

St Peter's Church of England Primary School, Burnham

Minnicroft Road, Burnham, Buckinghamshire SL1 7DE

Inspection dates

30 November–1 December 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

- Staff fully support the vision of the headteacher which promotes the achievement of all pupils within a caring community.
- Pupils attain highly across the school. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Governors are knowledgeable and check for improvement regularly. They are committed and help leaders to shape priorities appropriately.
- Pupils learn to read quickly because adults offer helpful guidance, have good subject knowledge and teach phonics effectively. Older pupils benefit from studies of authors which motivate them.
- Progress in writing is accelerating across the school. Pupils write regularly in many subjects and for different purposes.
- Occasionally, teaching does not enable pupils to learn well enough. For some pupils, progress is too slow in mathematics.
- Leaders' evaluation of pupils' progress was not incisive enough to take action quickly enough in the past. However, a new assessment system is better equipping leaders to evaluate pupils' performance more sharply.
- Subject leaders play an increasingly successful role in the school. For example, new leaders have made a promising start to leading improvements in science.
- The curriculum captures pupils' interests and generates tangible enthusiasm for learning. Abundant extra-curricular activities and visitors broaden pupils' experiences.
- Safeguarding is effective. The school builds trusting relationships with families, which promotes pupils' welfare extremely well.
- Adults nurture children in the Nursery classes. Children make good progress by the end of their Reception Year.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They make a good contribution to school life and work hard. Bullying is rare but remains a concern for a small group of parents.
- The pupil premium is spent well. Disadvantaged pupils are achieving higher standards than in the past. However, some of these pupils do not attend school regularly enough to benefit from good teaching.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics and improve pupils' achievement by:
 - evaluating the impact of staff training so that action plans can be swiftly adjusted and further support can be provided
 - strengthening adults' subject knowledge of mathematics to improve pupils' reasoning skills
 - sharing the best practice in the school to guide others.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that leaders make good use of the school's assessment system to identify pupils who are at risk of falling behind, especially in mathematics.
- Continue to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders' high ambition and decisive action have ensured that pupils benefit from teaching which is now good. As one parent commented, 'The school has really turned itself around in a positive way.' The majority of parents would recommend the school to others, reflecting positively upon the journey the school has taken.
- Staff are committed to improving their own skills and knowledge. Leaders support this very well through training and effective management of teachers' performance. Pupils achieve well in phonics and more recently in writing because staff use their good understanding of the subject to support learning very effectively. There are opportunities for both pupils and staff to work across schools to share expertise and build important skills.
- Subject leaders set out priorities confidently, checking regularly on what pupils can do and the impact of staff training. They have a thorough knowledge of how teaching is improving in order to raise standards in the subjects for which they are responsible. The new leaders of science are eager to increase pupils' enquiry skills. They model this in their own practice to help colleagues to develop further.
- The early years leader inspires improvement in others. As a result, there is a strong team spirit. Staff are eager to make swift changes and learn from others when necessary. They check children's assessments so that they can sensitively support children and build on what children already know and can do.
- Pupils learn to respect and value each other in this fully inclusive school. All pupils are cared for well, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result of specialist training, the special educational needs coordinator has a good awareness and understanding of the wide range of special educational needs. Funding is used well.
- The school uses additional physical education and sport funding well. Consequently, the school offers more after-school clubs and access to competitive sport, and as a result, the number of pupils engaged in sport is high. All pupils benefit from a wide menu of activities, including street dance, yoga, martial arts and gym. Pupils enjoy these activities and are eager to share new skills. For example, a team of enthusiastic footballers eagerly discussed tactics, reflecting on the importance of their goalkeeper in helping the team win their next match.
- The curriculum is wide ranging and interesting. For instance, local artists motivate pupils to create a range of sculptures and mosaics, including large-scale stained-glass windows inspired by a visit to the local church. Pupils apply taught skills well because of abundant opportunities to study artists, such as Peter Paul Rubens, and replicate specialised techniques, including producing a series of stained-glass windows.

