

# Bishop Ian Ramsey CofE Primary School

Manor Road, Medomsley, Consett, County Durham DH8 6QN

## Inspection dates

26–27 September 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Over time, senior leaders and governors have not addressed weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment. This has resulted in pupils making inadequate progress from their starting points.
- Turbulence in staffing has hindered school improvement and interrupted pupils' learning. Middle leaders have not been sufficiently challenged or supported to become effective in their roles.
- Leaders have not put effective assessment systems in place. Teachers have an inaccurate picture of pupils' abilities and low expectations of what pupils can achieve. On too many occasions, the work set does not meet pupils' needs.
- Until very recently, governors have not had a reliable picture of school performance. They have not checked effectively to see if additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used to good effect.
- Relationships between school leaders and the wider community have declined significantly. Leaders and governors have not developed systems to gauge or respond to the concerns of parents and staff. This has undermined the work of the school.
- Pupils make slow progress when learning to read. Books, including those that pupils take home to practise their reading, are not matched effectively to the letters and sounds they know or are learning. This prevents pupils from becoming fluent and confident readers.
- The wider curriculum lacks depth. The knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils acquire in subjects such as science, history and geography are limited.
- In the early years, assessment is inaccurate. Teachers do not build on children's confidence with words and their proficiency with numbers to provide sufficiently challenging activities. Expectations of what children can learn and do are too low.

### The school has the following strengths

- Staff ensure that pupils are safe. Pupils value the kindness of their teachers and the care and support they receive. Pupils are confident, articulate and behave with consideration for others. They are proud of their school community.
- Staff provide pupils with a range of experiences that enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils develop their self-esteem and confidence through varied opportunities to take on additional responsibilities.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - building the capacity and stability of senior leadership
  - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve across the school
  - developing the subject expertise and leadership skills of middle leaders to enable them to lead improvement and measure the effect of improvement strategies
  - establishing accurate assessment practices so that teachers have a reliable picture of pupils' capabilities
  - planning and implementing a more ambitious curriculum that allows pupils to work at a much greater depth of understanding across a wide range of subjects
  - using additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND effectively and ensuring that leaders and governors check its effect on pupils' learning and progress
  - rapidly improving the expertise of the governing body and developing the systems they use to check school performance so that school leaders have the support and challenge they need
  - building effective links with parents and the wider community so that they can work with the school to support rapid improvement.
- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by:
  - using accurate assessment to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, so that they make more rapid progress
  - using learning time more productively and moving pupils on in their learning when they are ready for further challenge
  - developing pupils' learning attitudes and skills so that they are clear about the actions they can take to make more rapid progress
  - making sure that the books pupils are given to practise their reading, including those they take home, are carefully matched to the letters and sounds that they know
  - providing more opportunities for pupils, particularly the most able pupils, to work at greater depth in all subjects, including English and mathematics.

- Rapidly increase the effectiveness of the early years provision, by:
  - ensuring that teachers accurately assess what children know, understand and can do
  - providing learning opportunities that enable children to build on their pre-school experiences and develop their capabilities in reading, writing and number
  - setting activities that enable the most able children to develop their skills in language through more ambitious opportunities to write
  - improving transition between the early years and Year 1 so that pupils are better prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum.

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 the 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

