

# Billingshurst Primary School

Upper Station Road, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9RE

**Inspection dates:**

9–10 December 2015

**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 | Inadequate |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Senior leaders and governors are ambitious for the school and have high expectations. School leaders have made significant improvements in all areas of the school's work, including in the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils in all years are making rapid progress in their learning.
- The school is led and managed well. School leaders are enthusiastic and determined to continue improving the school's performance.
- Pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average. Good relationships exist between staff and pupils. Classes are managed well and pupils work hard and behave well. Pupils take pride in the way they present their work.
- Parents speak highly of the school. They say teachers are approachable and helpful.
- Teachers check on how pupils are doing regularly and provide effective help for any pupil who needs it. Teaching assistants are well trained and support pupils' learning well.
- Pupils rightly say they feel safe and cared for. They strive to live up to the school's values and help to make the school a welcoming place. Pupils are happy and confident.
- In Reception, children quickly fall into the school routines and, through good teaching in a well-managed department, make good progress in their development. They are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- The governing body provides an effective oversight of the school through a good balance of support and challenge. Governors make sure safeguarding procedures are effective.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- School leaders do not always ensure that all teachers consistently follow the school's policy on marking.
- Not all pupils have enough opportunities to write at length to develop their ideas and practise their writing skills.
- In science, teachers do not always give feedback that helps pupils to develop their scientific understanding.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to do practical science.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of leadership further by making sure that the school's policy on marking pupils' work and providing guidance on how to improve is consistently followed by all teachers.
- Improve teaching in science by ensuring that teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to do practical science and provide more guidance on how pupils can improve scientific understanding.
- Improve progress in writing further by providing more opportunities for writing in more detail so that pupils can practise their writing skills and develop their ideas in more depth.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The senior leadership team is very ambitious for continual school improvement and has high expectations of staff and pupils. The headteacher has produced a concise evaluation of the school's performance with convincing supporting evidence. A well-organised school improvement plan has been developed, with a named governor for each priority area charged with ensuring that the planned actions are effective.
- Now in the second year of the two-year improvement plan, senior leaders have made rapid progress in addressing the areas for improvement in the previous inspection report. For example, they ensure that teachers check pupils' work carefully, that pupils' progress in mathematics has improved and that pupils take care over the presentation of their work.
- Subject and other leaders are enthusiastic and effective in their roles. They are encouraged to pursue further study to develop their leadership skills. The headteacher is keen to 'grow the leaders of the future'. Teachers new to the profession are supported well as they develop their teaching skills. They speak highly of the help they get from their teaching mentor and the value of the training and coaching they receive.
- School leaders regularly appraise the quality of teaching against the teachers' standards and gather a good range of evidence, including how well pupils are doing, to support their evaluations. Teachers are held accountable for pupils' progress and any underperformance is tackled promptly. As a result, teaching and pupils' progress are improving.
- Teachers keep a close eye on pupils' progress and quickly identify and plan effective extra support for any pupils in danger of slipping behind their classmates. The school works with the local authority and other local schools to verify the accuracy of teachers' assessments. Teachers, where necessary, plan closely with the inclusion leader to organise specialist help or extra one-to-one support from qualified teachers for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The school ensures equality of opportunity for all and that there is no discrimination. For example, senior leaders ensure that the pupil premium is well spent to the benefit of all eligible pupils. Eligible pupils gain life enhancing experiences through trips and clubs and extra help to close the attainment gap with other pupils.
- The school offers a suitably broad range of subjects in an imaginative way to meet the needs of the new National Curriculum. Pupils enjoy topics that appeal to their imagination, for example, 'Pirates' and 'Dinosaurs'. Topics start with exciting events, such as a trip or a visiting expert or character from history, to stimulate pupils' interest, and finish with another memorable activity. Forest school is part of the curriculum, rather than a club, so that all pupils can benefit from the experience. A wide range of other clubs and activities, such as visits to museums, garden allotments and a planetarium, enhance pupils' experiences further.
- As well as an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics, there is a wide range of sports available. The primary sports funding is used well to hone teachers' coaching skills and provide sporting tournaments and competitions. Pupils are successfully encouraged to be more physically active.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. This is evident in the good relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff. Pupils focus on different school values, such as respect, responsibility and happiness, each month. They learn about other religions and beliefs and about the fundamental British values. For example, pupils take part in the democratic process of electing members of the school council. As a consequence, pupils are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided good support, for example through regular visits to check on progress.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The governing body has taken effective steps to improve its oversight of the school's work since the previous inspection. Governors have received up-to-date training and streamlined the way the governing body holds school leaders accountable for the school's performance.
  - In addition to their own focused visits, governors gather evidence about the school from reports and presentations from school leaders and from talking to pupils and their parents. The governing body holds regular governors' surgeries where parents can meet governors and express their views.

