

Bincombe Valley Primary School

Culliford Way, Littlemoor, Weymouth DT3 6AW

Inspection dates

10–11 May 2016

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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, other leaders and governors are ambitious for the school and set high expectations for the quality of teaching, behaviour and achievement. Governors hold leaders to account for the progress pupils make, with increasing rigour.
- Since the previous inspection, improvements made to teaching, and to strategies used to check on what pupils know and can do, have improved and raised pupils' learning and progress. Teachers use this information effectively to target their teaching to address any gaps in pupils' understanding and to set appropriately challenging work for pupils.
- As a result of good teaching, pupils achieve well and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- From their various starting points when they join the school in Nursery or the Reception Year, pupils make good progress across a wide range of subjects. Progress in writing is particularly strong.
- Children in the early years settle into school well and make good progress, and by the end of the Reception Year the large majority have the skills required to ensure that they are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Pupils enjoy their learning. Their good behaviour, enthusiastic attitudes and respect for each other contribute well to the good progress being made.
- Pupils feel safe because the school fosters a calm and caring environment in which they can thrive. The school provides extremely well for pupils' emotional development.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability achieve as well as other pupils because adults support their needs effectively from an early stage.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching in phonics (the sounds that letters represent) and handwriting across the school is too variable.
- Middle leaders do not consistently check that their advice on how to improve teaching has been acted on by teachers.
- While the school's self-evaluation is accurate, it does not analyse rigorously the impact of actions taken. Identification of further development priorities lacks precision.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers follow a consistent approach to teaching phonics and handwriting
 - checking systematically that teachers act on the advice given by leaders to improve their teaching.
- Strengthen leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
 - actions taken are rigorously analysed to understand their impact
 - priorities for further improvement are precisely identified with clear action plans.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders and governors are ambitious for pupils in this school and strive to ensure that they receive the best education possible. Strategies to improve the school since the previous inspection have been successful in improving the quality of teaching and in raising pupils' outcomes.
- The very dedicated headteacher provides strong leadership and has inspired the staff and pupils to do their very best. As a result, pupils have a keen desire to learn and achieve well both academically and in their personal development in order to be good citizens.
- Systems to hold staff to account are rigorous, as shown in the improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and attainment across the school. Senior leaders monitor the progress of pupils in detail, ensuring that additional support is put in place without delay. Leaders ensure staff receive the necessary training to improve their effectiveness as teachers and subject leaders.
- Middle leaders have introduced a range of strategies to improve the quality of teaching and assessment and make regular checks on teaching. However, they do not ensure as a matter of routine that the advice they give to teachers to improve their effectiveness is acted upon.
- Pupils are familiar with British values, which they have translated into the 'Bincombe Bees' to help their understanding of what they mean. For example, they know about democracy and how it works in practice. This helps to prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum has been redesigned with a thematic approach across subjects to ensure that learning is interesting, varied and motivating, particularly for boys. The 'extreme sports' topic in Years 5 and 6, with activities such as 'street running', encourages pupils to be more active and challenge themselves both physically and mentally.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong, encouraging pupils to celebrate and respect their differences. This is evident in the display of each pupil's handprint, reinforcing the belief that every child is 'unique and beautiful'. The extra-curricular activities, such as 'problem-solving club' help to promote pupils' confidence and personal development well.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well and tackles any discrimination effectively. Leaders use the pupil premium funding wisely to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well both academically and in their personal development.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is of good quality, with clear systems that enable all pupils to receive the specific support that they need in order to make good progress. The school's specialist provision for pupils with emotional needs is extremely effective in supporting individuals and their families. As well as gains in academic progress, attendance has improved for these pupils.
- Leaders use the physical education and school sports funding well to raise standards in sport, improve pupils' fitness and increase their participation in extra-curricular activities, which impacts favourably on their well-being. In addition, teachers receive training alongside specialist teachers and coaches to improve their skills and confidence in teaching physical education and sports.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They are very appreciative of the improved communication that lets them know how well their child is doing in school. Parents particularly enjoy events such as celebration assemblies that involve them in their child's learning.
- While the school's self-evaluation is accurate, it does not analyse rigorously the impact of actions taken. Identification of further development priorities lacks precision.
- Good support from the local authority, external consultants and other schools in the Chesil Education Partnership have enabled leaders to strengthen their monitoring of the school's work and check on the accuracy of teachers' assessments.

The governance of the school

- Following an external review of governance after the previous inspection, governors have reorganised their work and undertaken extensive training to improve their effectiveness. With the help of a local authority adviser and an external consultant, they have developed the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their responsibilities effectively and provide appropriate challenge to school leaders. They suitably monitor the work of the school alongside middle leaders, which helps them to understand how well the school is performing.

