

St Bartholomew's CofE Primary School

Ann Street, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 4GP

Inspection dates

22–23 September 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not been diligent enough in tackling the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The school is only making slow improvements because plans for future improvement do not focus on the key areas.
- Pupils' progress is uneven across the school. This has resulted in some pupils not achieving their full potential by the end of Year 6. Prior to this inspection, leaders did not monitor the progress of all groups of pupils.
- Teaching is not effective because there are low expectations of what pupils can do. Often pupils could do much better than they currently achieve. Expertise in teaching is not shared across the school.
- Pupils have not had enough opportunities to think scientifically and develop their understanding of chemistry, biology and physics.
- In mathematics, the progress of the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, is not as good as it could be. Pupils do not effectively develop their reasoning skills or use mathematics in everyday life.
- Children in the early years do not make the best progress. This is because they do not get enough chances to develop their writing skills. There is no clear system that leaders can use to check progress and hence identify children falling behind.
- Subject leaders do not have the skills to effectively support teachers. They are unclear about how to advise teachers about improving pupils' progress.
- Attendance is slightly below national averages and there are some groups of pupils who do not attend well; leaders do not monitor this. Parents are not made sufficiently aware of the need for regular attendance.
- There is some low-level disruptive behaviour both in lessons and in the playground.
- Governors' efforts have not resulted in effective school improvements, partly because they have received insufficient information from the school. The school's website is missing information that is required by the Department for Education.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils say that they enjoy school and that bullying is rare. They have a good understanding of issues such as e-safety.
- Pupils benefit from well-planned support for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Parents generally speak highly of the school and most would recommend it to another parent.
- Staff are accurate in their views about what pupils achieve in their learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure greater consistency in the progress that pupils make across the school, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring high expectations in teaching, particularly for those who are most able, including those who are most able and disadvantaged
 - ensuring that there are more opportunities planned into the curriculum for pupils to use mathematics in everyday life and to further develop pupils' reasoning skills
 - sharing the good practice that already exists in the school so that teaching improves.
- Enable children to make the best possible progress in the early years by:
 - leaders monitoring children's progress in all areas to identify anyone falling behind
 - providing children with more opportunities to practise their writing skills.
- Strengthen the impact of leaders, including governors, to improve the overall effectiveness of the school by:
 - effectively monitoring the progress of all groups of pupils and acting promptly if there are any concerns
 - developing the capacity of subject leaders to support teaching, so that when they look at work in books they have the skills to advise on how to improve pupils' rates of progress
 - monitoring the attendance of all groups of pupils and putting in place effective measures to ensure that parents are aware of the need for their children to attend regularly and consistently
 - implementing the school's behaviour policy consistently, to improve behaviour in lessons and the playground
 - ensuring that the school's website meets the requirements on the publication of specified information
 - making sure that pupils have more chances to develop their understanding of chemistry, biology and physics and to think scientifically
 - ensuring that leaders' evaluation of the school and plans for the future have a sharp focus on the most important areas for improvement, with clear actions and timescales for achieving improvements
 - making sure that governors are given clear information so that they can analyse all aspects of the school's performance rigorously and hold senior leaders to account.

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 pupil premium 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

- Since the last inspection, there has been considerable turbulence in staffing at the school. There have been difficulties encountered in attracting and retaining staff. As a result, not enough progress has been made in dealing with the issues identified at the last inspection and leaders have not had a positive enough impact on standards.
- Important aspects of school leadership have only been partially addressed. For example, although the progress of some groups of pupils is monitored, no attempt has been made to track the progress and attainment of those who are most able.
- The impact of the school's use of pupil premium is inconsistent. This is because subject leaders do not rigorously monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils across the school.
- Information on the school's website regarding the pupil premium and special educational needs has not been updated and is therefore not compliant with current requirements. Due to the fact that the acting executive headteacher has only been in post for a few days, he has not had time to consolidate his position and deal with these omissions.
- Leaders have not monitored the behaviour and attendance of pupils carefully enough. They have not checked whether particular groups of pupils are frequently absent. Parents are rarely reminded about the importance of their children attending regularly.
- Subject leaders in the school do not yet have the capacity to support teaching effectively. Although they look at work in pupils' books, they do not have the skills to advise on what teachers need to do to improve rates of progress.
- Hitherto, leaders' self-evaluation has been too generous in its conclusions. It has focused too much on the positive and has not paid enough attention to the areas that needed to be improved. It has not clearly identified the key actions to be accomplished or provided clear timescales.
- Some aspects of the curriculum are too narrow, particularly in mathematics and science, which affects the progress pupils can make. There are not enough chances for pupils to use mathematics in everyday life or to develop their reasoning skills. Planned activities in science are limited. Pupils do not think scientifically or develop their conceptual understanding of biology, chemistry and physics.
- Leadership of the provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities is very effective in identifying barriers to learning and in providing additional support when needed. Changes to the curriculum have enabled these pupils to make better progress.
- Pupils are appropriately prepared for life in modern Britain. The school places strong emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development. The range of extra-curricular activities is greatly valued by pupils. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Equal opportunities are effectively promoted and all are treated fairly.
- Leaders have used the additional sports funding to contribute towards the cost of a specialist sports teacher who has helped to train staff and hence improve the quality of physical education lessons. The school encourages all children to take part in sport, including extra-curricular activities, whatever their level of sporting proficiency. It