### Inadequate

- There has been significant change and turbulence in leadership and staffing since the previous inspection. Leadership capacity has been reduced by a mixture of prolonged absence and a high turnover of staff. This has contributed to the significant weaknesses in the school's current effectiveness.
- Leaders' and governors' actions have not secured improvement. Leaders have been unsuccessful in developing the curriculum and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, teaching has not kept pace with the demands of the national curriculum or the needs of pupils.
- Leaders have not used professional development to build staff expertise securely, including the leadership abilities of middle leaders. In some cases, staff absence has hampered leaders' intentions. New initiatives have not been implemented systematically and, in many cases, remain at the very earliest stages of development. Several subject leaders are new to post and lack the subject expertise or leadership skills to carry out their roles effectively.
- Until very recently, senior leaders and governors have not had a clear picture of the quality of teaching and the need to secure rapid improvement. Senior leaders have been unsuccessful in influencing teachers and teaching assistants to raise standards.
- The local authority brokered additional support to bolster leadership and evaluate the quality of teaching. However, these actions have been unsuccessful in bringing about sustained improvements to leadership, governance and the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have not developed an ethos of high expectations. Too often, teachers accept the minimum from pupils and do not push them to fulfil their considerable potential. The many children who enter the school with skills and abilities above those typical for their age are not encouraged to make the progress of which they are capable. Overall, too few pupils reach greater depths of understanding.
- Leaders, including subject and phase leaders, have not developed an accurate system of assessment that gives them a clear picture of what pupils know and can do. Inspectors found a mismatch between the summative assessment information about pupils' abilities and what was evident in practice. As a result, work is not pitched effectively to meet pupils' needs.
- Leaders have not developed effective systems to support pupils with SEND. Important principles behind the SEND code of practice have not been embraced, because parents and pupils have not had sufficient opportunity to share their views on the effectiveness of provision for pupils. In some cases, pupils with SEND have been taught separately from their peers for English and mathematics, lacking the specialist input of their subject teacher. This has weakened their experience of the curriculum and their wider overall progress.
- Leaders do not use pupil premium funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils to make good or better progress over time. Leaders do not provide clear evidence to governors and parents of the progress disadvantaged pupils have made.

- Leaders do not have a clear understanding of the effect of funding to increase pupils' participation in sport. There are some signs of increasing participation, but leaders do not evaluate the use of this funding sharply enough.
- Leaders and teachers develop pupils' awareness of democracy and the rule of law. Pupils have opportunities to contribute to the school's work through their representation on the school council, the eco-council and the worship council. In addition, they work with the police to understand the dangers of religious and racial intolerance.
- Leaders and teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Through an assembly programme, pupils develop religious understanding, while their social and cultural development is enhanced through a range of trips and visits.
- An acting headteacher, brokered by the diocese, has been providing support since September 2018. Since that time, there have been signs that relationships with parents are improving and that provision for pupils with SEND is being addressed more effectively. However, these improvements are at a very early stage of development.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors' actions are ineffective. They have not provided adequate support or challenge for school leaders. Although governors carried out an audit of their effectiveness, they have not responded to this with sufficient urgency to address areas for improvement. As a result, significant weaknesses in governance remain.
- Governors have been ineffective in developing processes to hold leaders to account for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' progress. Their capacity was weakened by the absence of the chair of the governing body for much of the last academic year. They have not appreciated the declining picture of pupils' progress in recent years.
- Governors have not developed communication links and processes to enable them to identify and address staff and parental concerns. As a result, these concerns have intensified to an extent where they have seriously undermined the effective running of the school.
- Governors do not check effectively to see if additional funding to support sport, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND is being used to good effect. Governors are not sufficiently aware of the concerns raised by parents over provision for pupils with SEND.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff take their responsibilities for pupils' safety seriously. Adults have a good awareness of the actions they should take if they have any concerns about pupils' welfare.
- Senior leaders have taken significant action to make the school site more secure for the pupils in their care. Leaders have carried out additional audits of safeguarding

practice to make sure that policies and practice are fit for purpose.

- Leaders carry out appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of adults working on site. Leaders pursue concerns about pupils' welfare thoroughly and record them effectively.
- Pupils feel safe and happy in school. They feel that bullying is rare and are confident that adults would address any concerns should bullying occur.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Inadequate

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time is weak. Actions to improve standards have been unsuccessful. Teachers do not plan the curriculum effectively to provide learning opportunities that enable pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers do not assess pupils' skills, knowledge and abilities accurately. End-of-year assessments do not provide an accurate picture of what pupils know, understand and can do. For example, pupils who had achieved high scores in the phonics screening check in Year 1 struggled when reading words of similar difficulty in Year 2.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is too variable across the school and has been below the national average at the end of key stage 2 for two consecutive years. Teachers' subject knowledge is insecure. Consequently, there are weaknesses in how staff demonstrate mathematical methods to pupils. As a result, pupils are not confident to solve problems.
- On too many occasions, the pace of learning is too slow. Too often, when pupils finish tasks, their time is wasted as they wait for teachers to set additional work.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can do. The tasks set in a range of subjects, such as science, history and geography, do not enable pupils to acquire subject-specific knowledge and skills in enough depth. This does not prepare pupils well for the learning they will encounter at key stage 3 and beyond.
- Leaders and teachers have not met the needs of pupils with SEND over time. Until recently, on occasions, pupils have been separated from their peers for English and mathematics lessons and have not had access to high-quality teaching. While specific interventions have supported some of the pupils with SEND effectively, the use of such withdrawal from lessons has not met some pupils' needs. A new approach to support has been introduced, but these new practices are at a very early stage.
- Teachers and leaders are not sufficiently mindful of the additional needs of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, barriers to their learning are not successfully addressed. These pupils have made weaker progress than their peers over time.
- Teachers have provided experiences outdoors to develop pupils' awareness of the natural environment. These experiences have also helped to build pupils' abilities to play and work alongside each other in teams.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are positive. Most pupils are well behaved in lessons. However, there are occasions when some pupils become distracted when work fails to challenge them.
- There are areas of good practice in the school where teaching meets pupils' needs more effectively. However, leaders have not developed effective systems to enable this