- Governors have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching in school, and know how teachers' performance is managed. They rightly only reward good practice. They set appropriately challenging targets for the headteacher with the school's improvement priorities in mind.
- Governors' financial management is sound. They know how additional funds are being spent to help disadvantaged pupils and to develop school sport. Governors are aware that their analysis of the difference that additional funding is making to pupils' achievement and physical well-being is not always detailed enough to enable them to judge precisely what is going well and what needs to improve.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff are well trained and relevant safeguarding policies are tested out regularly for their effectiveness. Most parents support the view that their children are kept safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the previous inspection and is now typically good. Teachers are skilful and knowledgeable practitioners, with a friendly and upbeat approach that creates a positive environment for learning. Positive relationships, together with high-quality resources, capture pupils' interests and motivation.
- The feedback teachers give to pupils is effective in developing their learning. The school's marking policy is followed consistently across the school and helps pupils to improve their work.
- There has been a considerable improvement in the teaching of writing as a result of staff training and new approaches to teaching this subject. Pupils' writing shows that they are able to use a range of interesting vocabulary in well-structured written work. Although their handwriting style is not always neat, pupils are taught to be competent spellers, and use the range of grammar and punctuation that is appropriate for their age.
- A systematic approach to teaching comprehension skills is ensuring standards in reading are improving across the school. Older pupils particularly like the reading challenges with the follow-up quizzes and the new library books, which help to extend their language and vocabulary and love of reading. 'This school teaches you to be a brilliant reader', was one typical comment made; other pupils agree.
- Mathematics is taught well. Pupils are achieving higher standards due to the clear focus on developing fluency in calculation skills, with increased opportunities for pupils to solve problems and apply their reasoning skills in various contexts. The recently introduced 'traffic lights' assessment tasks at the start and end of lessons enable teachers to set work with the right level of challenge and address quickly any gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and mathematical understanding.
- Teaching assistants are very skilled and make a valuable contribution to learning. For example, they provide effective support for children in the early years with their language skills as well as developing their confidence as learners.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills well through the curriculum, for example with ample opportunities for pupils to express themselves in imaginative ways, such as the 'felt faces' art project.
- High-quality support is provided for pupils who have special educational needs or disability, and for pupils who have emotional needs, especially to improve their self-esteem and social skills.
- Disadvantaged pupils benefit from carefully targeted support in small groups or individually, which enables them to catch up with their classmates and achieve well.
- The most-able pupils are challenged well in their learning as teachers are adept at setting work with the right level of difficulty to stretch their thinking to the full. This is particularly effective in mathematics, where pupils are required to explain their ideas and methods, which deepens their understanding.
- There is some variation in the way phonics is taught across the school. Sometimes this hampers progress in developing accuracy in reading for younger pupils, and not all Year 1 pupils reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Teachers do not always effectively develop pupils' handwriting skills, which limits fluency in writing on occasions.

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 are developing into confident learners through the positive relationships that exist in school and the praise and encouragement they receive from adults. They created the 'Bincombe Bees', which exemplify British values such as equality and respect, and try to live these out in their everyday interactions.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and are well looked after by adults. They explain how the school keeps them safe and also how it teaches them to maintain their personal safety in different situations such as on the roads and the beach, and when using the internet.
- Pupils are clear that bullying and derogatory or aggressive language are not tolerated. They understand what constitutes bullying, such as whether it is physical or emotional. Pupils have complete confidence in adults to sort things out effectively should bullying occur.
- School staff work effectively with external agencies to support pupils and their families to help improve behaviour and attendance. Parents are extremely complimentary about the support that they have received from the school in this respect.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils move around the school building sensibly, cooperate well in lessons and settle quickly to work. They are well motivated and are keen to learn because they find work both challenging and interesting. Pupils have a high regard for their school and make comments such as, 'This is the best school in the world'.
- Pupils are very well mannered and show a genuine interest in others. They keep the school tidy, ask whether they can help and consider each other's welfare, particularly that of pupils who have special educational needs or disability.
- The few pupils whose behaviour has given rise for concern in the past are extremely well supported in the specialist nurture provision. Marked improvements in pupils' behaviour, attendance and self-confidence have helped them to reintegrate successfully into school.
- Attendance shows improvement and currently is close to the national average. Leaders have taken firm action to promote regular attendance and punctuality for the small minority of pupils who do not attend regularly. This is starting to show impact with a reduction in absence.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- From starting points on entry to the school that are well below those typical for most children, pupils make good and sometimes excellent progress across the school. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. In 2015, an above-average proportion achieved the expected level in the Year 6 national tests in reading and mathematics and in teachers' assessment in writing.
- Standards are improving and good outcomes are evident in the school's own assessment information and in the work in pupils' books. Attainment is rising in both key stages 1 and 2.
- Achievement in writing is much improved. Pupils write to good standards across the curriculum and demonstrate good skills in their use of spelling, grammar and punctuation when writing for a variety of different purposes. Occasionally, their style of handwriting is untidy, which hampers their fluency in writing.
- Pupils develop effective skills in calculation and a good understanding in all aspects of mathematics. They are able to solve problems effectively, use reasoning and apply their knowledge to explain their ideas clearly.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below average. An inconsistency in the approach to teaching phonics slows the progress of some pupils in becoming accurate readers. However, by the end of Year 2, the large majority have developed proficient skills in reading, with a good level of understanding.