- Governors check that the school's strategies for bringing about improvements are effective. For example, they monitor the impact of the pupil premium on the progress of eligible pupils and the way the primary sports funding is used to promote greater physical activity by pupils. A named governor is responsible for checking the progress against each priority in the school's improvement plan.
  - The governing body provides a good balance between support and challenge. Governors check that pay awards are warranted and that all underperformance is addressed promptly. They are closely involved with managing the performance of the headteacher, linked to targets in the improvement plan.
  - Governors regularly check that all safeguarding requirements are met and that health and safety concerns are addressed immediately.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- Teachers insist pupils behave well and work hard. They have high expectations of their classes, particularly of the quality of pupils' presentation of their written work. There is consistent use of the school's behaviour policy and regular praise so that pupils settle to work and respond to instructions promptly.
- Teachers work in year teams to plan activities and also share and improve their practice. They have learned from a good range of training and through working with other schools. For example, training from the National Mathematics Partnership and working with a local secondary school has improved teachers' subject knowledge and their skills in teaching numeracy and literacy. Planned activities engage pupils well. Overall, teaching is consistently good and pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing. Their assessments of pupils' progress are accurate so that the activities they plan build successfully on pupils' prior learning. Through regular meeting with school leaders, teachers identify any pupils in danger of slipping behind and develop effective strategies to help them to catch up.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and skilful. They support pupils effectively. Teachers work closely with the inclusion leader to plan suitable activities for disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs are effectively supported. On occasions, identified pupils work outside the classroom with a teaching assistant for more specialist help or individual attention.
- Homework is used to consolidate pupils' learning through regular exercises in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils also have some choice in extended projects they complete each term and which contribute well to learning.
- Pupils like their teachers and the work that has been planned for them. Teachers usually give clear explanations and ask challenging questions. In mathematics, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to solve problems and develop their reasoning skills. Year 5 pupils worked hard to investigate how the arrangement of three tables could be altered to increase their total perimeter. Pupils were inspired to sustain their concentration on the problem by the enthusiastic and accurate teaching.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for discussion before writing exercises so that pupils understand what they need to do. Pupils are confident in speaking and asking questions and are extending their vocabularies well. Pupils in Year 2 made rapid progress in writing a biography through asking each other questions about their experiences and using a 'writing toolkit' (guidance on what needs to be included). Although overall pupils' writing is improving, there are not always enough opportunities for extended writing for pupils to practise their developing writing skills and deepen their understanding.
- Most of pupils' written work is marked in detail, often with clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve their work. Pupils understand the marking system and regularly respond to advice given. However, school leaders do not ensure that teachers always closely follow the school's marking policy. In addition, in science, pupils' scientific understanding is not checked well enough and pupils do not have enough opportunities to do practical science.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe everywhere in school. Teachers look after them and listen to their concerns. The site is well supervised and the school ensures that pupils are kept safe. Pupils have learned to keep themselves safe from harm, for example when using the internet.
- Pupils have learned how to stay healthy. They enjoy the many opportunities to play sports at school. They know the importance of regular exercise and eating healthily.
- Pupils are self-assured. They speak confidently in class and ask questions and join in discussions willingly. Pupils are keen to take on extra roles of responsibility, such as being a school council representative or sports captain.
- Pupils know about bullying and the different forms it can take. They say bullying is rare and that teachers would sort out any incidents quickly and fairly.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They know the rules about behaviour and that their behaviour affects how well they learn. They listen to their teachers and get on with their work. Their good behaviour reflects the friendly but purposeful atmosphere in the school.
- Pupils are thoughtful of others as they move around the school. They are polite and courteous, often exchanging greetings and holding doors open for others. At playtimes, pupils play sensibly together and in the dining hall they show good manners and clear up after themselves.
- Pupils are proud of their work and their school. They present their written work well and look after the school environment.
- Pupils like their teachers and enjoy learning. They are happy to come to school and attendance is above average.
- Adults are consistent in the way they follow the school's behaviour management policy. There are few incidents of misbehaviour. All parents spoken to were very positive about pupils' behaviour and most of the comments on Parent View were also in agreement. Observations and speaking to pupils during the inspection produced no evidence to support the very few parental comments that expressed concerns over behaviour.

## Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school. The school's own performance information and work seen in books in all years show that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils show pride in their work and usually present their written work extremely well.
- Pupils pick up reading quickly. They learn phonics (letters and the sounds they make) well through regular short teaching sessions. In 2015 a very high proportion of Year 1 pupils, and more than the average, reached the expected standard in the national phonics check. Guided reading activities are effective in helping pupils to develop their comprehension skills. The school promotes regular reading well. For example, pupils say they enjoy the weekly sessions for DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) and parents are encouraged to listen to their children reading at home regularly.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and do particularly well in it. They gain confidence in handling numbers and mathematical terms and take care over the presentation of their work. They respond to the advice teachers give them to improve their understanding. They have to think about and explain why they do things. They are making rapid progress and their mathematical reasoning skills are developing well. For example, Year 6 pupils rose to the challenge of explaining their thinking when investigating a real problem of how to design a box for a parcel delivery firm to hold a given volume of items.
- Extra support, delivered in lessons and for small groups, for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is well planned and effective. Parents and pupils themselves are involved in planning the programme of extra support. These pupils are making similar or better progress than their classmates. Teachers plan activities in class that stretch the most able pupils. Overall, the most-able pupils are making good progress.
- The school makes sure disadvantaged pupils benefit from the pupil premium. Eligible pupils have access to all opportunities at school, such as trips and clubs, and have any necessary extra support to help them

to catch up. The attainment gap between them and others is closing. Between 2014 and 2015, the gaps reduced from 16 to four months in reading; from 18 to 10 months in writing; and from 16 to six months in mathematics.

