

Bearwood Primary School

Bearwood Road, Sindlesham, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 5BB

Inspection dates

22–23 September 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Year 6 pupils in the past did not make the progress expected of them and too many did not reach the expected standards in mathematics by the time they left the school.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. For example, in mathematics, some pupils do not benefit from problem-solving opportunities frequently enough to develop their ability to reason.
- The most able pupils are not challenged well enough. Sometimes they do not get on with their work quickly enough and they wait for teachers to help other pupils.
- Leaders of mathematics do not evaluate the impact of their training effectively and do not check that teaching is improving.
- Leaders' plans do not always help them to check pupils' progress across the school or identify what actions they need to take.
- Governors have not implemented the recommendations of their external review quickly enough to be able to make a full contribution to the leadership of the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is a harmonious community. Pupils behave well and care for each other. Pupils like school and the vast majority say that they feel safe and happy.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes thrive. More children attain well at the end of the Reception class than the level seen nationally. Standards are higher than in the past. Most children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Year 1 pupils attain well in the phonics check. Pupils benefit from their teachers' good subject knowledge so that they build their fluency in reading quickly.
- Teaching is improving throughout the school in English. Teachers guide pupils well when helping them to write and they provide regular feedback, which pupils appreciate.
- Leaders spend funding wisely to ensure that disadvantaged pupils' attainment is improving at the end of key stage 1. At key stage 2 more disadvantaged pupils are catching up with their classmates than in the past.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, particularly in mathematics, so that all pupils, including the most able pupils, can make consistently good progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers use their assessments precisely so that they can support pupils of all abilities to master skills quickly.
- Improve leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - taking urgent action to implement all the recommendations from the external review of governance and ensuring compliance on the school's website
 - refining school improvement planning at all levels to focus on pupils' outcomes from different starting points, so that all staff and governors are clear of what needs to be achieved
 - ensuring that all middle leaders across the curriculum guide teaching incisively and evaluate the impact of their actions so that they can identify how pupils are benefiting and help them improve further.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have improved morale and created a positive culture for staff which is much appreciated, including by those new to their careers who benefit from appropriate support. However, despite this determination, leaders' actions have not brought about the rise in standards by the end of key stage 2 that they expected. In particular, past pupils' progress has been too variable.
- Leaders' efforts to establish good teaching throughout the school have been hampered by staff changes. Teachers have improved the frequency and quality of their guidance, which means that most pupils are clear about how to improve their writing. However, this is not as effective in mathematics, where teachers' subject knowledge in some classes is weak. As a result teachers do not guide pupils well enough from their starting points. The honest and accurate reflection of the headteacher recognises this.
- Plans to improve the school are not focused enough on securing improvements in pupils' progress from their starting points. Not everyone knows what is expected of them. Therefore, it is difficult for middle leaders to take action to plan and monitor in their subjects, and for governors to check whether the plans are on track to raise standards further.
- There is a system in place to hold teachers to account and promote improvements in their teaching. Teachers are set targets to raise attainment. This has led to higher expectations and to some pupils attaining better than in the past. However, leaders do not always give precise enough guidance when they check in on lessons, or review pupils' work, to help them to improve progress. As a result, too few pupils have made good enough progress across the school in the past.
- There has been some instability in middle leadership. As a result, leadership of mathematics is not yet strong enough. New subject leaders do not yet check on their work rigorously. They do not ensure that pupils are benefiting from the training that leaders provide, such as an understanding of mastery in mathematics for the most able pupils.
- The curriculum is wide ranging and interesting for pupils. Extra-curricular activities broaden pupils' learning. Clubs such as chess, cheer leading, hip hop and sewing ensure that pupils can follow their interests and try their hand at new talents. Attendance at early morning clubs demonstrates pupils' positive attitudes; they want to participate and to get the most out of what the school has to offer.
- Not all subject leaders have taken effective action to improve standards across the wider curriculum. For example, while pupils benefit from motivating experiences in science such as themed competition days, animal roadshows and visits to The Living Rainforest nearby, they do not yet have enough opportunities to apply the skills taught in English and mathematics to science. Pupils do not develop scientific vocabulary and reasoning skills to the same standards as they are demonstrating in English. Work is sometimes too easy.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding effectively, in particular to bring about improvements in English which has led to improving outcomes in reading for the youngest pupils in the school. Leaders have identified that funding now needs to be directed to support more pupils to achieve well in mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils'

attainment is improving across the school, in particular at key stage 1. Older disadvantaged pupils in the school are also catching up with their classmates because they make faster progress, as a result of extra help.