- Pupils make a good contribution to their school and wider community. Pupils, supported by their parents, raise funds for local and national charities, including for The Samaritans' Christmas boxes. Special events bring the community together both near and far. The school's long-term sponsorship of a pupil in Africa helps foster cultural development and understanding across the school. Fund-raising days and the wider consideration given to Fair Trade projects encourage pupils to consider the lives of others abroad. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils assembled dried fruit and natural objects excitedly to create Christmas decorations to sell at their forthcoming fair. Pupils are rightly proud of their collaborative skills and appreciate how their work is contributing to their community and beyond.
- The school actively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's values, including its faith, lie at the heart of the whole curriculum and pervade school life positively. Pupils who visit the school's nurture class in The Lodge spoke confidently about how the school's value of joy helps them to manage feelings of sadness or anger.
- Leaders identify priorities accurately so that they take appropriate actions. They know where the school needs to improve. Recently, leaders introduced a new assessment system to track pupils' performance. They are not yet using this confidently to analyse information about how well pupils are achieving sharply enough. As a result, they are not always clear enough about the impact of their work to improve current progress across the school.
- The diocese and Buckinghamshire Learning Trust offer effective guidance to school leaders and governors to help them identify appropriate priorities and improve the school, particularly in raising the quality of teaching. The review of governance was useful and governors have now acted on advice to strengthen their work and improve their effectiveness.
- Leaders' deployment of staff to prioritise raising attendance is making a difference to some disadvantaged pupils this term. Funding has helped families to meet regularly with the family worker and benefit from the impressive solutions they have agreed together. Despite this, improvement is not yet rapid enough for all of these pupils. Funding is wisely allocated so that wider agencies can lend a hand. Leaders take swift action to re-evaluate methods if they are not working.

Governance of the school

- The newly restructured governing body is now well equipped to check on the school's work. The new chair of the governing body, who has strong community links, ensures that governors ask incisive questions so that they know about the work of leaders and can agree priorities. New members have added experience and expertise. Governors' ambitious plans are raising expectations in sport and expanding pupils' talents. Pupils benefit from sustainable improvements in sport as a result of the adept use of funding.

- Governors contribute well to the strategic direction of the school. They work closely with middle leaders and regularly report on their visits so that everyone is well informed. They know about the quality of the teaching in the school and identify confidently how it has changed in the last year and how this has improved standards in writing and in the early years. Governors are strengthening their communication to parents so that they can share priorities and improvements clearly.
- With the help of the diocese, governors manage the performance of the headteacher well. The rationale for all staff pay awards is clearly justified, although not recorded well enough, and underperformance in the past has been challenged well by leaders.
- The governing body checks regularly that funding is used effectively by leaders to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils in the school. They know that this is improving in some subjects quicker than in others and that attendance remains a barrier for some. Improvement plans prioritise this, but there is much work to be done this year to ensure that early improvements in the attendance of these pupils are sustained and built upon.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Keeping pupils safe has a high priority and staff are vigilant about pupils' welfare. All staff are trained well, including in the 'Prevent' duty. Staff raise any concerns about pupils' welfare swiftly, and leaders make referrals to appropriate agencies when necessary. For example, leaders collaborate with services to formulate care plans for children who are looked after by the local authority. The school is well supported by wider agencies in ensuring that pupils are kept safe from harm.
- The large majority of parents feel that their children are safe in school. Leaders provide parents with good information on how to keep their children safe. Parents work determinedly with the school to stay vigilant and learn about potential risks of modern life.
- Governors and leaders are trained in safer recruitment procedures and staff are appropriately vetted as part of their pre-employment checks. A designated governor regularly checks on safeguarding systems and reports back to the full governing body.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and guide them well, including the most able and disadvantaged pupils currently in the school. Leaders have challenged underperformance in the quality of teaching and commissioned additional training where this is needed. This has been effective because it has strengthened the skills and expertise of teachers and teaching assistants. Staff say that leaders help them by visiting their lessons and giving them useful feedback.

