

# Beaver Green Primary School

Cuckoo Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 5DA

## Inspection dates

27–28 September 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure rapid school improvement. As a result, teaching is strong, outcomes are improving and pupils are increasingly well prepared for the next stages of their education.
- Subject leaders have a realistic and well-informed overview of their areas of responsibility. They ensure that the exciting curriculum provides pupils with the right skills, knowledge and understanding. However, leaders acknowledge that opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills across the wider curriculum are not fully developed.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge. This enables them to plan learning that meets the needs of all groups of pupils effectively.
- Teachers use questioning well. This extends pupils' thinking and helps teachers to quickly identify and address any confusion.
- As a result of high-quality teaching, most groups of pupils are making at least good progress. Where progress is slower, such as for some groups of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, this is because previous teaching was not good enough. Appropriate support is now in place to help pupils to catch up.
- In 2016, pupils did not make good progress in reading throughout key stage 2. A swift and effective response from school leaders has ensured that reading is now strong across the school. This improvement is reflected in the improved 2017 provisional progress measures, although attainment levels at key stage 2 remain below those seen nationally.
- Phonics teaching is highly effective. In 2016, the proportion of pupils that met the expected standard in the phonics screening check was above the national figure.
- Pupils enjoy school, behave well and are keen to learn. They are well cared for and feel safe. The welfare team ensures that pupils attend school regularly and that effective provision is in place to meet their social and emotional needs.
- Children get off to a good start because early years provision is outstanding. The well-organised, exciting environment provides them with a myriad of opportunities to investigate, explore and learn.
- The early years leader has used observation and progress information highly effectively to identify children's needs. The entire staff team is highly skilled in meeting these needs. As a result, children make rapid progress from their starting points.

## **Full report**

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

- Raise levels of attainment in key stage 2 to be in line with national figures by embedding recent improvements to teaching, assessment and the curriculum.
- Further develop the curriculum to ensure that pupils have systematic opportunities to extend and apply their writing skills alongside subject-specific skills.
- Ensure that all teachers maintain a strong emphasis on supporting disadvantaged pupils so that the remaining differences in progress and attainment with the others are eliminated.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are a cohesive and ambitious team. Together, they have acted on advice with focus and determination. As a result, the school has improved rapidly. Leaders are not complacent, however. They recognise that there is still a legacy of underachievement that means some pupils in key stage 2 are still not attaining high enough standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Senior leaders meet regularly and use an appropriate range of information to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Leaders' evaluations are accurate and evidenced. These evaluations form the basis of the school development plan which drives the school forward effectively.
- Leaders have ensured that school systems and policies are now consistently implemented and understood. This means that everyone, both pupils and staff, are clear about what is expected of them.
- Subject leaders are given the time and training that they need to improve their curriculum areas. They are supported by regular moderation of work and meetings, both with local partners and within the wider trust.
- Additional funding such as the pupil premium and sports funding is allocated following rigorous analysis. In this way, leaders ensure that funds are used well to make a difference for pupils.
- Most staff and parents are fully supportive of the school, and recognise the improvements that have been made; one parent told inspectors that there was a 'new sense of community they have worked hard to achieve'.
- Pupils' understanding of fundamental British values is embedded in the culture of the school. Their awareness of the rule of law has been developed through activities such as trips to Parliament and a school 'general election' to appoint a 'head for a day'. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural awareness is developed well through regular class assemblies exploring themes such as perseverance and tolerance.
- Pupils enjoy the exciting new curriculum with learning topics such as 'land ahoy' and 'off with her head!' At the time of the inspection, the school was developing a new website, which now contains all the required curriculum information for parents. Leaders acknowledge that opportunities to extend writing skills are not yet fully developed across the wider curriculum.
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of clubs and activities, from badminton to film club and library club. In 2016, the high numbers of pupils engaging in clubs, and the quality of these activities, was recognised by the gold School Games Mark.

### Governance of the school

- The trust schemes of delegation clearly delineate the roles of the local governing body and the trust. These are being refined as the trust grows. They enable both groups to work effectively with school leaders, both in supporting them and holding them to account.