stronger practice to be shared with other colleagues to raise standards across the school.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Although there are many strengths in this area, pupils do not have a clear understanding of how to make progress in their learning. Teachers have not cultivated pupils' attitudes to learning or their confidence to explore a wide range of subjects in sufficient depth. Too often, pupils spend time awaiting direction from adults and are not equipped with the skills or opportunities to move on independently with their learning.
- Pupils are typically happy in the school environment and they value the support of their teachers and teaching assistants. They talked to inspectors with confidence and articulated their views clearly.
- Pupils report that bullying is generally rare in school. They expressed confidence that, if they had any concerns over bullying, these would be addressed effectively by staff. Pupils feel that teachers are kind and supportive and look after their welfare.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. They also demonstrated an awareness of how to stay safe on the roads.
- Pupils value opportunities to take on positions of responsibility, such as becoming mini police officers. They also appreciate opportunities to serve on the school council, the worship council and the eco-council. These opportunities increase their self-esteem as pupils become more confident to share their views and engage with others.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are extremely polite and courteous. They welcome visitors to the school and are keen to discuss their learning. They show courtesy by regularly holding doors open for one another and adults.
- In lessons and around the school site, pupils talked to adults with eloquence and confidence. They take pride in their school. In lessons, pupils behave well and respond to the requests of their teachers. Low-level disruption is rare, but occurs occasionally when work fails to meet pupils' needs.
- Historically, levels of attendance have typically been in line with those seen nationally. However, attendance declined to below the national average in 2017/18. Current figures indicate that attendance has now begun to improve, although a minority of disadvantaged pupils remain more likely to be absent than their peers.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Inadequate**

- Many children arrive at school with knowledge, skills and understanding above those typical for their age. The work set, as they move through the school, does not enable

them to make good or better progress from these strong starting points.

- By the end of key stage 2, pupils make weaker progress than their peers nationally in reading and mathematics. The picture has worsened over the past two years. Work in books shows that pupils continue to make significantly less progress than they are capable of, especially at key stage 2.
- Inaccuracies in teachers' assessment have a significant impact on pupils' progress. Because teachers do not have an accurate picture of pupils' skills and abilities, the work set does not address gaps in what pupils know and understand. These inaccuracies in assessment are apparent in various subject areas. For example, pupils' workbooks in science do not reflect the standards of attainment indicated by their teachers' assessments.
- The most recent assessments suggest that current pupils are making better progress in key stage 1. However, issues of inaccurate assessment in reading and writing render these figures unreliable. Although a high proportion of pupils were reported to have reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 in 2017 and 2018, pupils in key stage 1 demonstrated much lower reading standards. The books pupils are given to practise their reading are not matched closely to the letters and sounds that they know or are learning. This prevents pupils from reading with confidence and fluency because there are too many words that they are unable to decode.
- Pupils' progress in writing is inadequate. Although externally published outcomes suggest that pupils make better progress in writing than in reading and mathematics, a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks indicates that this is not the case. In Year 1, a much smaller proportion of pupils are writing at the standards expected for their age than assessments at the end of the early years would suggest. In key stage 2, there are notable weaknesses in the quality of writing. For example, too many boys do not have the basic skills to use paragraphs effectively in their work.
- Pupils do not develop their subject-specific knowledge and understanding across the wider curriculum in sufficient depth. Curriculum plans in science, history and geography are limited in scope and the work in pupils' books indicates that pupils are not well prepared for key stage 3 study in these subjects.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is weak. Pupils' knowledge of how to use a range of mathematical strategies to solve problems is variable. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their reasoning skills.
- Disadvantaged pupils underachieve. They make weaker progress than their peers and a smaller proportion of disadvantaged pupils exceed the expected standards for their age. Leaders and teachers do not use additional funding effectively to overcome the barriers to learning experienced by these pupils.
- Pupils with SEND make variable progress over time. Systems to check their progress are not well developed. In some cases, pupils do not have regular access to high-quality teaching in English and mathematics. While leaders are now taking action to monitor and improve provision and review progress with parents, these changes are at the very early stages of development.