provides a range of funded after-school sports clubs. Pupils have won various tournaments and recently were awarded a certificate for being the most sportsmanlike team.

- The vast majority of parents would recommend the school to another parent. They say that their children are happy and enjoy coming to school. Parents praised the breakfast club and said that it provided their children with a friendly start to the day.
- Pupils are positive about the school. They say that the best thing about the school is the kind teachers and the fact that everyone knows each other well.
- The local authority continues to provide effective support to the school. Some of the improvement efforts have been hampered by issues related to the high staff turnover. Interim leadership has been put in place to prevent further decline.

Governance of the school

- Previously governors have not held leaders adequately to account. In part this was because they did not have sufficient information from the school.
- Governors do not carefully monitor the performance or attendance of different groups of pupils, such as the most able. As a result, they are unable to challenge leaders effectively.
- There is missing information on the school's website regarding pupil premium and special educational needs. There has only been a limited review of the impact of pupil premium spending.
- Governors have had little involvement in the school's self-evaluation.
- A recent reorganisation of governance is already starting to show greater support to school leaders. They are now working effectively on the recommendations of the previous review of governance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff training is up to date and all staff, including those who are new to the school, know the school's safeguarding arrangements. They know who to contact should they have any concerns.
- Policies and procedures are regularly updated and staff are ever vigilant. They are well trained in child protection.
- Staff have had recent training related to extremism and preventing radicalisation.
- Issues related to pupil's personal safety, such as e-safety, are interwoven into the curriculum. The school is planning further training to ensure that this area always has the highest focus.
- The school works well with parents and other agencies. For example, office staff are meticulous in ensuring that they know the forward destinations of the high number of pupils who enter and leave the school, so as to ensure they do not go missing from education.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not effective enough in many classes. As a result, the progress that pupils make in the different year groups has been

inconsistent. Too often, teachers do not have high enough expectations and have been satisfied that pupils are only making expected progress and not the strong progress that they are capable of achieving.

- Some teaching does not ensure that the most able, including those who are disadvantaged, are fully challenged. This is very evident in mathematics, but is also the case in other subjects. Leaders do not make enough use of those teachers who do have the expertise and skills to improve progress. They do not ensure that this expertise is shared across the school.
- Staff are accurate in assessing pupils' learning. They make good use of the school's clear system of recording the attainment of pupils at various times during the school year.
- The teaching of reading is improving throughout the school. Pupils use their phonics skills effectively to help them read unfamiliar new words.
- Teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is often well planned to meet pupils' needs well. Well-trained additional adults improve pupils' learning because they know when best to intervene and ask questions aimed at developing pupils' understanding.
- Teaching is starting to improve and this is beginning to have an impact. There was evidence seen in books of effective written feedback to pupils. Initiatives such as linking with external schools to develop girls' confidence in mathematics are starting to have a positive impact.
- All staff in the school respect diversity and promote equality.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning vary across the school. In too many lessons, a proportion of the pupils were not on task or fully engaged in their learning. Sometimes, noise levels in lessons are high and there is a lot of fidgeting. Pupils say that this affects their learning. At other times, pupils are too engrossed in talking to each other and so they do not carefully listen to the teacher. Teachers do not implement the school's behaviour policy effectively and incidents of low-level disruption are not picked up quickly enough. This has a negative impact on pupils' academic development and their understanding of how to be a successful learner.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare. All pupils who were asked said that if they had any concerns a member of staff would quickly deal with the matter. The school's bullying logs reflect this.
- The school is alert to any potential issues related to pupils' emotional well-being and pupils mostly feel well cared for. The school ensures that they learn how to keep safe in different situations, whether online or outdoors.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep healthy. They eat healthy snacks at playtime. When some pupils attend the cookery club, they enjoy learning about the different food groups and the appropriate portions of protein, fats and carbohydrates that they need to eat.

