

Birdham CofE Primary School

Crooked Lane, Birdham, Chichester, West Sussex PO20 7HB

Inspection dates

1–2 November 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	Require improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' evaluations of the school's overall effectiveness are too generous and not accurate.
- Leaders' plans to improve the school are not clear enough about what success will look like for groups of pupils. Leaders do not have sufficient focus on those working at age-related expectations or the most able pupils.
- Leaders' management of staff performance is not sharply focused on the progress that groups of pupils need to make from their starting points, including the most able pupils.
- Standards in mathematics at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 have declined over time. Current key stage 2 pupils make less progress in mathematics than in reading or writing from their starting points.
- Teaching is inconsistent and does not always take account of pupils' starting points, particularly for the most able pupils. Consequently, outcomes for pupils are inconsistent and require improvement.
- Leaders' reports to governors are not always effective. Governors do ask the right questions, even when they are given little or no information that will help them hold leaders to account for pupils' outcomes.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in classrooms is good. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and respectful. Pupils work well together in class.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Pupils develop a strong sense of the world around them and their place in it.
- Leaders actively promote pupils' personal development and welfare. Leaders use the outside environment, curriculum and extra-curricular activity to enrich and enhance pupils' understanding of health and well-being.
- Children get a good start in the early years. Effective teaching is based on accurate assessment information. Children make good progress and are ready for key stage 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and secure at least good outcomes by:
 - ensuring that planned learning takes account of pupils' starting points, particularly in the case of the most able pupils
 - improving the effectiveness of strategies designed to accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics, particularly in key stage 2
 - raising standards in mathematics across the school, particularly in key stage 2.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership in bringing about sustained school improvement by:
 - developing strategic plans that are clear about what success will look like in different subjects and year groups, including for the most able
 - ensuring that the management of staff performance is tightly linked to effective strategic plans to raise standards, including in the progress that groups of pupils need to make in different subjects
 - reporting effectively to governors about the progress of groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the most able and those who are receiving interventions to catch up.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders' evaluations of pupils' outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment and their own effectiveness lack rigour and are too generous. Leaders have not been robust in analysing published performance information in 2015 or 2016 relating to pupils' progress from starting points and pupils' progress compared to national figures.
- Leaders' plans to secure improvement are not clear in their focus. General targets for the proportion of pupils working at age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics combined do not take into account the significant differences that leaders are aware of in some subjects and some year groups.
- Leaders' plans for the school lack ambition, particularly for the most able pupils. Leaders' plans do not have targets, quantifiable progress measures or a focus on increasing the proportion of the most able pupils working at greater depth.
- The management of staff performance lacks detail and rigour. Current and past performance targets for teachers do not take into account pupils' starting points in different subjects. Leaders do not focus on the progress that those already working at expected standards, and the most able pupils, could achieve.
- The information that governors receive from leaders regarding pupils' progress and outcomes is not effective. For example, leaders used phrases such as 'more encouraging on the whole' to evaluate 2016 key stage 1 outcomes, despite the clear difference in mathematics standards compared to other subjects and national figures. Governors do know that interventions to help pupils reach expected standards are in place. However, leaders' analysis and reporting to governors regarding the impact of interventions is not always effective.
- The school uses additional funding effectively. The school has a very small number of pupils supported by the pupil premium. Leaders detail how the additional funding is to be allocated and what success will look like for individual pupils. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Additional sports funding has been used effectively to promote physical activity and increase participation in competitive sport.
- Leaders provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Information about the curriculum is provided to parents through the school's website and use of social media. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities that enhance pupils' personal development and welfare, such as the club that focuses on ecology and the environment.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Poignant displays of the school's heritage, such as one on ex-pupils who fell in war, create meaningful and rich opportunities for reflection.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils play an active role in the running of the school and talk with confidence about the improvements their 'voice' has brought about through elected pupil leadership roles. Pupils have engaged with elected politicians about recycling concerns, which has provided good insight into democratic processes nationally.

Governance of the school

- Governors are not as effective as they could be because they are not always given insightful information by leaders. Leaders do not provide governors with a regular overview of the progress of groups of pupils. For example, the latest headteacher's report to governors only provides a progress overview for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in Year 2 and Year 6. The most able pupils or those working at greater depth are not an identified group within leaders' reports.
- Governors know that standards in mathematics are low. Governors do ask probing questions of school leaders, for example about the effectiveness of interventions. However, governors will have had to wait almost six months for the committee responsible for exploring this in greater depth to report their findings.
- Leaders have taken local authority advice and now provide governors with attainment information for every year group. Governors have not had the opportunity to work with this information in a way that could enable them to challenge leaders further. Governors have recently allocated additional teaching resources to accelerate mathematics progress. It is too soon to judge the impact of this action.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have clear and understood systems to record any concerns that adults may have about pupils' well-being. Leaders manage the information they have well. Leaders make timely and clear referrals to other agencies when required and work well with local schools. Leaders communicate sensitively with parents verbally and in writing and keep a clear trail of their actions. Staff and governors receive the relevant training to fulfil their statutory requirements and rigorously ensure that all staff have accessed and understood the information they are given.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent.
- Planned learning does not always take account of pupils' starting points. When work is too easy for the most able pupils they finish quickly, or often get all of the work right. Pupils were confident to tell inspectors when work was too easy. Books sampled on inspection showed that some pupils frequently use self-assessment in their books to report that the work has not been challenging.
- Staff do not always recognise confusion by pupils or lack of engagement quickly enough. Time is not always used effectively when instructions and explanations are not clear or expectations are not high enough.
- Leaders' analysis of last year's interventions show considerable variation in the effectiveness of teaching in supporting pupils to catch up. Overall, mathematics interventions were the least effective. For example, in the same year group all pupils were successful in improving their writing, and all but one pupil were successful after extra reading support, but only three out of eight pupils were successful in mathematics.

