

Bearnes Voluntary Primary School

Queen Street, Newton Abbot, TQ12 2AU

Inspection dates 29–30 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have a clear and shared focus on raising pupils' achievement and aspirations.
- Consistently good teaching has led to pupils making good progress.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years and the school's positive relationship with parents and carers supports children's learning well.
- Pupils enjoy school. The school's strong emphasis on safeguarding and its caring ethos ensures that pupils feel safe. Everyone is included and behaviour is always good.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well and pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Governors are very involved in the school's work and keep a close eye on ensuring good teaching and achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is sufficiently high to ensure all pupils make rapid progress, particularly the most able.
- At Key Stage 1, progress occasionally slows because activities and questions are not always adapted to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they should.
- A very few teachers have not set high enough expectations in the presentation of pupils' work. Also, not all pupils have shown enough pride in the presentation of their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed all the teachers in the school. Five lessons were observed, most of which were seen with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other teachers and a number of governors. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority. Discussions were held with pupils from all classes during the inspection and the inspector heard pupils read in Years 2 and 6.
- A range of school documentation was considered, including procedures for safeguarding pupils, the school improvement plan, and current information of pupils' progress.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers. Although some parents and carers contributed to the online Parent View survey, there were not enough contributions to show these results. However, the inspector did take into account the results of the school's own parent survey held shortly before the inspection.

