

Balgowan Primary School

Balgowan Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 4HJ

Inspection dates

28–29 November 2017

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, ably supported by the strong leadership team, is rightly focusing on improving pupils' rates of progress.
- The leadership team, including governors, has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to further improve the school.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum strongly promotes the school's core values. Pupils respect themselves and others and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils are confident and articulate. They are keen to discuss their learning. Pupils feel safe in school. They know that adults will help them should they have any concerns.
- Phonics is taught well. For the last three years, pupils' outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check have been consistently strong.
- Strong teaching enables most pupils to make good progress from their starting points in English and mathematics.
- The early years provision enables children to make a good start to their education. The early years curriculum is well designed and ensures that children are ready for Year 1.
- The majority of parents are positive about the school and appreciate how staff help their children to learn well.
- Middle leaders are addressing the weaknesses in their areas of responsibility and are making a positive impact on pupils' learning. However, they are not yet fully involved in the strategic development of their subjects.
- Overall, teachers' expectations are high. However, sometimes the work set is not challenging enough for middle-ability pupils and the most able pupils.
- Pupils' progress in the wider curriculum is not closely monitored by leaders. As a result, there are variations in the rates of progress that pupils make in these subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress for the middle-ability pupils and the most able pupils by:
 - ensuring that learning opportunities are sufficiently demanding in lessons
 - providing work in writing and mathematics that is challenging and deepens pupils' knowledge.
- Improve pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics by systematically analysing and tracking pupils' progress across the wider curriculum.
- Further improve the leadership skills of middle leaders so they are well equipped to implement and develop strategic plans and contribute more effectively to school improvement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- After a period of instability at the school, the headteacher took up her post in September 2016. The headteacher is well supported by a dynamic and determined leadership team. Together, they are working to drive forward improvements in the school.
- School leaders have an accurate understanding of where teaching is strongest and where additional support is required. They use this information to improve teachers' practice and provide good support to staff.
- Leaders ensure that performance management procedures are thorough. Leaders have increased accountability for the work that staff do. They monitor teachers' performance effectively and ensure that this is closely linked to pupils' progress and the objectives in the school development plan.
- Leaders meet regularly with staff to check and analyse pupils' progress. They use the assessment information to review the school's effectiveness and analyse how well different groups are performing. This enables leaders to identify emerging strengths and areas for development effectively.
- The school's core values underpin its vision and ethos. Staff model these values well, which supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The development of pupils' well-being is threaded throughout the curriculum. Assemblies and the personal, social, health and economics education (PSHE) curriculum further contribute towards pupils building good relationships and developing their resilience.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a range of interesting topics and subjects. The curriculum is further enhanced with extra activities in order to inspire and motivate pupils' learning. Additional activities include visitors to the school and visits to museums and galleries. These activities help pupils to learn new skills and contribute positively to their personal and academic achievement.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively in the school. The assistant headteacher makes sure that staff are clear about the needs of each pupil. She identifies teaching strategies that meet pupils' individual learning needs, and regularly checks on their progress. Subsidised trips and visits help these pupils to engage fully in the life of the school.
- The school has used the physical education and sport premium funding well to provide pupils with opportunities to try different sports and participate in competitive sport. In addition to this, the sports premium has also been used to increase the subject expertise of staff. As a result, pupils learn well about staying fit and healthy.
- Effective use is made of the special educational needs funding. The assistant headteacher is effective in ensuring that the needs of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are met. She regularly checks that resources are meeting pupils' learning needs and that they are receiving the appropriate support to move their learning on quickly.
- Leaders work effectively to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment

and pupils' outcomes. Leaders ensure that training is available for all staff, including newly qualified teachers. Professional development opportunities are carefully linked to teachers' personal targets and the school's priorities for improvement.

- Middle leaders work with teaching staff well to refine their skills, such as through coaching and training. However, senior leaders have rightly identified that middle leaders require further support to reinforce their newly acquired leadership and management skills and to contribute more effectively to whole-school improvements.
- Developing English and mathematics has been a high priority for leaders. However, leaders do not closely check pupils' progress in the other curriculum subjects. This results in pupils making inconsistent progress in the wider curriculum.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They hold leaders to account for pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching by asking challenging questions. The governing body is well organised. Governors' skills and expertise are used well to support and challenge leaders.
- Governors undertake appropriate training, including safeguarding training to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
- Governors ensure that extra funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is used well, and is having a positive effect on pupils' progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff know how to keep pupils safe at school. They are clear about safeguarding procedures, including the potential signs that may alert them to concerns about pupils' welfare.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and the vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, say that their children are safe at school.
- Safeguarding procedures and checks on staff meet statutory requirements. Governors have been trained in safer recruitment. Staff are up to date with the latest government guidance for safeguarding.
- School files for vulnerable pupils are well organised. Record-keeping is effective, and the designated safeguarding lead has clear systems in place to ensure that referrals are timely and additional support is available to pupils and families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders are raising teachers' expectations about what pupils should achieve. As a result, the bar on teachers' practice is rising.
- Teachers and teaching assistants develop pupils' phonics skills effectively. Pupils use their phonics strategies well to decode unfamiliar words when they are reading.
- Teachers foster an enjoyment for reading. They introduce interesting books to the

class and provide effective ways to encourage pupils to read widely and enthusiastically. Pupils say that they enjoy reading.