- In 2015, the school's strong focus on improving teaching following the previous inspection brought about significant improvements in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils had made good progress and reached standards above the national average in all three subjects. The group of Year 2 boys, who did less well than Year 2 girls, had a higher proportion of younger children than is usual.
- By the time they left school, Year 6 pupils' attainment was broadly in line with national figures. The few most-able pupils who made less progress in reading and writing than could be expected had joined the school later in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 6 who were eligible for the pupil premium, but who did not also have special educational needs, made rapid progress in all three subjects.
- The school's focus on writing has been effective in improving pupils' writing skills and increasing their enjoyment of writing. Pupils develop good handwriting and a knowledge of how to organise text and make sentences more interesting. However, they do not always get the chance to practise their skills in writing extended pieces.

## Early years provision

is good

- Children join Reception with skills and abilities broadly typical for their age. Through a good balance of well-planned teacher-led activities and ones that children choose for themselves, children make good progress in all areas of learning. For the past two years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the time they leave the Reception class has been above the national average. School information shows that children did better in communication and language, literacy and mathematics this year than last.
- The early years unit is well led and managed. Leaders plan the transfer of children into Reception very carefully. Staff visit all children's homes and their preschools prior to children starting school to find out about their interests and requirements. Class routines and expectations of behaviour are established quickly.
- Children settle in readily to the welcoming atmosphere of the Reception classes where they are cared for and valued. Most children behave well and learn how to get along with others. They quickly develop self-confidence and learn to do things for themselves.
- All adults are purposefully engaged supporting children's learning. Adults ask open and challenging questions that make children think hard and develop their language skills. For example, through the teacher's questioning, a group of children were successfully comparing the sizes of parcels and considering which parcel would require more wrapping paper. Children have good opportunities to count and learn about the relationship between numbers.
- The early years learning environment is bright and stimulating. The inside area is particularly rich in words and opportunities for writing and reading. Children are successfully encouraged to write for a purpose and are enthusiastic about the process. 'Writing bags' are very popular with children. For example, one child said, 'I love writing. Can I show you my writing?'
- Teachers model skills, such as using scissors, and the use of language clearly and praise children for their achievements regularly. Phonics is well taught. Imaginative contexts for teaching the sounds engage children well. Children, pretending to hold a sleeping baby to pronounce 'sh', were all engrossed with the task and made good progress.
- Children's achievements are well recorded and additional information from parents is included. Parents are kept engaged and well informed about their children's progress through face-to-face contact and home-school contact books. The accuracy of teachers' assessments of children's progress is verified with the local authority and other local schools. Adults meet regularly to plan activities for the next steps in children's learning and also to share good professional practice. Children show strong interest in all activities and stick with the activities they have chosen for themselves. Leaders ensure that teaching across the early years is consistently good.
- School leaders know the quality of provision and its impact in early years. They know that the early years unit is doing well but are ambitious for it to improve further. Staff work well as a team and use their sound understanding of how children learn in their successful planning.

## School details

|                                |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 135183      |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | West Sussex |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 10001640    |

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

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 609  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Alison Sutton  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Helen Williamson   |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01403 782789   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.billingshurstprimary.org.uk">www.billingshurstprimary.org.uk</a>       |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:office@billingshurstprimary.org.uk">office@billingshurstprimary.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 20–21 March 2014   |

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average primary school. It has three classes in each year group from Reception to Year 6. Children attend full-time in the Reception Year.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors, frequently accompanied by the headteacher or the deputy headteacher, observed pupils in all year groups engaged in a range of activities in different subjects. They looked at pupils' written work in all years and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other school leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. The inspector also spoke by telephone to the school's improvement partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and, informally, with other pupils in lessons and around the school. An inspector listened to pupils reading and spoke to them about their reading habits.
- Several school documents were examined. These included the school's evaluation of its performance and its improvement plan, notes of governors' meetings, information about pupils' progress and attainment, evidence about the quality of teaching, and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- The inspector took account of the 128 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the views expressed informally by parents as they arrived at school. The inspector looked at online comments from staff.

## Inspection team

|                             |                  |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Jim McVeigh, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Simon Francis               | Ofsted Inspector |
| Julie Sackett               | Ofsted Inspector |
| Stephanie Scutter           | Ofsted Inspector |

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