

Billingshurst Primary School

Upper Station Road, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9RE

Inspection dates

25–26 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not secured the improvements needed to sustain a good standard of education.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable across the school, apart from in early years.
- Disadvantaged pupils are not making enough progress to enable them to catch up with their peers.
- The leadership of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is not effective.
- Teaching does not routinely meet the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, some of these pupils do not make the progress they should.
- The level of challenge for the most able pupils is not consistently effective in supporting their learning.
- Subject leaders and year group leaders are committed to improving pupils' outcomes. However, their work is in its early days and its impact is yet to be fully seen.
- The work of the governing body lacks rigour. Governors do not provide appropriate challenge to school leaders in order to support ongoing improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- Strong and consistent teaching in the early years supports children's good learning and development.
- Staff provide good support for pupils' personal development. The strong relationships across the school support a culture of respect and kindness.
- Pupils behave well. Attendance for all groups has improved.
- Work to improve teaching is beginning to have an impact, especially in mathematics.
- The wider curriculum provides a breadth of exciting experiences. Pupils' learning in science is especially strong.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress, particularly that of pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, and the most able pupils by ensuring that teaching:
 - provides appropriate challenge and support
 - enables pupils to practise their skills and develop their ideas in extended pieces of writing
 - secures pupils' ability to explain their ideas in mathematics.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - further tackling inconsistencies in teaching
 - developing the skills of middle and year group leaders so that they play a full role in school improvement
 - improving the effectiveness of the governing body
 - improving the leadership of the provision for pupils with SEND.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not ensured that teaching is consistently effective across the school. Consequently, pupils' progress is not securely good.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. She is determined to improve the quality of teaching. Following the previous inspection, there was turbulence in staffing and a subsequent decline in the overall quality of teaching. There is now a systematic process to monitor the quality of teaching and provide support to those teachers who need it. Nonetheless, while teaching has improved this year, there is more to do to ensure that teaching is consistently good.
- A newly established structure has improved the leadership capacity within the school. Year group leaders have begun to be held accountable for the achievement of pupils in their care. They have frequent meetings with senior leaders to check the progress of pupils. However, this is yet to have a full impact on improving pupils' progress in the way that is needed.
- Subject leaders are keen and highly committed to improving outcomes in their subjects. However, most are new to leadership and so the impact of their work is yet to be seen.
- The leadership of SEND provision in the school is not rigorous enough. The monitoring of progress made by pupils with SEND is not effective. This has hindered the progress of this group.
- The drive to improve attendance has been successful. Attendance has improved for all groups of pupils, in particular for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have also successfully reduced the numbers of pupils who are persistently absent from school.
- Leaders are committed to providing an exciting curriculum that enables pupils to become successful, independent and motivated learners. This has been particularly successful in the science curriculum, which has improved markedly since the previous inspection.
- Leaders of subjects in the wider curriculum have begun to evaluate how well subject plans support a progression in pupils' skills and knowledge. Leaders recognise that their next steps are to check pupils' progress to ensure that these plans result in good learning.
- Leaders make effective use of the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport. They have used it to make sure that an increased proportion of pupils take part in physical activities and competitive sports.
- The use of the pupil premium funding has supported an improvement in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. However, leaders have not ensured that its use has had the impact needed for disadvantaged pupils to achieve as well as they should.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well. The 'immersion days', together with a plethora of trips and visitors to the school, make learning fun. Pupils

have good opportunities to contribute to school life, for example by being school councillors or house captains.

- Parents are mostly supportive of the school's work. However, a few parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, are concerned about the quality of leadership and management.

Governance of the school

- Governors are not playing a fully effective role in school improvement. Although they make frequent visits to the school and receive reports from leaders, they do not use this information well in order to hold leaders to account.
- Governors do not have a firm understanding of how leaders' actions have an impact on pupils' learning. This hinders their ability to provide appropriate challenge to school leaders. For example, governors do not monitor closely enough how well the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND supports their achievement.
- Governors are vigilant in making sure that safeguarding checks are in place. For example, during their visits to school, and while accompanying pupils on trips, governors keep the quality of pupils' behaviour under review. Governors also check that incidents of bullying are appropriately addressed. A governor visits the school at least termly to make sure that appropriate checks are made on staff and visitors.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders are well trained and rigorous in making sure that all staff receive the necessary training. Leaders fully understand the importance of the 'Prevent' duty training and know that, 'it could happen here'. As a result of being kept up to date with safeguarding initiatives, staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's safety and take appropriate action without delay.
- Leaders are dogged about pursuing their concerns about pupils. For example, they make sure that there is appropriate action taken when, on the rare occasions, a pupil leaves the school without registering at another school.
- Appropriate checks on the suitability of staff, volunteers and visitors to the school help to keep pupils safe in school.
- Most parents and all staff who responded to Parent View, agree that pupils are safe in school. All pupils spoken with during the inspection said that they felt safe in school. They can describe the ways in which to stay safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent. This has led to variations in pupils' progress, particularly that of the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