- Older pupils enjoy reading across a wide range of literature, encouraged by their teachers and the new stock of library books. They speak knowledgeably about different authors and demonstrate good levels of understanding.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress and attain as well as their classmates by the time they leave the school due to the effective support they receive both in lessons and in small groups or as individual tuition.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress as they receive carefully tailored support that is targeted to match their specific needs. Pupils who receive support from the specialist nurture provision make good progress, especially in their social and emotional development.
- The most-able pupils make good progress as their work is becoming increasingly challenging. Teachers use the information from their assessments to ensure that the work is set at the right level of difficulty, providing additional challenge as soon as pupils demonstrate their competence in an area of learning.

Early years provision

is good

- The majority of children join the school in the Bincombe Buds (aged two) or the Nursery (aged three) with knowledge and basic skills well below those seen typically for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning, especially in their language and communication skills and their personal development. They continue to make good progress in the Reception Year and most start Year 1 as confident learners with the basic skills and understanding typical for their age.
- Children are enthusiastic learners and are keen to join in learning activities. They behave well and develop a good sense of how to keep safe both indoors and outside.
- Parents enjoy positive relationships with school staff and are closely involved in the life of the school. They are kept well informed of their child's progress through effective channels of communication such as the weekly 'bacon butty' open mornings, and they say that they find staff very approachable.
- Good attention is paid to children's safeguarding and welfare. Adults are vigilant to ensure that children who have special educational needs or disability, and others considered vulnerable, are supported very carefully and effectively.
- Teachers' assessment and the tracking of children's learning are of good quality and activities are usually well matched to children's needs. Adults record the small steps seen in children's learning as they arise, compiling very comprehensive records of their achievement across their time in the early years.
- The overall quality of teaching is good. Adults plan stimulating activities using high-quality resources that spark children's interests and imagination. For example, the sand 'kitchen' is extremely popular with children as they cook up 'dishes' of lasagne and chocolate pudding, extending their language and social skills as they play.
- Mathematics development is strong and children are challenged effectively. In one such instance, as children were successful with the initial challenge, the teacher kept adding more number cards to the activity so that children's thinking was stretched to the full.
- Specialist external consultants are effective in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills; this support is used well by some disadvantaged pupils.
- Phonics skills are taught routinely, which underpins the effective development of early reading and writing skills. However, the variation in the effectiveness of the teaching of phonics does not enable some children to learn as well as they could.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. The leader ensures that staff have good opportunities to train and to develop their skills, particularly in supporting children's language development. She has a clear view of the strengths of the provision and is aware that further improvement is needed to ensure that a wholly consistent approach to teaching phonics is adopted across the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	113716
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10012358

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Boichot
Headteacher	Leif Pallister
Telephone number	01305 832329
Website	www.bincombe.dorset.sch.uk
Email address	office@bincombe.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 June 2014

Information about this school

- This school is larger than average. Pupils are organised in 14 classes, nine of which are single-age classes, with one mixed Year 3 and Year 4 class and one mixed Year 4 and Year 5 class. There are two Nursery classes for three- and four-year-olds and a 'Bincombe Buds' class for two-year-olds.
- The headteacher took up his post in September 2014.
- The school is part of the Chesil Education Partnership, comprising 21 local schools.
- The school hosts a Thrive Education Zone. This is specialist provision for pupils with additional needs from this school and other local schools.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. This is additional government funding for those pupils who are eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The school provides care for pupils through the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place over two days. Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school, sometimes in conjunction with the headteacher. In addition, they made visits to classrooms, assemblies, the dining hall and the playground.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and school leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority who supports the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of the school's own parents' survey, as well as consulting informally with parents at the start of the school day. They also took account of the 11 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire and the 23 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans. They examined information on current pupils' progress, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding procedures and the plans for the use of the primary physical education and sports premium.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, talked to them in classrooms and evaluated samples of their work.

Inspection team

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