- Good relationships between staff and pupils are evident. Teachers manage their groups well, using effective techniques to gain pupils' attention and to maintain a calm and purposeful classroom. Subsequently, there is a positive atmosphere for learning and pupils settle to work quickly and persevere with the task in hand. They readily respond to instructions. Much has been done to improve pupils' attitudes and to build their resilience.
- Teaching has ensured that pupils are highly motivated and proud of their achievements. During breakfast club, some pupils talked excitedly about how they were inspired by a famous painting, resulting in a school parade to share their work. Pupils applied the knowledge and skills taught across other subjects well to inform their designs. Some recreated rangoli patterns in Year 2, while others sewed dexterously to create an aptly named 'Binkus' elephant.
- Teaching assistants are skilled contributors to pupils' learning because they have been trained well for their role. For example, in a phonics lesson they pronounced sounds clearly and encouraged pupils to blend these together to read words. Other pupils were helped effectively to read sentences in simple books. Adults check on pupils' learning well, praising their efforts and intervening skilfully to guide pupils who are uncertain.
- Pupils read widely and with clear pleasure and pride. This starts in the early years, where children read words and titles, such as 'Zack the Cat', accurately. By the end of Year 1, pupils are confident to break up words and enjoy selecting their own books from the wide range available. Older pupils say that they love the excitement and sense of what comes next when reading books by their favourite authors. As one key stage 2 pupil remarked, 'I enjoy getting stuck into books. I always want to finish my chapter.'
- Teachers are aware of the needs of different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, in their classes. They plan tasks precisely to match pupils' different needs. Activities build quickly on what pupils can do because staff know pupils well. Pupils plan their ideas collectively, rehearsing their ideas confidently. For example, pupils in Year 1 talked animatedly about the different features of 'Wanted' posters before producing their own. This good guidance ensures that pupils attain well.
- Pupils, especially those needing extra support or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, appreciate having mathematical apparatus so that they can break down calculations and visualise the steps they have to take. These pupils are guided well by adults in some classes to support their calculation methods. This helps them to make good progress.
- Adults inspire pupils to tackle challenges that excite and motivate them. Pupils are skilfully supported to draw on what they already know. In Year 6, adults support pupils' learning well, reshaping their ideas sensitively and developing pupils' reasoning skills effectively. In the best examples, pupils flourish as a result of teachers' strong subject knowledge, believing that they are 'mathematicians', so fostering career aspirations.
- Teaching in mathematics is improving as teachers become more experienced in the delivery of teaching methods introduced in recent training. Not all teachers are applying this help as quickly as others. Some need further support. Leaders have plans to share the best practice in the school so that all teachers pose interesting and challenging mathematical problems for pupils to attempt.

