

# Buckland St Mary Church of England Primary School

Buckland St Mary, Chard, Somerset TA20 3SJ

## Inspection dates

7–8 February 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and those responsible for governance have not ensured that all aspects of the curriculum are as well developed as those for reading, writing and mathematics.
- The use of the new assessment system and checks on pupils' progress in subjects such as science are not as good as they need to be.
- The wider curriculum does not support and develop pupils' understanding of mathematics as well as it should.
- Pupils do not have a sufficiently good understanding of life in modern Britain. Some do not know what it is like to live and learn in a different locality, such as a large local city.
- Records relating to pupils' welfare are disorganised. They have not helped school leaders to ensure that pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes is good.
- In 2017, the school did not meet the national floor targets.

### The school has the following strengths

- All aspects of the early years provision are good, including the Nursery. Children make good progress and generally achieve a good level of development so that they are ready for Year 1.
- Pupils across the school are now making much better progress in reading, writing and mathematics than in the past. Pupils achieve well at the end of Year 2.
- The impact of the drive and commitment of the headteacher, staff and members of the trust is enabling the school to improve.
- Pupils' phonics development continues to be higher than average.
- Pupils experience a wide range of sporting and creative activities which they enjoy.
- Pupils are now keen to learn. They listen to staff. Pupils work well with each other in lessons.
- All teachers consistently follow the school's approach to teaching, learning and assessment. The feedback they give to pupils helps pupils to learn from their mistakes.

## Full report

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

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should improve the outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
  - teachers implement learning experiences that progressively develop pupils' knowledge and understanding across all the national curriculum subjects, especially science
  - teachers make sure that pupils have a good understanding of life in other areas of modern Britain, such as what it is like to live and learn in a different locality
  - the wider curriculum better supports pupils' understanding and knowledge of mathematics
  - the systems used to measure and record issues relating to pupils' welfare follow best practice and are used to inform improvements to the school's provision, particularly pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The headteacher and those responsible for governance have not ensured that some records relating to pupils' welfare follow best practice. As a result, the school leaders have been slow to evaluate, and eradicate, incidents of poor behaviour at lunchtimes. The newly appointed behaviour leader for the trust has implemented a new playground structure. It is too early to see the impact of the changes on improving pupils' behaviour.
- The school is in the process of developing a new assessment system. It is being used to monitor pupils' progress and to inform interventions to increase pupils' progress if they fall behind. Overall, it shows that pupils are making good progress more frequently in reading, writing and mathematics. However, it lacks sufficient focus on recording pupils' achievements in other subjects, such as older pupils' progress in science. This means that staff do not have a clear enough view of what pupils know, understand and can do in other subjects. Therefore, they cannot ensure that pupils are achieving as well as they can across all of the subjects in the national curriculum.
- Leaders are reviewing how the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are exploring how they can further develop the Christian ethos of the school. Pupils learn about faiths other than their own and demonstrate respect for diversity. However, older pupils do not have a good understanding of life in modern Britain, for example what it is like to live in a different locality.
- The headteacher, the trust and staff have worked hard to build positive and supportive relationships with pupils, parents and carers. They have brought stability to the school after a long period of turbulence and changes in staff. The vast majority of parents believe that the changes introduced by school leaders are leading to tangible improvements. Some parents are concerned about access to a shared headteacher. Leaders are aware of these concerns and have implemented appropriate systems for parents to have contact with her and the lead teacher.
- Staff morale is high. Staff have confidence in the school's leaders and those of the trust. They work as a determinedly cohesive team to ensure that the strong vision of high expectations and aspirations for pupils is realised in lessons. Wherever possible, staff are involved in helping to make decisions. They have a clear and shared view as to what needs to be done to improve the quality of education in the school and how to go about it.
- Leaders' actions have ensured that children's outcomes in the early years have improved. This is a result of the trust's focus on raising achievement and providing high-quality learning environments and resources. Pupils continue to make strong progress in phonics. Progress and attainment across key stages 1 and 2 continue to improve.
- Through working with other schools and leaders in the trust, staff receive good-quality training. Experiences are also specifically tailored for each member of staff to help them in their own professional development. The support given to staff increases their self-confidence and helps raise aspirations. Further training is planned to help staff to

develop pupils' understanding of their emotions, their self-esteem, their social skills and their resilience.

- The involvement of staff with other schools enables them to see, share and learn from best practice. It helps them to review the work they are doing and to moderate pupils' outcomes to ensure consistency with others teaching the same year groups. This is helping the quality of teaching, learning and use of assessment to improve.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) who works for the trust is having a positive impact on the education and well-being of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. She has established strong links with parents and quickly establishes the individual needs of each pupil. Training for staff and the regular assessment of the impact of support being provided ensure that the progress for these pupils matches their peers from the same starting points.
- The trust members have been successful in making sure that the school's development plans prioritise areas requiring the most action. The plans state clearly the difference the actions are intended to make and when it will be checked.

