

Bentley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Road, Bentley, Ipswich, IP9 2BT

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders have successfully improved the school in line with the recommendations made in the previous inspection report. Teaching is now consistently good.
- The school benefits from the strong links with another local primary school. The executive headteacher has used the skills of teachers and leaders from both schools to bring about rapid improvements.
- Governors are effective. They bring a range of skills to the role and work hard to strengthen the school's links with parents.
- For the past two years, almost all pupils have made expected progress by the end of Year 6.
- Standards achieved at the end of Year 2 in 2014 were higher than the previous two years and were broadly average.
- Skilled teaching assistants, guided by the teachers, provide good additional support to pupils who have disabilities or special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils. As a result, these pupils make similar progress to their classmates.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school and work hard in lessons. They like to solve problems and don't give up until they have the solution.
- Pupils feel safe in school and have no concerns about bullying. They know, that if they have a worry, an adult will help them.
- Children in the early years make good progress and are well prepared for when they start Year 1.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not encourage pupils to use their writing skills to good effect across a range of subjects. As a result, expectations of pupils' work are not as high in science and the humanities subjects as they are in English.
- Pupils do not always use the advice given by teachers when marking their work, and therefore, sometimes continue to make the same mistakes.
- Teachers do not check carefully enough at the end of the lesson, whether all the pupils have gained the intended knowledge or have understood the aim of the lesson. Sometimes, therefore, misunderstandings are not identified quickly enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning in nine lessons or parts of lessons and looked at a range of pupils' exercise books. The executive headteacher accompanied the inspector to all of the lessons observed.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, leaders of subjects, the teacher in charge of early years provision, and the special educational needs leader.
- The 22 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account. The inspector also spoke to parents on the playground before the start of school. Staff completed questionnaires in order to give their views of the school and their responses were considered by the inspector.
- A range of school documents was scrutinised including minutes of the governing body meetings, behaviour and incident logs, the school self evaluation document and school performance information.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils to ask them their views of the school and listened to pupils read. Pupils' behaviour was observed inside the school and on the playground at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Robin Taverner, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bentley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The school has a formal federation with a near-by school, Copdock Primary School, and has an executive headteacher and joint governing body who lead both schools. The schools work together to share their expertise, staff and resources.
- In the mornings, pupils in Year 1 and children in the early years, form one class. Another class contains pupils in Years 2 to 4. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6, travel to Copdock Primary School to be taught with the Year 5 and 6 pupils from that school. In the afternoons, children in the early years, and pupils in Years 1 and 2, are taught in one class, and pupils in Years 3, 4, 5, and 6 form the other class. Children in the early years Reception class attend full-time from the age of 4, when they join the school.
- The number of pupils in separate year groups varies from two to nine.
- The proportion of pupils supported through pupil premium funding, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils who are looked after by the local authority, is below average, at approximately one in 10 pupils.
- Approximately one in five pupils have disabilities or special educational needs, which is an above average proportion.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress at the end of Year 6, in reading writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help pupils to make even better progress so that achievement is outstanding by:
 - having consistently high expectations of pupils' work across a range of subjects including insisting that that they make good use of their independent writing skills
 - checking carefully to ensure that pupils have gained the intended knowledge or skills by the end of the lesson so that misunderstandings can be identified and acted upon, quickly
 - making sure pupils always use the advice and guidance provided by teachers through their marking of work, in order that mistakes do not persist.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership is good because leaders have been effective in making the recommended improvements since the last inspection. Teaching is now consistently good throughout the school due to the relentless ways leaders constantly look for the most effective ways of helping pupils to learn.
- Leadership is shared across the two schools in the federation and this arrangement is having a good impact on the quality of teaching at Bentley Primary School. This is because the schools share their expertise, enthusiasm and drive to bring about rapid improvement.
- Teachers in charge of subjects are effective. The well-qualified and enthusiastic leaders of mathematics have improved the quality of teaching in this subject so that it now embraces the key aims of the new National Curriculum. Teaching helps children to understand the reasons why a calculation is used in number work and requires pupils to apply their number and mathematical skills to solve problems.
- The teacher in charge of English has improved the teaching of phonics (sounds that letters make) and introduced changes to the way writing and reading are taught. These changes are helping pupils to make more progress and achieve higher standards.
- The leadership of provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs is good. Leaders ensure that pupils are taught well and make progress which is equal to, and sometimes better than, their classmates. This ensures equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Early Years provision is led well. Leaders ensure that children experience all the areas of learning, sometimes by teaching them directly, and at other times allowing them to practice their skills through activities they are able to choose.
- Senior leaders know their school well. School self-evaluation is accurate and leaders have relevant plans to improve the school further.
- The school works hard to strengthen relationships with parents. For example, the school keeps parents well informed of their children's progress through mid-year reports, followed by face-to-face meetings. Workshops are arranged to inform parents how, for example, phonics is taught or to highlight safeguarding issues such as the dangers of using computers and the internet.
- The executive headteacher and leaders of subjects, check the work of teachers regularly, by observing lessons and looking at pupil's work. The information collected is used well to recognise good practice and make further improvements.
- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective, and meet all requirements.
- Leaders ensure that pupils receive a broad range of subjects which are based on the new national curriculum. Subjects and themes are planned carefully, so that pupils who stay in the same class for two or more years, always have different topics to study. Leaders have introduced new ways of checking pupils' progress now that levels are not being used for some year groups.
- The primary physical education and sports premium funding is used well to provide a sports coach who teaches a range of different sports to the pupils. Pupils now have more opportunities to take part in sports competitions against other schools.
- Pupil premium funding helps to pay for an extra member of staff to provide additional support and teaching to eligible pupils. As a result, these pupils make progress in line with their classmates.
- The school has strengths in its development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils are taught about how people live, outside of the school, in various ways, from studying world religions to visiting businesses such as pizza restaurants. Pupils learn about democracy by electing their peers to the school council. The values of the school are strongly