Inspection team

Stephen Bywater, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The number of pupils in each year group varies considerably. There are four classes and, with the exception of the Reception class, pupils are taught full time in mixed-age classes.
- The vast majority of the pupils are of White British heritage.
- In 2014, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium funding. This additional government funding is used to support pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals or who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is over twice the national average. A very large proportion of pupils join and leave the school at different times during the year.
- The headteacher is also the headteacher of another local small school and divides her time equally between the two schools. There is a formal partnership through a federation within which there is shared subject coordination and joint training and events.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and pupils' progress so that:
 - the most able pupils in Year 2 are always challenged and supported to make as much progress as possible.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and staff are passionate about improving the school. All parents and carers who responded to the school's own questionnaire and those spoken to by the inspector are fully satisfied with the school's work.
- In developing the leadership skills of senior and subject leaders, the headteacher has ensured the school has the capacity to make further improvements. There is a good level of communication between staff and leaders at all levels and they are a united, hard-working team. They consistently model high standards and expectations and as a result, pupils and staff always strive to do their best.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. All leaders carry out robust checks of teaching, pupils' work and information on pupils' progress. This is used well to inform the school's raising achievement plan and to hold teachers to account for their pupils' progress. It is also used to target appropriate catch-up and intervention programmes for pupils who have fallen behind. This is equally true in teachers' assessments of pupils who are entitled to free school meals.
- The leadership team is tackling successfully the low standards attained by the pupils by improving the quality of teaching. This is now good because of effective performance management, training and support.
- The shared partnership between the school and its partner school is having a positive impact on teaching, achievement and leadership and management.
- For example, subject leaders work effectively and have firmly identified the elements of teaching which work well. Areas requiring improvement are developed by further training and development.
- There are robust systems in place to monitor teachers' performance. The headteacher holds teachers to account through termly pupil progress meetings.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funds to reduce class sizes, employ extra staff and implement learning programmes to develop specific skills. They closely monitor the value added to these pupils' education.
- The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as others in the school. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. Leaders do not tolerate discrimination and successfully create an ethos where relationships can flourish.
- The school successfully provides for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies are carefully planned to support pupils' development and make them think about moral choices. There are planned trips and outings locally and further afield that enable pupils to contribute to the local community and learn from the wider environment. The promotion of British values such as democracy is a strength of the school. During the week of the inspection, a number of school councillors were looking forward to a visit to the Houses of Parliament to enhance their work about the general election.
- Additional sports funding has been spent wisely to provide a huge range of activities and to support the purchase of a mini-bus which provides access to numerous events. Pupils have enjoyed numerous sporting activities including archery, gymnastics and Futsal (a variant of football that is played on a smaller field and mainly played indoors.) Well over half of all pupils in school participate.
- The local authority is currently supporting the school to further improve standards and the quality of teaching and learning as part of a targeted support plan. These initiatives are working well and, as a result, there are very clear improvements in the attainment of pupils in all subjects and in their progress.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and staff, parents and carers agree.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is forward thinking and has developed a formal partnership with the partner school in their federation. Governors visit regularly and share the information gleaned at their meetings. They monitor well the progress towards the current 'Raising Achievement Plan'. Governors' questions challenge leaders to justify what is happening and why.
 - Governors have a thorough understanding of how additional funding for sports and those entitled to free school meals is used and the impact it has. Teachers are more skilled, and pupils are enjoying their participation in a wide range of activities and competitive sports.
 - The pay policy is linked to performance and the governing body successfully tackles underperformance. The performance management procedures are rigorously implemented to ensure that teaching is consistently good or better. The regularly track how well pupils are doing and take steps to ensure targets are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Bearnese is a harmonious community. Pupils are courteous and respectful.
- There is a positive ethos in the school and pupils and staff show a genuine care and respect for each other. Parents, carers, staff and pupils are positive about the behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils have good manners. They are clear about the behaviour code and follow it closely.
- When a small number of pupils with behavioural difficulties find it hard to behave, they are supported well by clearly-thought-out strategies that are successfully implemented by the class teachers. When behaviour is more challenging, the school offers a higher level of support.
- Teaching assistants are confident in their work and highly supportive of individuals and groups of pupils. This further supports the good behaviour.
- Pupils are attentive to their learning and are regularly seen to be working successfully with their friends to solve problems.
- Pupils are proud of their school and generally proud of the work they do.
- Pupils say there is no bullying and the very few arguments are quickly resolved. One pupil who had not been at the school for long explained, 'everyone is really close', then added, 'it feels like I've been here forever – I love it'. Pupils are confident to turn to members of staff if they have any concerns.
- Members of the school council and peer mediators take their roles very seriously and enjoy the work they do in providing a welcoming and supportive environment for their friends.
- The school has worked successfully to increase parents' and carers' awareness of the importance of their children's attendance which is broadly average. Rigorous and robust procedures ensure parents and carers are informed early and absences are followed up.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils fully meet requirements.
- There are effective systems for supporting vulnerable pupils and their families. Well-trained designated staff deal with these issues and the whole-school approach ensures the needs of these families are fully met.
- The school has taken active steps to train pupils and parents and carers in e-safety. Pupils are aware of how to use the internet safely and say that they feel safe in the school as a result of the guidance the school provides.
- The school recognises the need for continued vigilance in raising attendance.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and enables pupils to achieve well. Improvements in checking pupils' progress and setting more challenging literacy and numeracy targets have resulted in teachers having higher expectations. This practice is particularly good in the Reception class and in Years 3 and 4.
- Throughout the school teachers skilfully use precise questioning to check pupils' knowledge and understanding. They accurately assess who requires intervention so that all pupils keep up and the most able are extended.
- In pupils' books there is very clear evidence of good progress throughout all year groups and by all groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and make good progress when teachers use a wide range of strategies to capture their interest and help them to apply and extend their literacy skills. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 English lesson, pupils were asked to write an expressive phrase about the flight of an arrow. One boy wrote, 'It flies like a demon in the depths of hell.' Pupils in Year 6 were confidently engaged in writing a persuasive argument using rhetorical questions to convince their parents and carers to take them on holiday.
- Throughout the school the teaching of reading is good. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are reading confidently and fluently.