### **Governance of the school**

- The trust members have oversight of the school and they are supported by the local governing board. All are highly committed. Questions raised in meetings demonstrate that the governors are inquisitive and are beginning to providing more challenge to leaders. However, they have not ensured that the curriculum provided by the school enables pupils to make the same good progress in all subjects as seen in reading, writing and mathematics. This limits pupils' readiness for the next stage in their education, particularly for older pupils in science. They have also not ensured that pupils have a good understanding of life in the wider locality.
- Those responsible for governance have not made sure that the recording of aspects of pupils' welfare meets best practice. This has resulted in a slower understanding of the need to change the arrangements for the playground at lunchtime. However, the trust has recently employed a behaviour leader who has instigated changes to the arrangements, although it is too soon to judge the effectiveness of the changes.
- Members of the local governing body are regular visitors to the school. Through their links, they have focused on the key areas in the school's action plan to understand how well the leaders are meeting their targets. As the trust is growing, members have started to review the way the local governing boards are constructed.
- The trust members have provided strong support for the school. They have improved the quality of the building inside and out. They have completely changed the provision in the early years, which is now good. They have also adopted other areas in the school grounds, in partnership with the local community, so that children in the community and those in the school have safe and secure adventurous places in which to play and learn.
- The monitoring of expenditure, such as the pupil premium and the physical education (PE) and sport funding, has ensured that the funds are now being spent as intended by the government. The PE and sport funding is encouraging pupils to participate in a

wide and diverse range of physical activities.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Through good-quality, regular training, staff have a good understanding of safeguarding. They know who to go to if they have concerns. They understand how to keep pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism. They are aware of their duties and responsibilities to report to other agencies, for example the police in relation to female genital mutilation.
- The safeguarding leaders in the school understand when pupils need additional support. They involve other agencies when needed to support families who are most vulnerable due to their circumstances.
- Appropriate checks are made on all staff before they begin work at the school to ensure that they are fit and proper to work with children. An appointed governor ensures that all safeguarding procedures are robust.
- The building and surrounding areas used by pupils have thorough and detailed risk assessments. Regular checks are conducted to ensure pupils' safety and security. These are undertaken by professional people with appropriate qualifications, alongside those responsible for governance.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the adventure equipment, when playing round the pond and when online.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Although still requiring improvement, the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to improve learning are on an upward trajectory.
- The new assessment system is helping all staff to know what pupils need to do to improve in the core aspects of English and mathematics. However, it does not provide enough information for staff to know and strongly build upon pupils' knowledge of the arts, humanities or science. As a result, staff are not fully aware of what pupils, particularly the older ones, already know and can do. Likewise, they are not sufficiently aware of any gaps in pupils' learning.
- New and established staff are working hand in hand. They want the very best for pupils in their care. Some are new to the profession of teaching. These teachers are getting the training and support that they need. More experienced staff are also getting support and training to enable them to hone and extend their leadership expertise. Further training and support are planned across the trust.
- Staff ensure that the synthetic phonics programme is taught systematically. As a result, pupils do well in the phonics screening checks at the end of Year 1 and Year 2. However, more explicit reference, by all staff, to the technical phonetic language pupils are using would enhance day-to-day learning, for example explicit reference to the smallest units of sound that are joined together to make words (phonemes). Staff help children to learn to read by getting them to merge phonemes together to make a word and help them to spell when hearing a whole word by splitting it up into the phonemes

that make it. Nevertheless, not all staff make it clear enough to pupils that they are using phonemes to enhance pupils' subject knowledge when reading and spelling.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. The administration of the school's documentation to support pupils' welfare is disorganised. As a result, school leaders did not reflect upon and act to reduce lapses in behaviour at lunchtimes as well as they might have.
- Pupils who have difficulty managing their anxiety or frustrations have targeted support that is carefully planned to help them to learn to manage their feelings. Plans are used by the SENCo and other staff to measure and record how well pupils are doing. Records show that interventions are working well, enabling these pupils to be emotionally more ready to learn.
- Strong pastoral care by staff helps pupils, particularly those who have SEN and/or disabilities, to be fully included in the life of the school. Staff are respectful of pupils' learning needs.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' behaviour around the school, particularly at lunchtime, is not always as good as it should be. There have been instances of unkindness through arguments and physical contact. Changes have been made to the playground arrangements, but these have only happened very recently. The impact of these changes is too early to judge. However, they have the potential to reduce over-boisterous behaviour, to encourage pupils to play well together and to provide spaces of refuge if pupils want to play alone for a time.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They have learned to listen to staff when they are talking to them. They pay attention to each other to share their thoughts and ideas. Pupils are respectful to each other when pupils read their work out in class or make contributions to class discussions. In gymnastics, and when engaged in other physical activities, they have learned how to work effectively as part of small and larger teams.
- Pupils' attendance is around the national average. The headteacher ensures that, if attendance slips, it is followed up. The school works appropriately with other services and families to help pupils attend when they can and on time for their lessons.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Requires improvement**

- In 2017, pupils who left Year 6 did not make the progress expected of them, based on their Year 2 national test results. This was in part a legacy of their past underachievement and insecure information about some of their starting points. They did not make enough accelerated progress to catch up.
- The school's assessment information indicates that, overall, in all year groups, pupils

are now making better, and frequently good, progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Work seen in pupils' books confirms this and shows that the proportion of pupils on track to reach the higher standards is improving. However, the progress of older pupils in other subjects, such as science, is not secure. In addition, pupils do not have a good enough understanding of life in other areas of Britain, such as in larger towns and cities.