- Trust support for school leaders via the primary director of education and the executive headteacher has been clearly focused and effective in securing rapid school improvement.
- The local governing body monitors key areas of school improvement well. Minutes of meetings show that searching questions are asked of school leaders in relation to the progress and attainment of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Records pertaining to pupils' safety and welfare are scrutinised to ensure that requirements are met.
- Following a skills audit and recruitment drive, the local governing board now has the range of skills needed to ensure sustainability. The induction of the large number of new governors is a priority for the trust.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Recruitment checks on staff are fit for purpose and meet current requirements.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a culture of care for individuals and that support is readily available to families. The welfare team forges strong relationships with pupils and their parents that enable them to receive the right help at the right time. Parents appreciate this extra help.
- Staff know what to do if they are concerned about a pupil. There are clear procedures in place and staff receive regular training to raise their awareness of risks to pupils. Records show that staff have taken the right actions to help keep pupils safe. Leaders work effectively with a range of other professionals to secure the best outcomes for pupils.
- All staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire felt that pupils were safe at school. Parents and pupils agreed that this was the case.

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

**Good**

- Teachers have strong subject knowledge across the curriculum. This ensures that they plan lessons which provide pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding that they need to make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy learning because work is interesting and well matched to their needs. Expectations are generally high and challenge is relished by pupils who quote, 'We don't say hard, we say challenge!' Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those requiring extra support have their needs met well through small, focused groups.
- Teachers use questions skilfully to deepen pupils' thinking. In mathematics, pupils are encouraged to explain their reasoning. Teachers quickly identify when and why pupils are confused, and ensure that misconceptions are addressed rapidly.
- Helpful equipment and pictorial methods are used effectively to develop understanding.
- Phonics is taught effectively across key stage 1. Pupils who read to inspectors did so with fluency and understanding. Regular guided-reading sessions were described by

pupils as 'where we look at books together and explore the issues together'.

- The needs of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are met well. Resources, such as headphones for pupils who find classroom noise disturbing, are readily available. Work is matched well to pupils' needs and skilled adults are aware of their learning needs. Progress is monitored regularly and provision adapted accordingly.
- Most teaching assistants support the needs of pupils well. They encourage pupils to have a go and use questions to extend thinking and assess learning effectively. However, in some lessons and parts of lessons, teaching assistants are not as fully engaged as they could be in supporting pupils.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel safe at school and told inspectors that there is always someone to talk to if they have a problem. They are confident that they will be listened to. Levels of supervision around the school are good.
- The culture of care and kindness is evident throughout the school and modelled by staff and pupils alike. Relationships are warm and demonstrate genuine concern and good humour.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They told inspectors that they 'all really support each other in our learning'. As a result of this pride and sense of purpose, the school is a unified and harmonious place.
- In the breakfast club, pupils enjoy time to socialise over breakfast or a table football game. No opportunity to develop independence or social skills is wasted. For example, tablecloths, flowers and bread baskets on the tables have been introduced to help develop social behaviour.
- Parents value the wide range of support provided for pupils and their families by the welfare team. One response from a parent to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire was typical: 'I don't know where I'd be without them.'
- The welfare managers' determination to secure improved attendance has been effective. Attendance information is analysed promptly and meticulously to identify patterns and trends. Families are offered bespoke support to improve attendance and punctuality. Inspectors looked at case studies where this support had had significant impact on raising pupils' attendance and achievement. Leaders are aware that while overall attendance continues to improve there are still some groups of pupils, such as pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, who do not attend school as regularly as they should.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Staff consistently apply the clear expectations of behaviour. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them, and that good behaviour will be rewarded. Pupils told inspectors how much behaviour has improved, and that they really value the 'Beaver bonds' they can earn for good behaviour.
- On the playground, pupils are active and lively without being overly boisterous, and respectful towards one another. They are well supported in their play by adults.
- Pupils are confident that incidents of bullying are dealt with well by staff. School records show that the actions that leaders take to deter bullying when it is reported to them are effective.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Good