- Leaders use sports funding well so that pupils benefit from a variety of competitions and sporting opportunities in school. Some attend local stadiums and national fixtures such as Wimbledon, which inspires them. As a result, pupils' attendance at clubs has increased and pupils report how much they appreciate taking part in new sports. Olympic athletes visit and motivate pupils. Sporting fixtures such as the 'memorial Ted Cooke football game' sensitively encourage respect and spiritual reflection in an act of remembrance for a long-serving governor.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is supported well through the curriculum. For example, some pupils appreciated musical opportunities to commemorate the 2016 Rio Olympics and others participated in the Young Voices anniversary performance at the O2 venue.
- The school manages inclusion well and outcomes for those pupils currently in the school who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are improving. Teachers use sharply targeted advice on how to support these children. Effectively deployed adults make a significant contribution to learning by guiding pupils well and checking what these pupils can do in class, alongside the teacher.
- Leaders have taken appropriate actions to raise the attainment of pupils, in particular in the early years and at key stage 1. This has helped the school build its capacity to achieve sustainable improvements. Parents of the youngest children appreciate this.
- Most parents who contributed to the online Parent View questionnaire are confident that their child is happy, safe and well looked after. Some parents report that they are unaware of how well their child is progressing or how well they are challenged.
- The support received from the local authority in the past has not used pupils' progress information across the school incisively enough to focus leaders' and governors' attention on strategic planning.

Governance of the school

- Governors are committed to improving their effectiveness but were slow to commission an external review after the previous inspection and were further hampered by changes of membership. As a result they have not yet implemented all the recommendations made to them. They are recruiting new members based on a clear evaluation of skills and needs, for example in health and safety, and safeguarding. Governors readily take up opportunities to improve skills so that they manage finances well.
- Following a recent reorganisation of the governing body, governors are now frequently analysing information about pupils' achievements. They are clear about how the school is improving but do not yet effectively use information about the progress that different groups of pupils are making. As a result they miss opportunities, and do not have a systematic schedule to help leaders to evaluate the impact of their actions and take notice of emerging concerns. Governors appreciate the openness of leaders, who welcome their contributions.
- Governors ensure that the performance management of staff and pay progression are handled correctly and keep an oversight on the impact of specific funding. This has improved outcomes in sport and for the disadvantaged pupils in the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a culture of vigilance among all staff to help keep pupils safe. Staff regularly discuss scenarios in training to 'think the unthinkable' and prepare them to report and deal with the wider risks emerging in Britain. Pupils who are in the care of the local authority are supported well in the school, and leaders secure good support for those pupils on wider agency protection plans.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Over time, some pupils have not benefited enough from good teaching across all classes and wider subjects within the curriculum. Teaching is most effective in the school when pupils' varying abilities are well met. When this does not happen, some pupils are set work which is too easy or too difficult. In other examples, they do not recognise what they can already do and do not get to grapple with the trickier, new skills as quickly as they could.
- Where teaching is most effective staff assess pupils' work well, so that even when these pupils are taught within the same ability group their tasks are adapted precisely to their needs. Not all younger pupils benefit from this good use of assessment.
- Teachers have raised some of their expectations of what pupils can achieve since the last inspection. For example, pupils take pride in their writing and present it well. Expectations are still not high enough for all pupils, for example in mathematics where not all pupils are set problem-solving tasks so that they can reason, as frequently as others.
- When teachers have a good understanding of the subjects that they teach, they use this well to support pupils to make good progress, in particular in English. They set high standards for the oldest pupils. An example of this is in the promotion of vocabulary such as 'mellifluous and melodious' when describing a fantasy world with pupils. This is not as evident in the teaching of mathematics with younger pupils.
- Teachers meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well. Adults use their assessments carefully, targeting what pupils cannot do so that they can work alongside pupils, providing opportunities for them to rehearse skills and build their confidence quickly.
- Teachers guide pupils well to help them improve their writing. Pupils value this because they know what they are aiming for. Most teachers give pupils clear instructions and explanations so that they know how and what to do. Sometimes this instruction is unnecessary for the most able pupils who do not need to benefit from this extra guidance.
- Teaching in reading, including phonics in Reception and key stage 1, is effective. Effective training has helped teachers to improve. More pupils are attaining well in comparison to national standards.
- Pupils enjoy reading and have frequent opportunities to practise using their sounds to break up words and build fluency at home. Older children learn how to choose books wisely, for example by reading the 'blurb'. They read widely and develop opinions about a range of authors. All pupils appreciate motivating events, such as the school's

recent celebration of the stories of Roald Dahl, to debate their views and express opinions. Children just joining the school dressed up proudly so that they could play their part too.