- In 2016, some pupils did not make good progress in mathematics, including a few disadvantaged pupils. Pupils in the school now benefit from regular opportunities to reason and explain in mathematics, which is increasing pupils' progress, and in particular the progress made by the most able disadvantaged pupils. Last year, these pupils did not attain as well in mathematics as they did in writing. Most pupils lay out their work confidently and use equipment well to sequence the steps they need to take to solve problems and check their methods.
- Science teaching equips pupils with a good balance of knowledge and enquiry skills. In particular, pupils develop their grasp of scientific vocabulary and their skills of prediction and fair testing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and nurturing. For example, adults help children in the early years and pupils to work together and learn to share, so that they can develop skills of cooperation and negotiation, particularly in the early years.
- Pupils learn to help themselves to overcome difficulties, anxieties and fears. For example, some keep written journals of their emotions, while others have photographic stories to promote memories of success to build their feelings of self-worth. Families of these pupils are fully involved in making these and appreciate the school's work in this area.
- Pupils build their own resilience well. The whole curriculum supports reflection and pupils' emotional development. For example, pupils created their own prayers, to contribute to a 'Remembrance Tree', to share their thoughts sensitively with others. A few pupils laid a wreath at the war memorial to participate in their community's wider commemoration of sacrifice and considered this in relation to their own experiences. Year 6 pupils wrote moving poetry inspired by the sadness of war. From time to time, when pupils experience emotional upset including bereavement, they are supported sensitively by staff.
- Pupils' emotional needs are supported well. Leaders promote a range of activities, including visits from a local puppeteer group, to help pupils fully explore issues such as loneliness, peer pressure and maintaining friends. A well-stocked chaplaincy room, where pupils can retreat and reflect, ensures that pupils benefit from thought-provoking resources. This work is highly effective.
- Pupils say that they feel safe everywhere in the school and can always look to their teachers if they are ever worried or upset. They have learned to keep safe on the internet, and posters around the school reaffirm key messages. Pupils learn to swim and cycle. Some are ambassadors for road safety, working with the whole community to make relevant improvements to the local area.
- Pupils who are persistently absent from school miss out on the good welfare that is provided to others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Staff have high expectations, which pupils meet. Pupils know what is expected of them and appreciate the range of rewards available. They conduct themselves well in lessons and when moving around the school.
- Pupils report that bullying is rare. School records show that this is the case. They speak with pride about the opportunities to learn ways to prevent bullying. As one pupil stated, 'Don't stand by! Stand up, stand strong, stand together.' Year 6 pupils are clear on the lasting impact of unkind words. Some parents worry about bullying. Leaders, including governors, are seeking ways to build parents' confidence in the school's systems.
- Teachers plan memorable lessons to improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards one another. For example, when grappling with the challenge to refill an empty toothpaste tube, pupils recognised that some actions are hard to undo. They apply lessons they have learned well. Most parents say that pupils are well behaved.
- Leaders secure swift advice to ensure that pupils at risk of exclusion are supported successfully. Exclusion is rare because intervention is highly effective.
- Attendance is improving. Leaders have strengthened systems and deployed additional staff to prioritise this work. Governors check regularly and help leaders to adjust their plans so that pupils at risk of high rates of absence are quickly identified and families supported. However, despite leaders' hard work in this area and the use of innovative strategies, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, although improving, is lower than that seen nationally.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- By the end of key stage 2, pupils make good progress from their starting points in a range of subjects. Typically, progress is stronger in English than it is in mathematics. However, leaders are beginning to successfully address this.
- Teachers ensure that the most able pupils are challenged so that most of them make good progress. These pupils attain well in writing because of their teachers' high expectations and expertise. Pupils use technical features of writing appropriately. They deepen their understanding by analysing what has worked well. Last year, the proportion of Year 6 pupils working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics was similar to that seen nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well in writing. Teachers help them to plan their writing carefully. They provide pupils with opportunities to write regularly in other subjects so that they make good progress from their starting points. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from this good guidance so that they now achieve better in writing than in the past.

- Pupils make good progress in reading. Leaders place a strong emphasis on securing these important skills. By the end of Year 1, most pupils meet the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Pupils have very positive attitudes to reading and enjoy selecting books from the captivating school library. Those who are behind in their reading receive extra support which helps them to catch up.
- By the time disadvantaged pupils leave the school, many attain the standard expected for their age in reading and mathematics. However, too few of the disadvantaged, most able pupils attained the highest standards in the past in mathematics. More disadvantaged pupils than in the past are now making good progress in mathematics. Leaders have now ensured that pupil premium funding is impacting positively and improving outcomes for the most able of these pupils. For example, the most able Year 6 pupils attend secondary schools each week for additional specialist teaching which prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- In the past, pupils' progress in mathematics has been slower than in reading and writing, in particular at key stage 1. Current information shows that pupils are now achieving higher standards and many are benefiting from teachers' raised confidence and improved skills this term. Leaders acknowledge that there is more work to do and have improvement plans in place which set out their actions. Leaders do not yet consider how to evaluate these plans well enough against the progress they expect of all pupils across the school.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader is ambitious for all children and is making a positive contribution to the leadership of the wider school. The early years leader ensures that the environment is motivating and planned activities hold high appeal. Consequently, children enjoy learning and are highly enthused by the opportunities afforded to them.
- The majority of children leave the early years well prepared for Year 1. Typically, more children than nationally reach a good level of development by the time they leave Reception.
- Effective use of funding has ensured that disadvantaged children's attainment is improving. More of these children reached a good level of development last year than in the past. These pupils thrive as a result of the individual care they receive.
- External support is helping staff to ensure that they use assessment to raise the expectations they have of the most able children so that more can make strong progress and exceed the standards expected for children of their age. Currently, fewer children exceed expectations than seen nationally.
- More children are joining the Reception classes from the Nursery than in the past. In Nursery, children make good progress and so are well prepared for the challenges of Reception. From the outset, staff place a strong emphasis on developing children's vocabulary, improving children's communication skills effectively. Adults sensitively encourage good listening. As a result, children develop communication skills very effectively.