promoted and, for example, pupils are encouraged to 'shine a light' and help others as much as possible. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for fund raising for charitable causes and in doing so, learn about business and enterprise. Pupils have decided they would like the school to keep chickens and have presented a business plan to the teachers and governors to make this happen.

- The local authority has checked whether improvements are being made since the last inspection and has helped the school to improve their early years provision.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is effective. Governors bring a range of skills to their role including knowledge of finance and personnel management.
- They know the school well, including having a good understanding of performance information and the quality of teaching.
- Governors are confident that the school is improving and know how they would like to see the school improve even more.
- Governors are aware of their statutory duties and have received appropriate training in safeguarding and many other issues. They are kept well informed about how well teachers and other staff perform and link this information to pay awards.
- They know how the pupil premium and sports premium are being spent and can say how the school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Recently governors sent a questionnaire to parents. They looked at the responses and wrote to parents to say how they are taking account of their views and the resulting changes they will make to the running of the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The vast majority of pupils in the school work hard in lessons and try their best. Pupils enjoy their lessons which are made interesting and challenging by the teachers. For example, in mathematics lessons, when pupils are asked to solve a problem, they keep trying even if they do not find the answer straight away.
- Pupils of all ages, including in the early years, enjoy their tasks and activities and say how much they like their school. They often help each other in lessons, working well in pairs or larger groups.
- Pupils are polite and courteous towards visitors, and in lessons are keen to talk about what they are learning.
- They behave well on the playground at break and lunch times. They get along well with each other and make good use of the equipment and apparatus that is provided for them.
- Attendance is above average, and so far this year there are no pupils who have been absent regularly. The school works hard in a variety of ways to encourage good attendance.
- Exclusions (periods of time when pupils are not allowed to attend school) are rare.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They know that if they have any worries, a member of staff will help them.
- Pupils know how to stay safe. They are taught about the dangers of using computers and the internet and

are knowledgeable about road safety and 'stranger danger'. On occasions such as bonfire night, pupils are taught how to avoid accidents.

- Pupils say bullying is very rare and if it occurs they are confident an adult will help to resolve the issue. Pupils understand the different kinds of bullying that can happen, including name calling, hitting and kicking.
- Parents are very positive about the school. Parents spoken to on the playground before school say that their children are very happy in school and enjoy their lessons. All of the parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children feel safe and are well looked after.
- Pupils say behaviour is good. They understand the school rules and know how the school policy for encouraging good behaviour works in practice.