- Spelling is improving because teachers are tackling it through the systematic teaching of letters and sounds and spelling rules.
- In the better lessons, mathematical teaching is sharply focused on problem solving. Teachers probe pupils' understanding by asking them to explain how they solve the problem and why they have chosen their method. However, teachers of Years 1 and 2 pupils do not always plan activities well enough to engage less able pupils with interesting resources, or challenge the most able to extend their learning. On these occasions, pupils can become a little restless and the rate of learning slows.
- When teaching assistants are present, they skilfully add to the quality of the learning by asking questions to individuals that help them to learn. They also offer practical support in correcting misconceptions and enabling pupils to complete the activity.
- Teachers mark pupils' work well to enable them to make good progress. Adults provide effective feedback to individuals, and learning speeds up. Most pupils' work is marked with care and contains helpful advice to develop pupils' learning. Pupils usually have time to make corrections and learn from their errors and misconceptions.
- Recently, there has been a significant improvement in the presentation of work in pupils' books but this is not always consistently so.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' progress is improving and is now consistently good in all year groups and subjects. Standards vary from year to year and across key stages. The relatively small numbers in some teaching groups mean that data should be interpreted with care. For example, in 2014, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was well below average, especially in writing. The school's information and pupils' work indicate that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is improving and is likely to be broadly average for the current Year 6 pupils.
- Children enter the school with skills which are generally well below those that are typical for their age and make good progress in all areas of learning. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 although standards are below the national average by the end of Year 2. They build on the solid foundations achieved at the end of the early years. However, the majority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are new to the school, having arrived in the past year. They are all progressing well from very low starting points in all subjects.
- At Key Stage 2 the progress is good and particularly rapid in Years 3 and 4. This is because of the teacher's excellent knowledge of the pupils' starting points and the provision of challenging and engaging work. As a result, pupils rapidly develop their skills in all subjects.
- Throughout the school pupils make especially good progress in reading. Younger readers show interest and enthusiasm for books. They select their texts carefully and talk meaningfully about what they read. They are able to sound out words when they do not know them because they have been taught effective reading strategies. Pupils talk excitedly about the books they are reading.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good because they are supported by effective systems. These include targeted in-class and additional support that enables them to learn well as individuals, or when they are working as part of a larger group. The school is successfully closing the gap in attainment between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and all others.
- The most able pupils are generally challenged effectively because teachers' planning and practice are firmly and securely established across all the year groups. However, there are occasions when the most able pupils in Key Stage 1 wait while work is explained to other pupils and consequently, their progress is restricted.
- Progress in mathematics is good and learning is meaningful because pupils make connections with their real-life experiences.
- The very small number of pupils in each year group means that a comparison year on year and between national averages is difficult and unreliable. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 6 were over four terms ahead of other pupils in reading, almost five terms ahead in writing and nearly two terms behind in mathematics. When compared with other pupils nationally they were almost three terms behind in reading, almost three terms behind in writing and almost four terms behind in mathematics. The school's data and book review evidence indicate that disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 are making faster progress than other pupils.

The early years provision**is good**

- Children's good progress in the Reception class is underpinned by the very detailed information which staff find out about the children before they start in the class. Their starting points are measured with rigour when they start school.
- Good leadership and management ensure that teaching in the early years is consistently good. Effective work with parents and carers, for example in sharing the school approach to the teaching of sounds linked to letters (phonics) and ideas about counting, enables them to effectively support their children at home.
- The school uses this information to plan a wide range of activities which are accurately matched to their individual needs. As a result, children are rapidly developing early reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- The progress made by different groups of children is equally rapid. One of the most able children spoke confidently about the book, 'The Witch on the Broom' and explained the adventures of the witch and her cat. Another wrote when asked what kind of learner he was, 'I am a sharer beecos I shade my idees abowt the afbet'..
- Although space is limited it is used effectively. Children are kept very safe, both indoors and outdoors. Children get on well together and happily share equipment and cooperate well when building in their role-play 'construction site'. Children are developing enquiring minds and a positive attitude to learning.
- The teacher and teaching assistant work effectively to meet the needs of all individuals. They work well together to make sure all children benefit from the wide range of activities and record the progress made in detailed 'learning journeys'. These provide a clear picture of children's achievements which are shared with parents and carers.
- In 2014, an above average number of children achieved a good level of development at the end of the Reception year and were well prepared for work in Year 1.

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 113400

Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	461965

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Yvonne Short
Headteacher	Nicola Dunford
Date of previous school inspection	April 2012
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