- The effectiveness of other adults in fostering good learning is variable. The most successful adults support pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, well. Explanations are clear and additional practical resources are used effectively. However, when additional adults are not clear about what is being taught or what is expected, progress is less evident.
- Phonics is taught well. Younger pupils use their phonic skills to break down unfamiliar words into sounds and then put them back together with confidence. Older pupils, including the most able, read with confidence, fluency and expression.
- Leaders have recently introduced an additional tool to support the teaching of mathematics. Work in pupils' books suggests, at this early stage, that pupils' progress is being enhanced with the additional focus on fluency.
- Relationships between pupils and staff create a good climate for learning. Pupils work well together because of their highly effective personal development.
- Work in books is well presented. Adults have clear and high expectations and pupils respond well to them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils develop an enriched understanding of what it means to be healthy. Leaders use the curriculum, themed days and extra-curricular activity to promote healthy and active lifestyles. Pupils learn how to plant, care for and harvest crops before cooking or preparing for consumption.
- Pupils feel safe in school and are provided with a rich range of visitors to promote and enhance their safety and well-being, including the emergency services. Pupils have good knowledge about how to keep safe online and the school environment provides clear and consistent reminders about this.
- Parents and staff are clear that they feel pupils are safe and well looked after in school.
- Pupils take great pride in their work and this is evident in the way they present their work in books. Pupils have high regard for their school environment, including the outside spaces. Older pupils talk about the improvements in the school that they have helped shape with confidence and a sense of achievement.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have improved rates of attendance over the last three years and maintained them. Leaders have amended relevant policies, set targets and taken a clear stance regarding holidays in term time, all of which contribute to good and improving attendance.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves well outside of lessons and show respect for their well-maintained school. On the rare occasions that pupils are off task they respond well to the presence of other adults and quickly self-regulate.
- Lunchtimes are calm. Leaders encourage quiet reflection as part of the dining

experience. On the playground pupils are happy and purposeful. Pupils know who to talk to if there are minor issues with behaviour, and feel that these will be dealt with.

- Pupils can lose their focus in lessons, mainly when work is too easy or too difficult. Pupils do not significantly disrupt the learning of others and are quick to get back on track.
- Parents and staff feel that pupils behave well in school.

Outcomes for pupils

Require improvement

- Leaders reported to governors in the spring that the progress made by key stage 2 pupils in 2015 required improvement. In 2013 and 2015 the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of Year 6 in mathematics was below that seen nationally. Progress from pupils' starting points was also below national averages. In 2015, the proportion of pupils working at the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 declined in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In July 2016, with different accountability measures, standards in mathematics were below those seen nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and progress in mathematics remains weak, compared to national averages and to other subjects in school. The most able pupils did not make good progress in mathematics or reading from their starting points.
- Standards for current pupils in mathematics and writing are low across the school, particularly key stage 2. For example, current Year 5 pupils left Year 4 with almost all pupils working at the expected standard in reading but less than half doing so in mathematics. This does not represent good progress from key stage 1 starting points.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected standard in their phonics screening check has been consistently in line with that seen nationally.
- The proportions of current Year 3 pupils who left key stage 1 working at the expected standards in reading and writing were similar to those seen nationally.
- The school has a small number of disadvantaged pupils. Progress information and work in books suggests that disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to pupils with the same starting points nationally.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership of the early years is good. Leaders have good curriculum and assessment knowledge, which has a positive impact on teaching and outcomes in the early years.
- Staff make accurate assessments on entry. Leaders know which children are working within age-related expectations and those who need additional support to catch up. Parents play an active role in their children's assessments by providing the school with information about what children do at home.
- Outcomes in the early years are good. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year has been broadly similar to national averages for several years. Almost a third of children start school with

language and literacy skills that are below those typically seen. The majority of those children who need to make better progress catch up. Consequently, the majority of children are ready to start Year 1.

- Children make good progress in their writing. Effective phonics teaching means that children have the knowledge they need to become independent writers. Children are confident to apply their developing phonic knowledge in their writing, as they grapple with unfamiliar words effectively.
- Children have strong personal, social and emotional development. Children work very well independently both inside and outside. Children are focused on the task at hand because teachers have provided key ideas or vocabulary for them to use when working without an adult.
- Leaders work well with others to ensure that children settle well into school. Leaders plan effectively with the on-site nursery to ensure that children and families are familiar with school. Additional time and resources are provided to support vulnerable children to settle well.
- Activities do not consistently meet the needs of children with less developed physical and language and communication skills. For example, when sequencing and re-telling a story is the planned focus then children's inability to use scissors to cut and stick the story is a barrier to the planned learning and limits children's progress.

School details

Unique reference number	125972
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10002773

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Owen
Headteacher	Mark McCadden
Telephone number	01243 512 399
Website	www.birdhamprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@birdhamprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 May 2012

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of specified information on its website; in particular, it does not publish required information to parents regarding pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school met the 2015 floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Birdham is a much smaller than average primary school. The school has five mixed-age classes.
- Very few pupils are entitled to the pupil premium. The proportion is almost four times less than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning throughout the school. Inspectors looked at pupils' work during lessons and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and middle leaders. Meetings were held with a local authority representative and with governors.
- Parents' views were considered through the 35 responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View and in conversations with parents at the beginning of the school day. The views of staff were considered through the 10 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and through meetings.
- Pupils' views were heard through meetings and by talking to pupils around the school.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness, improvement plans, records of local authority visits, and leaders' analysis of the quality of teaching, pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records and the central record of recruitment checks on staff.

Inspection team

Mark Cole, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Krista Dawkins	Ofsted Inspector
Rosie Beattie	Ofsted Inspector

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