

Francis Baily Primary School

Skillman Drive, Thatcham, Berkshire RG19 4GG

Inspection dates	9–10 June 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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leadership is strong. Senior leaders are ambitious and have secured necessary improvements since the last inspection.
- Middle leaders are confident and have a good impact on the teaching and learning in the school.
- Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are dedicated, and challenge school leaders appropriately to ensure continued improvement.
- The quality of teaching has improved due to a coaching model introduced by leaders. It is now good. Teachers' questioning is strong, enabling pupils to reflect and reason.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and welcoming. They are eager to explain their learning and share their ideas. They show great respect for each other and for adults.
- Procedures for keeping pupils safe are well embedded in the school. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they represent) is strong. As a result, pupils' reading skills are well developed.
- Children in the early years foundation stage make good progress from their starting points. This is due to a very positive learning environment that engages them, encourages them to learn and develops independence.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school because they are interested in their work. Consequently, attendance is high.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Writing across the curriculum is not consistently strong. Boys do not write as well as girls. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write outside literacy lessons.
- The curriculum is not yet embedded throughout the school and there is a lack of consistency in the approach to coverage. Not all objectives are covered or closely linked to pupils' outcomes.
- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Few teachers ensure that the presentation of pupils' work is of a high enough standard.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in writing by ensuring that:
 - attainment in writing is in line with that in reading and mathematics
 - all groups of pupils have a wide range of opportunities for writing across the curriculum
 - boys make accelerated progress, so that their achievement is in line with that of girls.

- Develop a more cohesive and well-structured curriculum by ensuring that:
 - progression is clearly evident
 - all national curriculum objectives are covered
 - middle leaders collaborate and share ideas.

- Develop more outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
 - all staff comply with leaders' agreed principles for high-quality teaching and learning
 - pupils improve the presentation of their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders and governors have a clear sense of purpose and direction, focused on school improvement. As a result, all areas for development at the previous inspection have been addressed. Leaders have drive and enthusiasm and they have made significant improvements. Their self-evaluation is accurate and they are clear about what the school needs to do to continue to improve. There is now more careful tracking of pupils' progress in place for all groups of pupils, resulting in higher outcomes.
- Middle leaders are confident and proactive. They have received useful and effective training to take on their roles. Middle leaders have a good understanding of their areas of responsibility and as a result, standards are improving throughout the school. However, there is some inconsistency of approach to the curriculum due to a lack of collaboration between members of this group.
- The school has developed a model of coaching which has been shared as good practice across the local authority. This approach has had a significant impact upon the quality of teaching, which is now good overall. Where teaching is less strong, it is improving rapidly.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is well led. The special educational needs coordinator has a good knowledge of these pupils and their needs. She has, together with the lead for inclusion, used findings from monitoring to improve provision and teaching, and consequently, pupils' outcomes.
- The curriculum is creative and provides pupils with a purpose for learning within a meaningful context. Topics are chosen which engage all pupils, with many having a particular interest for boys such as 'superheroes' and 'Captain America'. As a result, boys are better supported to develop their writing skills. The curriculum is enriched by a number of trips to places of interest, including Stonehenge and a Sea Life Centre, enabling pupils to become 'active researchers'. The approach is cross-curricular, although this is not consistently embedded across the school. The curriculum is based on the objectives of the national curriculum, but not all of them are covered or linked to pupils' outcomes.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is taught through the curriculum. Teachers skilfully dovetail spiritual and social development through their questioning and reflective approach to the curriculum. Pupils appreciate having the opportunity to reflect upon their actions as it 'gives you a chance to have a deeper understanding of why you did something'. Singing makes a good contribution to children's social, cultural and spiritual development and this was clearly seen in an assembly where pupils displayed a very positive attitude. They listened carefully to each other during an African call and response song. Pupils speak sensitively about the importance of valuing other people's ways of life and respecting their feelings. As one pupil said, 'Religion guides people and gives them rules to respect each other'.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of British values. They create their own class rules, consider the consequences of their behaviour, and learn about the monarchy. During the inspection, the school celebrated the Queen's official birthday, listening to speeches about the Queen and music played at her coronation.
- Pupil premium funding is used appropriately to support disadvantaged children to make accelerated progress. There is a wide range of interventions that are well monitored, and good systems are in place to track progress.
- The additional funding for primary sports and physical education is used effectively to increase participation. Pupils have an increasingly wide range of sports to choose from, including football, cricket and tag rugby. These are well attended.
- The school is held in high regard by parents and carers. They appreciate that links with the wider community have been forged through sporting and musical events.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity and diversity and this has resulted in a calm environment where all are respected.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school. Staff and governors have attended many courses run by the authority to support improvement.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The strong governing body is committed and positive. Governors are supportive of the changes being

made by leadership and the drive for improvement. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, for example the focus on improving boys' writing, through questioning the detailed reports of the headteacher.