- Pupils were enthusiastic to talk about their roles in the school council and greatly enjoyed its last fundraising production, called 'St Bartholomew's Got Talent'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The behaviour of pupils in the playground at both playtime and lunchtime is often very boisterous. Although adequately supervised, pupils are often playing games that result in others getting knocked over. The inspectors saw that in the first few days of this term there had been many incidents of bumped heads and cuts and grazes.
- Overall attendance is just below the national average. The absence of different groups of pupils has not been monitored. This has meant that over the past couple of years attendance of some groups, such as the disadvantaged, has been low. Attendance is now improving because the school has started to monitor groups.
- Pupils are sociable and kind and interact with their peers effectively. When questioned, pupils said that they felt safe at the school. Parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were unanimous that pupils were safe in the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because of the inconsistent progress they make during their time at the school. Often, gaps in learning are not effectively addressed until the last two years at the school. Last year, the percentage of pupils who reached expected standards at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average in 2016.
- In mathematics, the progress of the most able, including the disadvantaged most able is not strong. This is because pupils are not always stretched to explain their thinking. Books show that challenge for this group of learners is spasmodic at best and this has resulted in these pupils not fulfilling their capabilities and making the same progress as other pupils nationally. In 2015, a significantly lower proportion of pupils reached the higher levels.
- Current pupils make inconsistent progress in the different year groups. For example, progress was slower last year in reading in Years 1, 2 and 3. In writing, progress was slower in Years 1 and 3.
- Progress in science is not strong because too little time has been spent on this subject.
- Progress throughout key stage 1 in 2015 was slow. Pupils entered Year 1 with skills that were similar to the national average, but by the time they left Year 2 they attained significantly below the national average. However, evidence seen in pupils' books this year shows the early signs that current pupils are making better progress. This is due to some staffing changes and better planning across the key stage.
- Progress in English for all groups of pupils is more positive. Reading is effectively promoted, although at the time of the inspection the library was used as a storage area. However, pupils were keen to say how many books they had read during the summer holidays and advised how much they had enjoyed the reading party at Sussex Cricket Ground earlier in the year. Pupils make stronger progress in writing. They enjoyed showing inspectors the innovative changes they had made to the story of Red Riding Hood.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress that is at least similar to, and often better, than all pupils nationally. This is because the school works hard to ensure that these pupils are helped with their specific needs.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language make progress in line with other pupils. Those who arrive at the school with little English are given additional support and quickly catch up.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Generally, the majority of children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. A similar proportion reach a good level of development so most are appropriately prepared for Year 1. However, not enough children make better than typical progress during the year.
- One of the reasons that progress is not as strong as it could be is because leaders do not use a clear system to monitor children's progress in all areas of learning. As a result, valuable time is lost because it is not instantly clear whether any child is falling behind.
- The percentage of pupils who achieved well in writing last year was lower because children do not get enough chances to practise their writing skills.
- The school employs an additional teaching assistant in Reception specifically to raise the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils. Generally, this has had a positive impact and most disadvantaged pupils achieved the early learning goals.
- The early years leader is committed to ensuring that there is good engagement with parents. Many parents were delighted that, soon after starting school, children were given tasks that parents could help with at home.
- The teaching in early years effectively promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a good use of resources, which are imaginative and stimulating in both the inside and outdoor areas. The hairdressing role-play area was much enjoyed by children, who were seen during the inspection to pretend to wash and style a teaching assistant's hair.
- Children are safe, happy and well cared for in the Reception class. They mostly behave well and share resources happily. There are no breaches of the statutory requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	114538
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10012281

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alice Whalley
Acting Executive Headteacher	Mike Jee
Telephone number	01273 692463
Website	www.st-bartholomews.brighton-hove.sch.uk/
Email address	head@st-bartholomews.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 July 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium and special educational needs on its website.
- St Bartholomew's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A very high proportion of pupils enter and leave the school at times other than the beginning of the school year.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is much higher than that found in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than the national average.

- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Children in the early years are taught in one full-time Reception class.
- The school runs a breakfast club which was visited during the inspection.
- At the time of the inspection, there was an acting executive headteacher who is in school two days a week. He has been in post a few days.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. There were 12 lessons and part lessons visited, many of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils and inspectors looked at work in books and listened to some pupils reading. There were also informal discussions with pupils at breaktime regarding what it was like to be a pupil at this school.
- Inspectors took account of 22 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and also spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- There were meetings with the local authority, members of staff and governors.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation and policies, including the school improvement plan. Information about the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was considered along with documents about pupils' current attainment and progress. Documents checking the quality of teaching and learning and records relating to behaviour, attendance, child protection and safeguarding were also examined.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sue Child

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