics.
- The number of pupils at the school in Year 1 who take the national phonics screening test is too low to compare the results with national figures.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability make good progress. Detailed plans, rigorous tracking and effective interventions mean that many make better than expected progress.

### Early years provision

### requires improvement

- Children generally enter Reception Year with stages of development of learning that are typical for their age. Most children make good progress so that many move on to Year 1 with a good level of development. However, not all children who enter the school with typical levels for their age go on to reach this level and not enough make better than typical progress during the year.
- The new early years leader, who has been in post for one term, has reviewed the provision quickly and identified the need to develop the early years foundation stage in a number of areas. This includes: improving the outdoor area so that there are increased opportunities for children to take part in purposeful activities that promote children's progress in all areas of learning; strengthening the teaching of phonics; and improving the part that parents play in the learning journey of their children throughout the year.
- Children settle in quickly to school life and learn school routines well. They develop excellent personal skills. Children in the Reception class were observed to be polite, kind and considerate to one another. They take turns and share equipment. They are polite to adults and show good levels of concentration when they are listening to a story read by the class teacher.
- Detailed records are kept of the children's learning that is taking place throughout the year. They contain accurate assessments about how well the children are doing.
- There are too few children who are disadvantaged to make comparisons with the national average, but over time, inspection evidence shows that they make good progress in Reception class.
- The teaching assistant plays an active and positive role in the learning of children, skilfully joining in with children who select activities independently and supporting them to make good use of their learning time in the classroom. The outdoor environment, however, is not sufficiently developed to support this good learning during activities outside the classroom.
- Parents are positive about the start their children get in the Reception class. Discussions with the inspector, evidence from Parent View, and analysis of the school's annual parental questionnaire show that a large majority of parents are pleased with the learning taking place.
- The early years leader ensures that all the welfare arrangements for the early years are met and that children feel safe, valued and cared for.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115067
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10011220

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	48
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jan Hoogewerf
<b>Interim headteacher</b>	Rosalind Welch
<b>Telephone number</b>	01787 372383
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bulmerschool.co.uk">www.bulmerschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@bulmer-st-andrews.essex.sch.uk">admin@bulmer-st-andrews.essex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 May 2014

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there has been considerable change in the teaching and non-teaching staff. An interim headteacher has been in place for four weeks. The school has recently increased from having two to three classes.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized school.
- The school is split into three classes.
- Reception Year children share their class with pupils from Years 1 and 2.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is too small to compare with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is well above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes with the interim headteacher, heard pupils read and looked at pupils' work in their books and on display.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, a group of governors and a representative from the local authority.
- A range of documents was 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.
- The inspector talked informally with a range of parents as they collected their children from school.
- Safeguarding arrangements were scrutinised.
- Inspectors took account of comments made to the online Parent View survey and responses to the school's own survey of parents.

## Inspection team

Duncan Ramsey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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