- Governors take their roles seriously by undertaking appropriate monitoring, and challenging leaders' work. They visit the school frequently to look at pupils' work and observe teaching and learning. Through this and attendance at training, they are able to challenge and support the school effectively.
- Governors have a good understanding of the sports and physical education funding and can explain the impact of spending. They have a deep knowledge and understanding of how pupil premium funding is used, and monitor the impact of interventions closely.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. A number of strategies are in place to support families, who are well known by leaders. All teachers and governors are trained in safeguarding procedures and have undertaken training in the risks of radicalisation and the 'Prevent' duty. All records of contact with parents and external agencies are well documented. Effective systems and good relationships promote a safe culture in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers provide pupils with useful advice which helps pupils improve their work.
- Phonics teaching is a strength of the school. Pupils engage in a variety of activities to support their learning and practise their skills. They use a range of strategies to help them read with confidence.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this to develop pupils' understanding, for example of the different types of conjunction.
- Adults use questions effectively to help pupils develop their thinking and express their ideas. For example, in a geography lesson, strong questioning by the teacher encouraged pupils to think more deeply and reflect about reasons for changes between a number of maps from different decades. Teachers use pupils' responses to address any misconceptions they have and take time to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- In the best lessons, work is well matched to pupils' abilities and the most able pupils are challenged to develop their skills and knowledge. Teachers use a wide range of appropriate resources in these lessons and pupils are engaged and excited by their work. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes and make strong progress.
- In less successful lessons, the noise level is sometimes too high, resulting in an environment that is not conducive to learning. Pupils do not focus on their work and their progress slows. In these lessons, pupils are not always given work that interests them or challenges them sufficiently. However, leaders have plans to introduce a set of agreed principles known as 'non-negotiables' to ensure consistency of teaching and learning across the school.
- Less-able pupils are supported well, usually by a teaching assistant. Work is provided at an appropriate level to ensure that they are able to achieve and make progress. This was evident in a Year 1 class where a young pupil stated excitedly, 'I was stuck but now I'm flying!'
- In mathematics lessons, pupils are encouraged to reason and do so with a high degree of thoughtfulness. For example, in a Year 5 lesson on translating shapes, a group of pupils was asked to predict where shapes would be when translated and give reasons for their answers.
- In the teaching of literacy, good use is made of a number of strategies to encourage pupils to write and to enable teachers to assess children's needs. Most work is undertaken in a context that engages pupils such as 'superheroes'. In one class, pupils were responding to a 'letter from the Queen' sent on her official birthday to the class. A group of pupils decided upon the success criteria and explained them to the class and the teacher skilfully. However, writing is not as well developed in other subjects and achievement in writing is not as strong as in reading.
- Presentation in books lacks consistency. In many cases, pupils' work is neat and tidy. In some cases, pupils do not appear to take pride in their work and this is often not addressed by the teacher.

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 are polite, friendly and respectful and they show care for each other. In a Reception class, for example, a young child offered her distinctive whiteboard to her neighbour so that he could feel special.
- Pupils participate in a number of fund-raising events for charities such as BBC Children in Need, Oxfam and Macmillan Cancer Research. Consequently, pupils are aware of and show respect for those less fortunate than themselves.
- A range of support is available for pupils with emotional needs. For example, a number of pupils enjoy attending 'lunchwheel', where structured activities take place, enabling pupils to enjoy their breaktime.
- A number of support programmes are in place to support pupils' social and emotional development. Three emotional literacy support assistants and an emotional health academy worker have been employed to support pupils with issues such as low self-esteem. This has improved pupils' confidence.
- Pupils enjoy being given responsibilities. For example, Year 6 pupils are proud to read to Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, help in the library and run clubs for younger pupils. Pupils use playground equipment sensibly and look after it well. This is because they are encouraged to buy a token, which they can swap for a piece of equipment at breaktime. This instils a sense of responsibility and contributes well to social development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is confirmed by both parents and pupils, who have no concerns, stating that behaviour has improved considerably in the last two years and instances of bullying are rare. Pupils and parents are aware of the behaviour code which they say is 'simpler and easy to understand'. The impact of this new policy is shown in the great reduction of incidents at the school. Many of these are very minor. Pupils are clear that teachers and other adults deal with any poor behaviour, including the use of derogatory language, quickly and effectively.
- Attendance is above average, showing that pupils are keen to come to school and value their education.
- Parents state that their children are safe at school and receive the 'best care', especially those with special educational needs. Pupils know how to keep safe and that there is someone to talk to if they have a concern.
- When teaching is less strong and expectations of behaviour are not high, pupils sometimes lack engagement and this results in some low-level disruption.
- Pupils play well together during unsupervised times. They show a high degree of support for each other. For example, when one child was upset and alone, another pupil invited them to join in a game with them.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' outcomes have improved steadily over the last two years due to improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. Current assessment information and work in lessons and in pupils' books show that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Achievement in key stage 1 has improved and is now in line with expectations. There has been a significant improvement in the number of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 and this is now above the national figure.
- The proportion of children that achieved a good level of development in the early years foundation stage profile is above the national figure.
- The school tracks pupils closely and through half-termly meetings. Outcomes in key stages 1 and 2 in 2016 are expected to be similar to or above those in 2015. Tracking across all year groups shows that pupils who have been falling behind have been helped to catch up.

