

Belton Church of England Primary School

Saddlers Wells, Belton, Loughborough, LE12 9TS

Inspection dates

5–6 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good overall. Pupils make excellent progress in their development of reading skills. They make good progress in developing writing and mathematics skills.
- The provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and they make good progress in their learning.
- The quality of teaching is good and this ensures that almost all pupils make good progress. Teachers quickly get to know the individual needs and interests of pupils in this small village school.
- Pupils have a very well developed understanding for their age about how to stay safe, and they attend school regularly.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are exceptionally well-motivated learners. This is because they are interested in the topics they learn about and because the quality of teaching is good.
- The quality of leadership and management is good. Leaders have successfully ensured that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have remained good since the last inspection. Concise and well-considered improvement plans indicate that the school is well placed to continue to improve.
- The governing body has a secure understanding of the school's performance and is effective in holding leaders to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress overall, and particularly in mathematics in Key Stage 2, does not match the outstanding progress they make in developing their reading skills.
- Staff do not have an agreed strategy about how to teach pupils to calculate numbers.
- Leaders do not always identify the precise training needs of each member of staff.
- Subject leaders do not have enough opportunities to observe other teachers in school, to help them to improve their teaching.
- Teachers do not make the best use of time in a small minority of lessons to check and respond to the progress pupils are making. This means that they miss opportunities to further challenge pupils, particularly the most able.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed four teachers teaching a total of six lessons. Four of these were observed jointly with the interim headteacher. Two assemblies were also visited by the inspector.
- The inspector gathered the views of parents and carers by taking account of the 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). He also spoke with a number of parents and carers.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school improvement plan, documents showing how leaders check and support the improvement of teachers' work, and the school's record of staff suitability checks. The inspector also checked work in pupils' books and the school's records of pupils' progress.
- Meetings were held with the school's senior leaders, members of the governing body including the Chair of the Governing Body, a professional adviser working in partnership with the school, and two groups of pupils. This included listening to pupils read.

Inspection team

Jeremy Spencer, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children begin the Early Years Foundation Stage when they are four years old. They are taught in three mixed-age class groups. They leave the school at the end of Year 5 to move on to the next stage of their education.
- Most pupils are from a White British background. A very small minority are known to speak English as an additional language.
- A lower than average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for funding through the pupil premium (extra money given to the school by the government mainly for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school's long-standing headteacher retired at the end of the summer term 2013. An interim headteacher, who has been the school's senior teacher, is currently leading the school.
- A breakfast club operates on the school site and is included in this inspection as it operates under the leadership of the governing body.
- The school is part of a loose federation of other local schools who work together and support each other without formal links.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that a higher proportion of pupils make better than expected progress, particularly in mathematics in Key Stage 2, and improve the quality of teaching to outstanding by:
 - revising the school's calculation policy to ensure that all staff, parents and carers have a clear understanding of how calculation skills should be developed and the standards pupils are expected to achieve
 - ensuring that teachers consistently make the very best use of time in lessons to address any gaps in pupils' learning and to challenge the most able.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders identify the individual training needs of teachers more effectively so that more teaching is outstanding
 - teachers, in their capacity as subject leaders, observe colleagues' teaching more often, to enable them to monitor quality and support improvement more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All of the parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View), or who spoke with the inspector during the inspection, believe that their child makes good progress at the school. Inspection findings confirm that all groups of children make good progress at Belton Church of England Primary School.
- Children begin the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly in line with those expected at this age. They settle into the school quickly, and work and play in a safe and stimulating environment. This, along with good teaching, helps them to make good progress during their first year in school. During the inspection, children were observed giggling together with their teacher during a 'wriggle and jiggle' movement and music activity at the beginning of the day. The activity played a valuable role in enthusing and energising the children and was highly effective in preparing them for learning.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1). They make particularly good progress in developing early reading skills. This is largely due to the school's successful programme to teach pupils about phonics (the sounds that letter make). In 2013, 100% of pupils in Year 1, (16 pupils in total), achieved the government's expected standard in phonics. This is well above the national average of 69%. Pupils typically leave Year 2 with attainment well above average in reading, and above average in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2, to the point where they leave the school at the end of Year 5. However, their progress, particularly in Years 4 and 5, slows slightly in mathematics. Pupils typically leave Year 5 well prepared for the next phase of their education, with attainment well above average in reading, and above average in writing and mathematics.
- Individuals and different groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, the very small proportion of pupils who are supported through the pupil premium, and also the most able pupils, make good progress from their different starting points. This is because leaders track the progress they make very carefully and ensure that they receive any necessary support to help them to learn well. For example, a number of pupils, including those supported through the pupil premium, attend a school homework club, where staff provide additional support to ensure that homework is always completed on time. Several pupils attend a 'more able' maths club, which helps to ensure that the most able pupils receive the additional support they need to achieve well. Pupil premium pupils are, on average, about two terms behind other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the gap is closing over time.
- Pupils develop excellent spiritual awareness through, for example, frequent opportunities to pray and sing together. They also make very good progress in developing social skills and in their moral development. Pupils develop an appropriate understanding of cultures which are different from their own, but opportunities to develop this aspect of learning are more limited than they could be.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers build strong and trusting relationships with pupils. They also ensure that pupils are given frequent opportunities to discuss ideas with their peers in lessons and almost always share learning objectives with pupils in lessons. As a result, pupils understand what they are learning to do, and become confident, willing, and highly engaged learners.

