

Inspection of a good school: Bayford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ashdene Road, Bayford, Hertford, Hertfordshire SG13 8PX

Inspection dates:

24 October 2019

Outcome

Bayford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Bayford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a lively and friendly place to learn. Pupils are polite and helpful. They welcome each other to school in the morning. They are caring, supportive and play sociably together. Staff know their pupils exceptionally well, so they understand when extra help is needed. Parents and carers told inspectors they are confident that their children are well prepared for secondary school.

Pupils understand that teachers expect them to stick to the rules and work hard. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is usually good. Bullying is rare. Pupils know that there is always an adult they can go to if they are worried.

In assemblies, pupils listen carefully to the music and think hard about the 'thought for the day'. Pupils like a lot about their school. This shows in the pride they take in their singing and across a wide range of subjects, including French and the recently introduced outdoor learning programme. Pupils enjoy after-school clubs. Leaders are proud of the school's 'Sport's Mark Gold' award. In the early years, children are enthusiastic and accurate when they practise the sounds that letters make to help them to read. They especially like learning how to cook.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher and governors are ambitious for all pupils to do well, including pupils with special educational needs (SEND) or who may be disadvantaged. Teachers are well supported and know that leaders care about their well-being.

Ensuring that pupils learn to read well is a high priority. In the early years, children are confident to use the sounds that letters make to help them read new words.

Older pupils have lots of opportunities to read in lessons. In English, pupils learn from a wide range of interesting stories and poetry. In Year 6, pupils spoke about the characters and planned a short role play based on the class text. In Years 3 and 4, pupils were knowledgeable as they discussed different poetry styles. Workbooks showed how their learning was organised to take them from simple to more complex activities. Pupils listened carefully as their teacher helped them to understand words such as 'myriad' and 'ceaseless' from the poem 'After the sea-ship'. Pupils could explain how this linked to other poems they had read, for example about the journey of the 'Windrush Children'. In all year groups, teachers read to pupils at the end of the school day. Despite these strengths, some pupils do not have a wide enough vocabulary to deepen their understanding of the books they are reading. Leaders know there is more work to do to ensure that pupils make consistently strong progress in reading across year groups.

In mathematics, teachers' planning makes sure that pupils build new knowledge and skills in a logical order. Teachers check regularly to see how well their pupils are learning. Over time, pupils are confident to apply their knowledge to solve more difficult problems and to explain how they worked out their answers.

In science, leaders check to make sure that essential knowledge and skills are taught in the most effective way. Plans set out what pupils will learn in each year group. Work is under way with other schools and science organisations to share ideas and good practice. Further work to improve pupils' use of age-appropriate scientific vocabulary and skills is in place.

In some subjects, leaders are new, so improvement planning is at an early stage. In history, teachers' planning for learning is not always as effective as it is in English and mathematics. Pupils enjoy learning about important historical events but sometimes struggle to recall what they were taught previously. A few pupils could speak about Viking and Roman invasions. However, they found it difficult to explain the difference between an empire and a kingdom.

In the early years, children settle in quickly. They are eager to learn from a wide range of interesting activities, for example weighing, measuring and using different shapes to create a car. Adults ask carefully considered questions to help children to think more deeply about what they are doing. Regular opportunities to practise new skills help children to remember what they have already learned over time. This means that they are well prepared to move on to key stage 1.

In Ofsted's surveys, staff and most parents said that pupils behave well. This is consistent with the behaviour inspectors saw in school. While almost all parents are highly positive about the school's work, a few have found recent staff changes unsettling. Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to resolve these concerns.

Pupils learn about British values, such as democracy and respect. They are tolerant of individual differences, including other faiths and different beliefs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their responsibilities to keep Bayford pupils safe. Leaders make sure that all the required safeguarding training is up to date. This is so that everyone knows what to do if they are worried a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff share any concerns quickly so that extra support can be put in place. Safeguarding records, including the pre-employment checks on staff who work at the school, are clear and well maintained. Pupils are taught how to keep safe in different situations, including when they use the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The importance of reading for pleasure, in school and at home, is a high priority. However, the strong progress that pupils make in early reading is not consistently well matched across key stages 1 and 2. Some pupils do not have a wide enough vocabulary to deepen their understanding of the books they are reading. Leaders should check that pupils are given opportunities to explore the meaning of the increasingly complex language in the stories they read. This is so that more pupils become fluent readers quickly and are confident to explain the detail in different texts.
- The schools' curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced across all subjects. In history, for example, teachers do not systematically make the links between different topics, so some pupils struggle to remember what they have learned before. Leaders have acted to plan next year's curriculum, train staff in how to deliver it and are in the process of making the necessary changes. They should now check that all subject teams have the skills they need to ensure that subject content is taught in the most effective order and revisited at the most appropriate time.
- Leaders and governors should continue to work closely with parents to resolve any remaining concerns about recent changes.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 10–11 February 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	117387
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10110277
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brenda Lambie
Headteacher	Malcom Foster
Website	www.bayford.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 February 2016

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with SEND.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes from the early years to Year 6.
- The early years offers part-time Nursery provision and full-time education for children in the Reception class.
- In the most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAM), which took place in July 2017, the school was judged to be outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons across a variety of subjects. We looked in detail at reading, mathematics, history and science. We spoke with subject leaders, teachers and pupils about their work and about other aspects of life in the school.

- Inspectors also met with the headteacher, senior leaders and governors, including the chair of the governing body. We looked at a range of documents, including curriculum plans, school development plans, and pupils' attendance, behaviour and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors looked at the 33 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 33 free-text responses, 13 responses to the questionnaire for school staff and 28 responses from pupils.
- Inspectors looked in detail at pupils' reading and their work in history, mathematics and science.

Inspection team

Christine Dick, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Pauline MacMillan

Ofsted Inspector

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