- In 2016, the proportions of pupils at the end of key stage 1 that reached the expected standards were in line with the national average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. Provisional 2017 results show further improvements to standards that were above the 2016 national figures in reading, writing and mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher standards increased in reading and writing to above the 2016 national figures.
- Year 6 results at the end of key stage 2 improved in the provisional 2017 results in both reading and writing at expected standards. Rates of progress improved in reading and writing and remained steady in mathematics.
- The focus on developing reading has improved pupils' engagement, enjoyment and outcomes. Leaders have ensured that all staff, including office staff, take every opportunity to hear pupils reading. The library has been restocked and the librarian is a passionate advocate of reading, encouraging pupils to try books by different authors. As a result, there is a passion for reading across the school and outcomes have improved.
- School progress information and the work seen in pupils' books show that most disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their starting points. However, rates of progress are too variable across the school. Leaders monitor and adjust the use of additional funding regularly to help support the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils are developing their skills, knowledge and understanding well in subjects like science, geography, history and design technology. This is because the curriculum provides a wide range of exciting well-planned opportunities for them to do so. Opportunities to connect and extend writing skills, however, are not fully developed across the wider curriculum.
- Rates of progress are improving. Progress in books and school information show rapid improvement from starting points. However, for some pupils in key stage 2, particularly in Years 5 and 6, levels of attainment are still low when compared to national expectations. While outcomes are improving, provisional attainment standards at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 are still below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- Children get off to an outstanding start in early years. When children join the Nursery or Reception, their levels of development are typically well below those expected for their age, especially in communication, literacy and physical development. In 2016, the proportion of children who attained a good level of overall development at the end of the early years was above that seen nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities typically make good or better progress from their starting points. Additional funding such as the pupil premium is used well to match their needs. For example, a specialist speech and language teaching assistant provides both small-group work and training for other adults to help meet language development needs.
- The environment is exceptionally well planned. It provides an exciting and rich place for discovery and learning. During the inspection, children were engaged happily in using pipes to construct race tracks, exploring letters in a cornflour solution and using a wooded area for imaginative play.
- Staff are highly skilled at modelling and encouraging talk and asking questions such as 'Why did that happen?' and 'Tell me about that.' The clear focus on developing early language supports children highly effectively in all their other areas of learning, and in their play with each other.
- Warm relationships encourage children to take risks and help each other. Children are quickly able to develop independence through getting out and packing away their own resources because the environment is well organised.
- The early years leader has ensured that all staff are well trained and aware of the next steps for the children. Observations of children learning are plentiful across the curriculum. They are used well, both to record progress and identify needs.
- Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning through contributions to learning journals and reports. There are regular opportunities for parents to 'stay and play' or to find out more about what their child is learning.
- A focus on transitions has ensured that children settle quickly into the early years and continue to receive support should they need it into Year 1. In this way, children are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors or completed the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, were delighted with the early years. Comments such as, 'I can't believe how quickly he settled', or '10/10' were typical of those received.

## School details

Unique reference number	141871
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10040906

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

Type of school	All-through primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	449
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of local governing board	Mr B Chilton
Headteacher	Catherine Hylands
Telephone number	01233 621989
Website	<a href="http://www.beaver-green.kent.sch.uk">www.beaver-green.kent.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@beaver-green.kent.sch.uk">office@beaver-green.kent.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school became part of the Swale Academies Trust in April 2015. The predecessor school was judged to require special measures following an inspection in December 2013.
- The headteacher is supported by the director of primary education and an advisory headteacher from the trust.
- The school is a larger-than-average two-form-entry primary school with a Nursery.
- The school population is mainly White British, with the first language as English.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is much larger than average.

- Proportions of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are in line with those found nationally.
- The school outcomes were above national floor standards in 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all classes, spoke to pupils, heard them read and looked at work in their exercise books. A number of observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed in and around school, during breakfast club, assembly, lunchtime, and on the playground.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, a group of pupils, the chair of the local governing board and the trust.
- School documents were looked at, including the school's information about pupils' achievement, the school's evaluation of its work, plans for school improvement and records concerning pupils' safety.
- Inspectors spoke to parents on the playground and considered 39 responses, and 33 free-text responses, to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also considered 48 responses to the staff questionnaire and 25 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathan Shields	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Tait	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Martin	Ofsted Inspector

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