- Learning support assistants are a particular strength of the school and they play an important role in helping all pupils, particularly disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, to participate fully in lessons and make good progress. They enable pupils to develop the skills they need to become increasingly independent learners, but also judge when they need to intervene in pupils' learning so that the pupils do not fall behind.
- During the inspection pupils were observed making good progress in most lessons, including a lesson in the Year 4/5 class, during which pupils learned about writing techniques to further engage the reader. By the end of the lesson, almost all pupils had produced a high-quality piece of writing and could discuss the techniques they had deployed to engage the reader.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View, or who spoke with the inspector, believe that their child is well taught at the school.
- Most teaching, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is good and a small minority is outstanding. However, over time, teaching in mathematics has not been as effective as in other subjects. This is largely because the school does not have a calculation policy (an agreed system to teach pupils how to calculate numbers). Pupils in Year 5 answer oral mathematics questions, involving calculation, accurately. However, they lack confidence and often answer with hesitation. This contrasts with the strong confidence they have in their reading and spelling skills. Leaders have identified this as a development point and have begun to work on a calculation policy. Leaders have agreed to share the policy with parents and carers when it is completed, to help them to understand the standards expected of pupils.
- Teachers plan lessons with care, taking into account pupils' prior learning and achievement. However, once lessons begin, some teachers do not check pupils' work as frequently as they could do. This means that some misconceptions go unnoticed as lessons develop and, on some occasions, more-able pupils spend too long repeating work unnecessarily when they are capable of moving on to more challenging activities.
- Teachers mark pupils' work frequently and provide pupils with clear feedback about how their work could be improved. However, teachers' comments in pupils' writing books are often more useful and constructive than comments they make in pupils' mathematics books. Pupils also appreciate and value their individual learning targets, which help to identify the next steps of learning that they need to take.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- As pupils left the school hall at the end of an assembly, they began to sing to the music that was playing. The singing was completely unprompted by staff and was accompanied by contented smiles. This was a joy to observe. Pupils' enthusiasm was maintained during the lessons which followed during the remainder of the day and was accompanied by an eagerness to learn. This is a very happy school and one in which pupils' behaviour is truly outstanding.
- During the inspection, none of the lessons observed were interrupted by pupils behaving inappropriately. Responses from pupils and staff indicate that this is almost always the case at the school. Pupils were observed behaving impeccably in different areas of the school, including the dining hall, outside, and at the school breakfast club.
- The school is a very friendly place and pupils are courteous and polite towards each other, to staff, and to visitors. Pupils have a strong understanding of the different types of bullying, but

say that they are not aware of bullying happening within their school.