- Staff are well trained and swiftly improve their practice so that children can benefit from their new skills. For example, a language specialist visits regularly to model ways to help staff overcome children's speech delays. Adults sign alongside children who cannot express themselves and promote a strong sense of belonging and inclusion. Adults introduce the names of objects to older children sensitively, building words up into phrases and repeating them back to children. This helps children develop spoken language quickly so that they can express themselves confidently.
- The Nursery classes provide sensory experiences for children to explore and develop their imagination. The youngest children peel sprouts and slice mushrooms so that they learn to improve their fine motor skills through controlling simple tools. In addition, they mix paint and print with their hands, delighting in the simple cause and effect of changing colours. Older children cooperate together so that they quickly develop their social skills of turn-taking and listening to others.
- A thematic approach to the curriculum in the Reception classes motivates children to learn well. For example, children recalled animatedly the story of 'Stick Man', using their own props. Some targeted children sang together, acting out nursery rhymes whilst miming rowing a boat. This strengthened their core muscles and improved their physical control needed when writing.
- Children are supported well to make marks and to form recognisable letters and words using a range of equipment such as twigs dipped in paint. Displays celebrate children's early writing and include lists and collaborative story maps. At other times, children are supported to write simple captions, for example, while drawing light sources. Consequently, children develop early writing skills quickly.
- Adults incorporate mathematical equipment alongside children's play so that children can recognise numbers and solve simple calculations. During the inspection, children were keen for adults to share in their success when ordering numbers using mathematical equipment to represent numbers to 10. Other children practised forming numbers and played with mathematical jigsaws to promote their understanding of simple additions.
- Safeguarding arrangements are secure and well known by staff. The early years leader is a designated person and leads her team well. As a result, children are kept safe. The inclement weather led to staff wisely limiting the use of the outdoor area as surfaces were slippery. All staff are vigilant and look after children well.
- Clear routines, good relationships and positive links with parents help all children to settle at the start of the school year. The school is strengthening parents' contributions to the assessment process.

School details

Unique reference number	110450
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10019868

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	277
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Nichols
Headteacher	Lesley Blount
Telephone number	01628 602295
Website	www.stpeterscofe.org
Email address	admin@stpeters.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below that seen nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils working in 19 lessons, of which 13 were observed jointly with school leaders. They looked at work in pupils' books, including across the curriculum. Inspectors listened to pupils read informally and in groups, talking with pupils about their views on authors and their attitudes to reading.
- Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils as they moved around the school and in the playgrounds. They took a tour of the school with older pupils and discussed the curriculum with them. They took into account the views of other pupils by talking with them at breaktimes and in lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, teachers and groups of pupils from key stage 2. They met with a small group of governors, including the chair of the governing body and also representative from Buckinghamshire Learning Trust. An inspector spoke on the telephone to a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documents, including the school's development plans, records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety and minutes from governing body meetings. Inspectors also looked at information showing pupils' current attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The views of parents were taken into account by analysing the 42 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke informally with parents during the inspection. The views of 19 staff were taken into account through discussions and by considering their responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Susan Aspland, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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