- Disadvantaged pupils make the same or better progress as their peers in reading and mathematics. Additional funding is used effectively to provide specific, targeted help and to enable pupils to participate fully in school life.
- The most able make good progress and more pupils are exceeding the levels expected for their ages in reading, writing and mathematics than at the previous inspection. This is because pupils are set appropriately challenging work.
- Boys' writing is not as strong as that of girls. The school has put measures in to address this and writing is well promoted across the school through a number of displays celebrating work. However, writing is not so well developed in other subjects.

Early years provision

is good

- Leadership of the early years is strong. Leaders talk passionately and enthusiastically about provision and are clear about what they still want to improve. They have taken positive actions to address the school's priority around boys' writing and there has been a recent drive to improve the outdoor learning environment.
- The outdoor area is now inspiring. There is a wide range of activities for children to engage in and a group of girls showed particular skills in using hockey sticks to manoeuvre balls. Another child was engaged in making mud cakes using a small area of mud caused by a recent rainfall. She was totally focused and was able to talk with confidence about what she was doing.
- Mathematics, literacy and phonics teaching is strong, as teachers have high expectations and are good role models for children. Teachers ensure that children clearly understand the language being used. However, children are not always encouraged to widen their vocabulary and use more adventurous word choices when speaking and writing. Resources and activities are well organised and matched to needs. As a result, all children make good progress.
- Inclusion of all children is evidently a high priority and leaders are aware of the diverse range of standards on entry. Provision is tailored to meet individual needs. For example, in a mathematics session on estimation of length, one child was given one-to-one support to improve her understanding of mathematical language, while higher achievers were estimating length using a range of measuring equipment. As a result, all children were able to achieve at an appropriate level.
- Parents receive daily information about their children's progress due to the recent introduction of a new comprehensive online package. This enables practitioners and parents to make observations against specific areas of learning for early years. Parents are able to access the system from home and can contribute to their child's profile. As a result, communication between the school and parents has improved and parents have up-to-date information about their child's progress.
- Behaviour within the early years setting is exemplary. Clear routines have been established and children respond quickly and quietly to instructions. They are courteous and very independent.
- Children enter the school from a wide range of settings and the school invests significant time and energy to ensure transition is smooth for all children. A number of visits are made to homes and families and this ensures that home-school partnerships are strong.

School details

Unique reference number	109831
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10012227

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	540
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Asa Parker
Headteacher	Chris Davis
Telephone number	01635 862 188
Website	www.francisbaily.co.uk
Email address	office.fbaily@fb.w-berks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 January 2014

Information about this school

- Francis Baily Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is low.
- The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs or disability is lower than the national average.
- The majority of children are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is low. Few pupils are from any single minority ethnic group.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons or parts of lessons. The majority of these were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, and examined work in books.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, middle leaders, senior leaders, a representative from the local authority, governors, parents and pupils.
- The inspectors examined school policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, pupils' work, the school website and the school's self-evaluation and development planning. They also viewed documents relating to safeguarding and records of behaviour and attendance. The minutes of governing body meetings were examined.
- The views of 95 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account, and some parents were spoken to in the playground at the start of the school day.
- The views of 27 members of staff were gathered from the staff questionnaire.
- The views of 58 pupils were gathered from the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Barbara Chevis, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Cox	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Gadd	Ofsted Inspector

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