- Over time, teachers have not consistently planned tasks that build progressively on what pupils know and understand. However, leaders' support to improve teachers' practice is having a positive impact.
- Where teaching is strong, teachers check what pupils can do and plan activities that move their learning on well. The impact of effective teaching was seen, for example, in Year 2 science books where the most able pupils were appropriately challenged to describe the differences between a bulb and a seed.
- Much good work has been done this year to improve the teaching of mathematics. Teachers increasingly make good use of the newly introduced approach. For example, Year 1 pupils embed their learning about multiplication by using practical resources and pictures to demonstrate their understanding.
- During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were encouraged to think deeply about how to solve problems using money, using a systematic approach. Pupils' books showed that these types of activities are typical in some year groups, although not all. Even where teaching of mathematics is strong, it does not consistently develop pupils' abilities to explain their ideas.
- The teaching of writing is too variable across the school. Pupils do not routinely develop their skills or practise them in extended pieces of writing. Consequently, some pupils lag behind with their writing. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- Teaching encourages pupils to read well, and for the most part, with confidence and expression. Teachers promote an enjoyment of reading and take opportunities to widen pupils' vocabulary. Phonics is taught well, and this enables the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the phonics check to be consistently in line with the national average. Nonetheless, pupils' progress is hampered when teaching is not well matched to pupils' needs.
- Teachers work hard to make their classrooms bright and inviting. Displays of pupils' work across the wider curriculum demonstrate the exciting activities that teachers provide.

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 keen to do well in school. They are polite, considerate young people. Pupils listen to each other's ideas in a respectful manner. They are confident to give their opinions and older pupils develop their ability to use evidence to support their views.
- Pupils can describe how the curriculum promotes their physical and emotional well-being. For example, they know that they benefit from learning in the outdoor provision and from taking part in the wide range of after-school clubs. Pupils are proud of how they take on responsibilities in the school and the part the school plays in trying to reduce single-use plastics.

- All pupils spoken with during the inspection said that they felt safe from bullying and confident that they could go to an adult if they needed support. The school has robust and effective policies in place to tackle bullying on the very rare occasions when it does happen.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have rigorous systems in place to monitor and support pupils' behaviour. This has resulted in a reduction in behaviour incidents this year. There have been no permanent exclusions for several years and no fixed-term exclusions for two years.
- Pupils understand the system to encourage good behaviour. They work cooperatively in pairs and in small groups. Pupils behave well around the school and during playtimes. Pupils usually behave well in lessons. However, on occasions, some pupils become distracted when teaching is less engaging.
- School leaders have worked hard and successfully to reduce pupils' absence. As a result, pupils attend well.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The quality of pupils' learning varies widely between classes. As a result, some pupils do not achieve well enough.
- The work in pupils' books showed the impact of inconsistencies in teaching. In particular, there is still too much 'catch-up' in Year 6.
- Over the last three years, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has been weak. In 2018, too few pupils reached age-related expectations in the combined measure of reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND made particularly weak progress.
- The progress of pupils currently in school is too uneven. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. Pupils' work showed that, although there are some pupils who are making good progress, too many pupils in these groups are not making the progress they should.
- The most able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. This is because, too often, work lacks the challenge needed to make them think and work hard.
- Pupils' achievement in the wider curriculum varies. It is strongest in science where pupils develop good scientific knowledge and skills.
- Evidence of pupils' work in other subjects, for example art and geography, showed that pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. As a result, pupils in Year 5 demonstrated good progress in art when making creative use of textiles and clay to portray the planets. Year 6 pupils showed their developing historical understanding through their study of the Mayans. Leaders know that they have more to do in order that they can evaluate fully the impact of the wider curriculum on pupils' progress.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is well led. The leader understands the strengths of the provision and knows the aspects for further improvement.
- Early years provision is good because teaching is consistently good, unlike elsewhere in the school. The leader ensures that adults use their knowledge about the children to match learning activities to their needs effectively.
- The leader is rigorous in ensuring that safeguarding systems are effective. Children understand the routines in early years and behave well. They learn to work and play happily together. Adults promote a sense of care and relationships are nurturing. As a result, the early years provides a happy, safe environment in which children thrive.
- During the inspection, children enjoyed talking about the strawberries and beans they had planted; writing about their wishes; playing cooperatively in the role-play area and building construction models. These activities are planned well and mean that children sustain their interest in them. However, at times, activities do not provide the challenge needed for children to make the strong progress of which they are capable.
- Communication with parents is strong. Transition arrangements are well thought through. Liaison with pre-schools and home visits help staff to know the children well so they settle quickly into learning when they join the school.
- Early reading skills are developed well. A quick start is made to learning phonics. Care is taken to make sure that the books children read link closely to their phonics understanding. This helps them to become confident readers.
- Children, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, make good progress in the early years. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the time they move into Year 1 is above the national average. This prepares children well for key stage 1.

School details

Unique reference number	135813
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10088195

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	608
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bik-Kay Talbot
Headteacher	Helen Williamson
Telephone number	01403 782 789
Website	www.billingshurstprimary.org.uk
Email address	head@billingshurstprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 December 2015

Information about this school

- Billingshurst is larger than the average-sized school.
- Children in the early years are taught in three full-time Reception classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly higher than the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors evaluated learning across the school. Nearly all lessons were visited jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteacher or the special educational needs coordinator. The early years was visited jointly with the early years leader.
- Inspectors looked very closely at a full range of pupils' work from across the school to inform their judgements about the achievement of pupils currently in school. Most of this scrutiny was carried out alongside school leaders.
- Inspectors talked to several groups of pupils about their experiences of learning at Billingshurst Primary. Inspectors listened to pupils read. A group of pupils showed an inspector round the school, discussing the displays, their learning and what it is like to be a pupil at the school. Inspectors observed lunchtime and playtime.
- Discussions were held with senior, year group and subject leaders. Discussions were also held with teachers, teaching assistants and recently qualified teachers. Inspectors took account of the 44 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire. An inspector met with a group of governors.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents gathered from 108 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View and 75 free-text comments. Inspectors also had conversations with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website and a range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, behaviour and bullying, attendance, the school's self-evaluation document and the school development plan.

Inspection team

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