- The school sets appropriate homework for pupils. Parents like this, but a few are concerned about the need for additional clubs where pupils are offered help to catch up in Year 6. Leaders consider this a necessary option because teaching in the past has not ensured that all pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident to share their views readily. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about the school council elections taking place during the inspection. They appreciate being listened to, and surveyed their classmates' views in assembly.
- Teachers guide pupils well and pupils sensitively help each other to improve their work. This is beginning to build pupils' confidence to grapple with things that are more difficult to learn. Leaders are committed to this 'can do' culture so that pupils learn resilience, but it is not yet consistent across subjects or classes.
- Staff encourage pupils to negotiate. Pupils report that any problems are usually solved quickly with little help needed from adults, who watch over them sensitively and intervene if needed.
- Pupils feel safe at school. Parents agree. Younger pupils speak confidently about how to keep themselves safe when crossing the road to school and visiting Windsor. They recognise the danger that unfamiliar adults may present and older pupils apply the guidance that they receive confidently when sharing information on the internet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Around the school and in class, pupils consistently conduct themselves well. The school is a harmonious community where everyone is respected and made to feel welcome. As one parent commented, 'It lives up to its ethos of being one big, family school'. Pupils are polite and take care of each other and visitors to the school.
- Playgrounds are a haven of fun and the buzz of activity is tangible. Pupils select from a wide range of equipment to practise sports skills and burn off energy. They value these opportunities to keep fit and healthy. Younger pupils have opportunities to build from large construction blocks or spin story wheels to inspire their imagination so that they can act out stories together.
- There are few recorded incidents of bullying. Pupils trust staff to deal quickly with any unpleasant behaviour, should it occur. Exclusions are rare and when they do occur the school swiftly puts into place good welfare arrangements to support families.
- Most pupils attend school regularly. Rates of persistent absence are decreasing. Senior leaders work closely with families who need more support and quickly seek advice from other services. They challenge those parents whose children's attendance is persistently too low.

Outcomes for pupils

Require improvement

- Year 6 pupils did not attain well enough in their national tests in 2014 and 2015 in mathematics and writing, compared with pupils nationally. Overall not enough pupils made good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they left the school.
- In 2016 the school's provisional performance information indicates that the proportions of pupils who achieved the standards expected for their age in the overall combined subjects of reading, writing and mathematics was broadly similar to that seen nationally. This is a clear indication that the school is improving in some areas.
- Pupils attaining the expected standards did not do as well in the tests in mathematics as they did in other subjects within the school or compared with pupils nationally. This picture is the same for those pupils capable of attaining the highest standard.
- The school's current assessments, checking of pupils' work in books and observations of teaching confirm that the pupils who are now in Years 5 and 6 are beginning to attain better in mathematics, applying their developing skills in reasoning to problem solving. Pupils' progress across the school is accelerating; however, not all pupils benefit from good teaching which uses assessment well.
- In 2016 the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard in grammar, spelling and punctuation tests and in writing assessments were broadly similar to other pupils nationally. More pupils attained the highest standard in grammar, spelling and punctuation tests than in writing. Pupils receive good guidance in writing and benefit from the improved subject knowledge of their teachers. More pupils in the school are supported well to catch up to achieve the highest standards than in the past.
- In the past the proportions of Year 6 pupils who have attained the standards expected of them in reading have been in line with the national average. In 2016 this picture remains the same. This is also the case in the proportions of the most able pupils who attained the highest standards.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception has risen over the past three years. It has risen consistently since the time of the last inspection and is above that seen nationally. This is ensuring that more pupils are better prepared for Year 1 so that they can attain well as they move through the school.
- For the past two years, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has risen to above the national average. Leaders' investment in training has improved teachers' subject knowledge and as a result more pupils are benefiting from good teaching.
- In key stage 1, pupils fared well in the national assessments in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015, which was an improvement on 2014 when their attainment was significantly below others nationally. In 2016 pupils have sustained this improved picture against the expected standards required since the introduction of a new curriculum.
- The progress and outcomes for pupils entitled to the support of pupil premium funding are improving but remain variable. Pupils catch up more quickly to expected standards at key stage 1 than at key stage 2. Current assessments show that the proportions of older pupils making good progress across the school are increasing so that more are keeping up with their classmates than in the past.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well to make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. They are helped by adults who guide them sensitively and check regularly on how well they are doing.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the Nursery with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. They make good progress to catch up by the time they join the Reception classes. Adults support them sensitively to develop language by introducing new words while playing together and exploring varied and interesting experiences which stimulate curiosity. As they sing together adults emphasise rhythm and rhyme so that children learn to listen carefully to sounds.
- About a third of children join the school at the beginning of the Reception class from settings other than the school's Nursery.
- Most children enter with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. Some children are achieving beyond this. An inspector watched two boys moving numbers to 20 along a practical washing line outside. They confidently counted beyond 20 and introduced their own level of challenge by combining digits to make 23 and 56. They could identify the numbers which came before and after when asked, but did not yet have an understanding of concepts such as more or less.
- Children make good progress in the Reception classes to meet at least expected standards, with more children exceeding these in recent years across all areas of learning. Most children are well prepared for Year 1. Leaders analyse assessment information well and identify areas where provision could be strengthened to inform their action plans, such as to support knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Children enjoy their learning. They play together confidently, show concern for each other, take turns and share the rich resources on offer. They make choices about what to do and have freedom to collect, move, combine or change equipment as their play develops. They keep themselves safe by considering possible risks. They readily join in and respond eagerly to new ideas, such as when an inspector triggered their imaginative play by calling out 'Trip, trap, trip' as she crossed their decked walkway. Two girls instantly recalled the scenario from Billy Goats Gruff and giggled, looking for the troll beneath it. They warned each other to be quiet, taking off their shoes before hunting, absorbed in their adventure.
- Adults question most children well in order to encourage them to think more deeply. They explain things carefully and promote clear speech so that children can hear and build up sounds to read and write quickly. Children make marks to explore letter shapes in paint, mud and sand and some are quickly learning to read and write simple words.
- Adults play sensitively alongside children, modelling language and effectively assessing what most children can do to inform their plans. They are not yet using this information swiftly enough to challenge the most able children consistently.
- Parents value the excellent opportunities they have to work in partnership with the school, to build trust and express their views. As a result their children settle quickly. During the inspection, children literally squealed with joy as their families arrived to