- Teaching assistants support pupils well by using questioning to check and develop pupils' understanding. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils receive skilled support from the teaching assistants. As a result, these groups of pupils make the same good progress as their peers.
- Teachers establish positive relationships with pupils and expect good behaviour. Pupils respond well to their teachers and the pupils' good attitudes contribute strongly to the progress they make. Pupils are confident to ask for help if they do not understand, as they know teachers will help them.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to recall number facts quickly and accurately. As a result, a high proportion of pupils reach the expected standards in mathematics for their age.
- Teachers do not consistently plan work that demands enough of pupils. Staff are not sufficiently adept at maximising the learning time for the middle-ability pupils and the most able pupils. Consequently, these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable, especially in writing and mathematics.

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 polite and listen to each other's points of view.
- Pupils have good opportunities to take part in activities that keep them fit. They enjoy healthy food at lunchtime. Children in the Reception Year are developing good habits of healthy eating and enjoy the fruit that is available.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of democracy, for example by voting for their school council representatives. There are many opportunities for pupils to raise funds for charity. Pupils gain a secure understanding of how to become a good citizen in modern Britain.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they enjoy school and feel safe. They understand how to use the internet safely. Pupils know what to do should a stranger try to contact them by email.
- Pupils said that bullying is very rare and that teachers are quick to resolve any issues. Pupils are confident that adults will listen to them and respond appropriately, should they have any problems.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons, as well as at unstructured times. They move safely around the school, are courteous and display good manners when they speak to adults.

- Pupils get on well with each other and treat each other with respect.
- The attendance of pupils is consistently high. This is because pupils enjoy learning in school. The school works closely with the few families whose children do not attend regularly and attendance for these pupils is now improving.
- Most of the parents and staff who completed Ofsted's online surveys agreed that pupils behave well in school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Standards in the 2017 key stage 2 national assessments show that children attained above-average outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, pupils made broadly average progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is an improvement compared to the previous year. The most considerable improvement was in pupils' writing outcomes.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 in 2017 were above the national standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Phonics outcomes in Year 1 continue to remain above the national average. Pupils make good progress and enter Year 2 with the necessary skills to read and write. These outcomes reflect the systematic and high-quality phonics teaching in the school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities achieve well in relation to their starting points because of the additional support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants.
- The progress of pupils who are disadvantaged is steadily improving. Evidence from pupils' work and from the school's assessment information indicates that many of these pupils are making better progress this year, compared to last year.
- The school's current assessment information, supported by inspection evidence, shows that the majority of pupils are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- From their starting points, the most able pupils do not make as much progress over time as they could. In addition, too few of the middle-attaining pupils make the accelerated progress necessary to reach the higher levels of attainment. Consequently, some pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable and are not reaching the higher standards.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is good. Children enjoy a wide range of experiences across the curriculum.
- Adults help children settle quickly into school. Links with parents are strong and this aids the children's transition into school life. As a result, children develop good routines and are happy and confident in their environment.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children. They have created a bright and stimulating environment in which children learn and play outside as well as in the classroom. The early years has good-quality resources that help

children to develop physically, socially and academically.

- Staff provide high-quality care to children. Children feel safe and behave well. Children are developing positive behaviours for learning. They concentrate well and show resilience when carrying out tasks.
- Most children enter Reception with skills that are typical for their age. By the time they leave Reception, a high proportion of children are working at good levels of development. As a result, they are well prepared for Year 1.
- The early years leader has a realistic picture of the strengths and she has accurately identified what needs to be done to improve the early years further.

School details

Unique reference number	137216
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10037681

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	682
Appropriate authority	Balgowan Academy Trust
Chair	Patricia Spedding
Headteacher	Maria Veysey
Telephone number	020 8658 6374
Website	www.balgowan.bromley.sch.uk
Email address	admin@balgowan.bromley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 March 2013

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 percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in all classes. Leaders accompanied inspectors to many of the visits to lessons.
- Pupils' work was reviewed during lessons and a more detailed scrutiny was made of pupils' books with the headteacher and three assistant headteachers. Pupils' work in a wide range of subjects was scrutinised. Pupils' work on display was also considered.
- Pupils read to inspectors and inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to gain their views.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and during break and lunchtimes was observed by inspectors.
- Formal and informal discussions took place with senior leaders.
- Meetings and discussions were held with an external consultant, staff, parents and pupils. Inspectors met with members of the governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's documentation on pupils' attainment and progress, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, governors' minutes, the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement, as well as reports on the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors considered the 180 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, as well as speaking to parents directly. The responses from 20 staff questionnaires as well as the school's own staff and pupil questionnaires were also considered.

Inspection team

Jenell Chetty, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Nick Flesher	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Moller	Ofsted Inspector

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