## Early years provision

## Inadequate

- Leaders have not ensured that assessment information is accurate. Leaders do not take sufficient account of what children already know, understand and can do when they start in the Reception class. Children showed themselves to be confident, articulate and inquisitive from the start of Reception. Leaders confirmed that this level of capability has been the norm over time.
- A substantial proportion of children talked articulately to inspectors using rich, expressive vocabulary in purposeful, connected sentences. Children were highly imaginative in their play and demonstrated very good physical coordination when balancing. A large proportion of children arrive at school with skills, knowledge and abilities that are above those typical for their age.
- Teachers do not capitalise on this strong start. They do not have an accurate understanding of children's capabilities and so they do not plan activities that enable children to make good or better progress from their starting points. Despite strengths in children's communication and language, social and emotional development, and physical skills, teaching is not sufficiently focused on reading, writing and numbers. As a result, children make inadequate progress from their strong starting points, particularly the most able children. Too few are prepared thoroughly for the demands of the Year 1 curriculum.
- Adults in Reception do not provide children with sufficient opportunities to express their thoughts and ideas through an appropriate range of vocabulary. Children do not experience an enjoyment of language, as they have few opportunities to express themselves through mark-making and writing. Despite this significant weakness in the early years curriculum, in 2018, 80% of children were said to have met the early learning goal in writing at the end of Reception. The majority of these children failed to demonstrate this same standard a few weeks later in Year 1.
- Generally, teaching and learning lack a clear purpose. Teachers and teaching assistants often put more emphasis on the resources to be used than on the underlying learning that those resources will support. This is particularly the case in the outdoor environment, where adults' plans to enhance the use of the outdoor space are not well focused. Provision is not matched sharply enough to children's needs.
- Staff care deeply for the children. Children settle quickly, as staff are quick to forge an atmosphere of care and support. Children and parents value the care they receive.
- Children are imaginative and happy in much of their learning and play. They enjoy exploring the indoor and outdoor environment. They talk confidently with one another and adults. Their courteous behaviour reflects the care and support they receive from their teachers.

## School details

Unique reference number	114254
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10052988

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Sheila Bamber
Headteacher	Sharon Rogan
Telephone number	01207 560235
Website	<a href="http://www.birmedomsley.co.uk/">www.birmedomsley.co.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:bishopianramsey@durhamlearning.net">bishopianramsey@durhamlearning.net</a>
Date of previous inspection	20–21 November 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEND support is below average.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club that is run by school staff.
- There have been considerable staffing changes since the previous inspection. A new headteacher took up post in January 2017 and a new chair of the governing body took up post in November 2017. The chair of the governing body was absent from her role during the spring and summer terms in 2018. A number of subject leaders are new to post since September 2018.

- The substantive headteacher was absent during the inspection. An acting headteacher, from a diocesan school, has been providing additional support on a part-time basis for two and a half days per week.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a wide range of lessons, covering all classes in school. The acting headteacher joined the lead inspector on some of these observations.
- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher and middle leaders.
- The inspectors met with six members of the governing body, including the chair.
- The inspectors met the education development partner from the local authority and the director of education for the diocese.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils and talked to pupils about their learning and experiences at the school in lessons and at lunchtime. They also listened to pupils read in different year groups.
- Inspectors carried out an extensive review of pupils' books.
- Inspectors looked at the school's development plans and information on pupils' progress. They also considered arrangements for safeguarding and scrutinised records relating to attendance and behaviour. Inspectors looked at a range of reports and local authority documents reviewing different aspects of the school's work.
- The inspectors took into account 105 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and 51 free-text responses from parents. They also considered four letters from parents and held a telephone conversation with one parent. They also considered seven responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lee Owston

Senior Her Majesty's Inspector

Andrew James

Ofsted Inspector

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