- The school leaders ensure that pupils practise the writing they need for different audiences and purposes. Pupils' use of mathematics outside dedicated mathematics lessons is not as well developed. This is because mathematics has not been specifically planned to be supported in other subjects, unlike the school's approach to developing literacy skills. This reduces the opportunities that pupils have to practise their skills in a wider range of experiences which bring mathematics to life and demonstrate its usefulness.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception Years make good progress and generally achieve a good level of development so that they are ready for Year 1.
- Support and good use of additional funding enable disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities to do generally as well as their peers from the same starting points. Teachers know the individual pupils well and are effectively targeting residual underperformance.
- Good use of the sports premium has increased the participation of pupils in sports and physical activities. For example, through the 'Tea Club', pupils have engaged in volleyball, dodgeball, football, tag rugby and gymnastics. Pupils also have experiences of unfamiliar activities such as archery and fencing. This has sparked pupils' interest in these activities that has extended beyond school participation for some pupils and, for others, their enthusiasm and involvement continue as part of after-school clubs.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- There is increasingly strong interworking between the attached nursery and the Reception/Year 1 class staff. Relationships in both Nursery and Reception are warm and caring. Children learn how to play with one another courteously.
- Children are provided with experiences that provide exploration and purposeful play. This is helping them to develop enquiry, curiosity and motivation. As a result, children maintain their concentration and complete activities well.
- The trust has taken over the running of the co-located nursery. Following the removal of the previous building, the trust has developed a barn building into a highly attractive facility. This is well resourced, with good-quality play and learning equipment. The outdoor space is shared with the Reception children. Again, this is an attractive, secure and positive learning environment. Staff make good use of the available learning spaces, providing a good balance of high-quality indoor and outdoor experiences for all children.
- Safeguarding is effective. Children are kept safe and know how to keep themselves safe, both in the classrooms and in the outside area.
- Leaders have been investigating and improving the systems for describing children's

progress so that adults are clear about what children can and cannot do. They are using the new systems to accurately plan and record activities. They are using the information to moderate their judgements internally and with other schools. The information is shared with parents in learning journals. Parents can also contribute to the journals through a newly established online system. Further training for staff is needed on how to use the online system to ensure accuracy and for them to have confidence in the system.

## School details

Unique reference number	141740
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10042653

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

Type of school	Primary school
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Eric van den Barselaar
Headteacher	Helen Woodhams
Telephone number	01460 234 251
Website	<a href="http://www.bucklandstmaryceprimaryschool.co.uk">www.bucklandstmaryceprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:buckland@redstartpartnership.co.uk">buckland@redstartpartnership.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school opened as a sponsor-led academy on 1 March 2015. The school is part of The Redstart Learning Partnership. This multi-academy trust comprises five primary schools in the south-west of England. The headteacher is supported by other members of the trust, including a SENCo, a behaviour specialist and an executive principal from the trust. The executive principal is a national leader of education and provides support to four other schools in the trust.
- Buckland St Mary Primary is considerably smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are three mixed-aged classes and a Nursery. The number of pupils in each year group fluctuates and is sometimes less than five.
- Since the closure of the previous school, considerable changes have been made to staffing and the accommodation provided. Two of the three class teachers, along with the headteacher, officially took up their posts in September 2017. They were previously

involved with the school.

- The nursery building was removed and the new accommodation shares a remodelled outside area with children in the Reception Year.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2017, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector worked with the headteacher and other members of staff throughout the inspection. The inspector conducted observations of pupils learning, some jointly with the headteacher. She reviewed pupils' work and the records of pupils' achievements. She met with the headteacher, teachers, members of the local governing body, pupils, parents, the director and chief executive officers of the Redstart Learning Partnership and the school's support partner.
- The inspector scrutinised the quality of pupils' work, listened to pupils reading in class and talked with pupils about their work and life in school.
- The inspector took account of the 29 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. The 35 responses by pupils to Ofsted's electronic questionnaire were considered, as were the 12 responses submitted by staff.
- The inspector considered a wide range of documentary evidence in the school and the nursery, including records relating to safeguarding, the curriculum, assessment information, the school's self-evaluation and development plans.

## Inspection team

Steffi Penny, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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