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, older pupils have a very well-developed understanding of the potential dangers they could face when using the internet. They were also able to explain in detail why visitors should wear identification badges when in school. Younger children in the Early Years Foundation Stage were observed learning excitedly. However, they clearly understood why it was important that they did not run when they were indoors.
- Pupils' attendance is above average and has been so consistently since the last inspection. This reflects pupils' enjoyment of coming to school. An attendance policy has been agreed, through working in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistency of approach in the ways in which pupils' absences are managed in the local area.
- Almost all parents and carers who responded to Parent View believe that the school ensures that pupils are well behaved.

The leadership and management are good

- The interim headteacher has settled into her new role very quickly. She is highly respected by staff, pupils, parents and carers, and the governing body. She demonstrates great drive and energy, and has clear ideas about how the school can continue to improve. She evaluates the effectiveness of the school accurately. The interim headteacher is supported by a small team of teachers and staff, many of whom have responsibilities for leading multiple aspects of this small school. Almost all parents and carers who responded to Parent View believe that the school is well led and managed.
- Leaders, including the Early Years Foundation Stage leaders, have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been addressed effectively. A clear school improvement plan outlines how the school intends to continue to improve, and how the impact of the improvements will be checked by leaders, including the governing body.
- Leaders successfully ensure good value for money at the school. Additional grants, including the pupil premium, are spent effectively. For example, a large proportion of pupil premium funding has been used to fund additional hours for learning support assistants to support pupils who require extra help with learning. As a result, these pupils have made improved progress.
- Leaders have worked effectively, in collaboration with other schools locally, in an informal partnership arrangement. For example, leaders have worked in partnership to try to make the best use of the government's new primary school sport funding. The funding has been used to employ specialist physical education staff to teach pupils in the partnership schools, and also to help to train staff and improve their confidence in teaching physical education lessons. Appropriate arrangements are in place to measure the impact the funding makes on improving physical education outcomes for pupils.
- Detailed records of the attainment and progress of individual pupils are used well to check the progress of pupils and identify those who need additional support. This also enables leaders to check that all pupils are receiving equal access to the curriculum.
- Pupils learn about an appropriate range of topics and subjects, and this is reflected in their great enjoyment of learning. During the inspection, older pupils were clearly very enthused by their

'Vikings' topic, and demonstrated a good understanding of how life may have been for the Viking settlers.

- Leaders ensure that staff look after pupils well and that all reasonable steps are taken to keep pupils safe. Procedures for child protection and safeguarding meet requirements, and staff are appropriately trained.
- There are effective systems in the school to manage teachers' performance. Teachers do not automatically move up the pay scale each year and each teacher is set targets to help them to focus on how to improve. However, as part of this process, teachers' individual training needs are not always identified and recorded.
- Subject leaders, including the leaders of mathematics and English, undertake a number of activities to check how well things are improving in their subjects, and to identify how things can improve. These activities include analysing pupils' work and analysing information about pupils' progress. However, they do not spend enough time observing their colleagues' teaching, so that they can use their expertise to help to improve their performance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has an accurate overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is committed to raising standards further. Governors have an accurate understanding about the quality of teaching in the school, and are able to discuss data about pupils' performance with confidence. Governors have successfully ensured that appropriate performance management systems are used in the school to hold leaders, and other staff to account. For example, staff do not move up the pay scale automatically, and are only able to move up the pay scale if they meet their performance targets. The governing body has a clear understanding about the actions it would need to take to tackle any underperformance from staff.

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	120114
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	429996

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	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanne Finney
Headteacher	Elizabeth de Looze
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2009
Telephone number	01530 222304
Email address	office@belton.leics.sch.uk

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