The quality of teaching is good

- The teaching of phonics has improved since the last inspection and is now effective. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They have high expectations in lessons, helping pupils to remember what they have learnt previously and introducing new words, or combinations of letters so that pupils can use this knowledge in their reading.
- The children in early years are benefitting from these lessons and are already beginning to write independently and spell words accurately. For example, in one lesson, a child in the early years group, wrote a complete sentence, working out for herself how to spell the word, 'owl'.
- The school places a high priority on the teaching of English grammar, punctuation and spelling which helps pupils to write with accuracy. Good teaching of writing helps pupils to learn about different writing styles, for example, a newspaper article, before they have a go at writing in this style for themselves. Pupils, do not however, have sufficient opportunities to practise their writing and apply their writing skills across a range of subjects.
- Mathematics topics such as fractions or multiplication are taught thoroughly and in depth. When pupils can show they understand the mathematics skill, they are asked to use the skills to solve real-life problems. Pupils are often asked how they arrived at particular answers and are encouraged to learn their number facts such as times tables.
- Good use is made of practical apparatus or everyday objects to give pupils a good understanding of number. For example, when teaching a group of Year 1 pupils, the teacher introduced multiplication by asking the children to arrange windows on a building.
- Reading skills are taught to pupils in small groups, usually led by an adult. Pupils make good progress in these lessons, learning how to understand the meaning of extracts from books or poems. Younger pupils are given individual reading targets which say what they need to learn next. In reading lessons they work towards achieving their targets.
- Marking is improving. Teachers often praise pupils for the aspects of their work they have done well and provide guidance to show how their work can be improved. However, teachers do not always make sure that pupils use this helpful guidance well to make the required improvements.
- At the end of lessons, pupils are asked questions to make them think about their work and test their understanding of what has been taught. For example, in one lesson, pupils were asked how they could make sure their answer was correct. Teachers, however, do not always give pupils time to complete these questions or do not insist that they are completed carefully. Therefore, teachers do not always gain a full picture of the level of understanding of individual pupils.
- Skilled teaching assistants, directed by the teacher, provide good support to pupils with disabilities or special educational needs, as well as pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium. Pupils benefit from small group and individual support and this helps them progress as well as their classmates.

- Teachers manage mixed age-group classes well, making sure that all pupils make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to teach groups of pupils according to what they know already and what they need to learn next, rather than simply forming groups according to the pupils' ages.
- The most able pupils gain from the teaching they receive at Copdock Primary School in the morning, where good challenge is provided and work is pitched towards the higher levels of attainment. Younger pupils, who are the most able, also receive challenge and often benefit from working with older pupils in the small mixed-age group classes.

The achievement of pupils is good

- In their Reception year, most children make typical or better progress and are prepared well for when they start Year 1.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who achieved the required standard in phonics, (sounds that letters make), in 2014, was above average. Due to improvements in the teaching of phonics, this was a higher proportion than achieved the standard the year before.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, in 2014, was broadly average, and higher than the previous two years. Due to the good teaching of reading, writing and mathematics, attainment is predicted to be higher still in 2015 with more pupils achieving the higher levels.
- In 2013, and 2014, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing, and mathematics, combined, at the end of Year 6, was broadly in line with the national average.
- Due to the very small number of pupils in each year group, attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6, has its ups and downs year-on-year. In 2014, attainment in English punctuation, spelling and grammar, and in reading, was similar to 2013, and was broadly average. Attainment in writing, although lower than the previous year, was broadly average, but attainment in mathematics was two terms behind all children nationally. This was due to a smaller proportion of pupils than average who achieved the higher levels.
- In 2014, there were only six pupils in the cohort which makes it difficult to compare the proportion of pupils making expected and more than expected progress with national figures. Despite this, almost all pupils in Year 6 have achieved expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics for the last two years. The school can show, through accurate teacher assessment, that an average proportion of pupils made better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014.
- Observations of teaching, and scrutiny of pupils' work, suggest that the attainment and progress of pupils currently in Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics is stronger than last year, and in particular the proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress is greater.
- There are very few pupils who are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium and so it is hard to compare their performance with others, especially when looking at national figures. These pupils make good progress in lessons, however, and keep up with their classmates.
- The progress of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs is as good and sometimes better than their classmates. These pupils are tracked closely and teachers make sure that any additional support is effective in helping them to catch up.

The early years provision is good

- Small numbers of children join the school each year and their skills and abilities when they enter the Reception year, vary year-on-year. In 2014, the majority of children entered the school with skills typical for their age in creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematics

development and physical development. Literacy and communication skills were less well developed. Over the last two terms they have made good progress, and have caught up to where they should be. They are being prepared well for when they start Year 1.

- Teaching is good. Children are making good progress with their writing skills and most are beginning to write words and sentences independently. They are also making good progress with their number skills. For example, they understand pairs and counting in twos, and some can count to 20 and beyond.
- Children settle quickly to their tasks, concentrate well and try hard. They get on well with their classmates, working and playing together, in a calm and friendly atmosphere. Children are safe and well looked after.
- Leadership of early years provision is good. Leaders plan the tasks and activities carefully for the children, taking into account what the children know and can do and what they need to learn next. Themes and topics link the activities together to make learning relevant and enjoyable. Children experience all the areas of learning, sometimes being taught in small groups and other times choosing activities to practice their skills.
- 'Learning Journals' are now on-line. These record the children's achievements, their stage of development and their next steps in learning and are used well by teachers to plan tasks and activities which will help children to make further progress. Parents can see these and add to them. Links with parents are strong. Parents are invited to meet the teacher every six weeks to discuss the progress of their children.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	124754
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	453490

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	Select
Chair	Dennis Kell
Headteacher	Joanne Austin
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2013
Telephone number	01473 310253
Fax number	
Email address	admin@bentley.suffolk.sch.uk

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