

Berrycoombe School

Berrycoombe Vale, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL31 2PH

Inspection dates 12–13 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school because:

- Pupils are making good progress and achieving well in all subjects.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching have resulted in higher standards in English and mathematics. Pupils' results at the end of Year 6 have continued to rise since the last inspection and are now above the national average.
- Standards in reading at the school are improving rapidly and are now above average.
- The quality of teaching is good across the school, with some that is outstanding. Teachers deliver expertly planned lessons that are creative, interesting and make good use of the environment.
- This is a very safe and caring school where every child matters. Pupils recognise this and report that they are looked after very well. Attendance is rising rapidly.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school and are very respectful to each other and their teachers. School staff continually emphasise the expected high standards of behaviour
- The very strong team of school leaders and governors, including the extremely effective headteacher, provides outstanding leadership and management.
- All leaders, including governors, have worked together and have challenged and improved significantly the weaker teaching at the school. Consequently, pupils' achievement has improved significantly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- There are a few lessons where, on occasion, teachers do not make the best use of assessment information to encourage some pupils, particularly the more able, to make better progress and move on to more challenging work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons and seven teachers, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher. A number of other short visits to lessons and small group work delivered by teaching assistants were also observed. They also made short observations of sessions on the teaching of phonics (pupils learning letter patterns and the sounds they represent to enable them to read).
- Inspectors heard some pupils from Key Stage 1 read and held a meeting with pupils from Key Stage 2.
- Other meetings and discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and school staff. Inspectors also met with some parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of the 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to the staff questionnaire during the inspection.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plans, priorities for development, achievement data and documents relating to safeguarding children.

Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Liz Kissane

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Berrycoombe is an average-sized primary school, where most pupils attend from the local community. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- More pupils than is usual join or leave the school at times other than is usual and start or complete their primary education elsewhere.
- The school meets the current floor standards, the minimum standards expected by the government for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a breakfast club on site managed by the governing body.
- A privately managed nursery is located on the school site but is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding overall by ensuring that all teachers consistently make full use of assessment information within lessons to give all pupils, particularly the more able, sufficiently challenging work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are generally below what would normally be expected for their age. However, there is variability between different cohorts and the range of abilities is often wide. Good quality teaching and interesting learning activities within a creative learning environment enable all children to make at least good progress within the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Good progress continues throughout the school and pupils' attainment by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 is above average in both English and mathematics and continues to improve.
- Improvements made in teaching are securing good progress for all pupils, especially for those who are eligible for the pupil premium and those who are disabled or have special educational needs. Many of these pupils are making accelerated progress across the school from their individual starting points and this is secured with well-focused support and effective interventions delivered by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Progress in lessons is good because teachers plan their lessons well to meet the needs of all pupils with tasks that are matched to their ability. However, there are occasions when the progress of a small number of pupils is slightly limited by not always being given opportunities to move on to more challenging work.
- School tracking data indicate that progress continues to accelerate and the current pupils look set to achieve higher than those in previous years.
- Pupils enjoy reading and the wide range of texts that are used promotes the good progress being made. The creative regular teaching of phonics is effective and rapidly improving the literacy skills across the school. A good example of this was where the pupils in Year 1 sipped milk as they learnt to segment 'sip', making clear links between the sound and the action. Pupils use the 'working walls' in lessons to develop their mathematical skills well.
- The learning needs of pupils who move to the school from elsewhere are rapidly assessed and responded to, enabling them to settle quickly. As a result, they quickly achieve a good rate of progress in line with others, ensuring equality of opportunity.
- Imaginatively planned topics ensure that the pupils' skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics are developed well across all subjects within the curriculum, supporting the good rate of progress being made.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The work undertaken to improve the quality of teaching at the school continues to drive the quality of learning up for all pupils, which is now good and rapidly improving.
- The majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire and all of those who spoke to an inspector thought that their child was taught well and made good progress at the school.
- Experienced teachers are well supported by highly skilled teaching assistants. Planning of lessons is meticulous and tasks are designed to enthuse and engage all pupils, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs. There is a positive climate for learning and relationships are good. Classrooms are full of well-behaved children who are focused, working together and eager to do well.
- Teachers plan lessons very well and monitor the progress of pupils with some superb questioning. However, on occasion, this information is not being used to accelerate the progress of some individuals, to allow them to move onto more challenging work and attain higher standards. This was particularly noticeable for a very small number of the most able pupils in one lesson seen, where the work became a little repetitive rather than extended, and consequently those pupils became distracted.
- In the Reception Class, children benefit from good teaching. Good routines and independent learning are established from very early in the school year. In the child-initiated activity

session where the children were developing their social skills, a teaching assistant modelled waitressing skills in the 'Berrycoombe Café' and used good questioning to help the children develop their social and language skills. A very well equipped outdoor space allows for development in all areas of learning.