explore their new classrooms. Children proudly shared what they had been learning. Activities helped guide parents to know what was expected of their children. Warm relationships are an overwhelmingly positive experience in the early years.

- Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning using exciting news sheets for children to share memorable days, such as holidays and birthdays in class or noticing seasonal changes.
- Outdoor resources are out of reach of the children at some times of the day. Leaders are aware of the restrictions this places on children's opportunities to follow their interests and are taking action to overcome this.
- Leaders recognise that more needs to be done to ensure that the most able children achieve consistently well across the whole curriculum. They use their assessments incisively to inform training for staff. As a result staff act on weaknesses and are increasing opportunities for pupils to raise questions and explore early scientific concepts earlier in the year. This better prepares the most able children to achieve well.
- Leaders do not yet ensure that teachers in Year 1 are fully prepared to meet the needs of all children who did not achieve the expected standard at the end of Reception. Some children are not supported well enough to build on what they can already do in writing.

School details

Unique reference number	109836
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10019860

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	279
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Butroid
Headteacher	Jane Barlow
Telephone number	01189 784 628
Website	www.bearwood-pri.wokingham.sch.uk
Email address	admin@bearwood-pri.wokingham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2-3 December 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about governors' attendance records at meetings, the declaration of their pecuniary interests or memberships of their committees.
- The school is above average in size.
- The proportions of pupils from a wide range of minority backgrounds is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is below average. This is additional funding provided by the government to support those pupils who, in this school, are entitled to free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities is broadly average.
- There is provision for children in the Nursery on a part-time basis. Half of them attend in the morning and the rest in the afternoon. During the inspection the numbers attending were low. Children in the two Reception classes attend full-time.

- The school provides a drop-off and pick-up service before and after school for their pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils working in 19 lessons, eight of which were observed jointly with school leaders. They looked at work in pupils' books, including across wider subjects beyond English and mathematics, and listened to the less able and most able pupils read in Year 3 and Year 6.
- Inspectors observed pupils as they moved around the school and in the playgrounds and spoke informally to pupils. They attended an assembly and toured the school with two of the school's oldest pupils to discuss the curriculum. They took into account the views of pupils by considering the 91 responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, teachers and one group of pupils. They met with the chair and spoke with a parent governor by telephone. A short telephone discussion took place between the lead inspector and a representative from the local authority.
- Among the documents scrutinised were school development plans, records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety, and minutes from governors' meetings. Inspectors also looked at information showing pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The views of parents were taken into account by analysing the 57 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke informally with parents from the Nursery and Reception classes during the inspection. The views of staff were taken into account by considering the 47 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Susan Aspland, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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