- The teaching of writing, mathematics and communication is good and planned well to ensure that pupils see the relevance of the work. In Year 3, using prices for goods in mathematics was helping pupils develop their number unit skills, while in Year 6, allowing pupils to choose their genre to write a short story increased their interest.
- The assessment of pupils' work is thorough and is consistently applied by all staff. Pupils value the constructive feedback given to them. They can explain what they have to do next in order to improve and they use the first session of each morning to respond to the comments made by their teachers, thereby helping to secure their rapid progress.
- Regular use is made of self- and peer-assessment. 'Talking Partners' are used to ensure the full engagement of all pupils while promoting high levels of independence.
- The teaching of reading is good. It is supported by daily phonics sessions in Key Stage 1 and for selected pupils in Key Stage 2. Reading at the school is a regular and popular feature of school life.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are well behaved and have positive attitudes towards their learning. They generally work with sustained concentration in lessons. A small number of pupils sometimes demonstrate some challenging behaviour, but the adults manage this very well and learning is hardly ever disrupted.
- When pupils are playing outside, moving around the school or interacting with each other and adults, their behaviour is exemplary, which demonstrates their strong moral code. It is clear that they fully understand the difference between right and wrong.
- All pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, feel safe and very secure. Pupils and most of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed with these findings, recognising that behaviour and safety are good. Pupils report that they are well looked after and they are confident that adults at the school will deal quickly with any problems that they may have.
- A very small number of parents and carers indicated some concern about behaviour and bullying at the school. However, pupils said that the behaviour is good and there is now no bullying of any kind, including physical, emotional and cyber bullying. The inspection supports this view and found the behaviour of pupils to be good.
- Pupils are keen to do well and respond to the rewards system at the school, as seen in their eager anticipation of the 'star award' to the best-behaved pupils in the assembly. The school council provides pupils with a good opportunity to take an active role in the decision making at their school.
- Most pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy learning. There are still some pupils whose attendance is below the levels that it should be and needs to improve. However, the school is working very hard with parents and consequently attendance has risen significantly for the last three years and continues to do so. The rate of exclusions has reduced substantially.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- This school is led by an inspirational headteacher with a clear focus and determination to allow everyone at the school to reflect the school motto by 'Always Aiming High'.
- Clear vision and high expectations are firmly established across all activities at the school. All leaders, including governors, share a common purpose and a consistency of approach that ensure that the school continues to improve rapidly.
- Improving performance is the core purpose at Berrycoombe, with leaders recognising that at this school everyone matters. There are highly-tuned robust systems, including a strong

emphasis on professional development, to ensure that the performance of leaders, teachers and other staff is relentlessly focused on improving outcomes. This quest by all staff to secure high-quality teaching, in a culture where high expectations are the norm, is driven by a desire to improve the life chances for the pupils. Leaders have successfully secured consistently good teaching, which is continuing to improve rapidly.

- Leaders have secured sustained improvements at the school, most notably in teaching, pupils' progress and attendance and, consequently, standards are higher. The recent introduction of a specialist literacy programme has resulted in the rapid acceleration in English for the pupils who have undertaken the programme, which is due to be made available to more pupils in the future.
- The curriculum is vibrant, exciting and responds to pupils' needs and aspirations. Regular themed events capture the imagination, and the desire to extend learning outside, with such activities as Forest School and the allotments, continues to have an improving impact on pupils' behaviour and safety.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is carefully mapped against the curriculum to ensure that pupils can enrich their lives with a wide range of experiences.
- All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met and staff work hard to ensure there is no discrimination.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are experienced and provide a high level of challenge to the senior staff at the school. They demand improvements in performance that are sustainable and have a direct impact on the achievement of pupils.
 - They have a clear understanding of the school, including financial issues, and are fully involved in the evaluation and planning of activities that are key to this school's success. They have contributed some outstanding strategic leadership in partnership with senior leaders at the school.

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	111924
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	405362

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Twigg
Headteacher	Craig Robertson
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 May 2011
Telephone number	01208 74969
Fax number	01208 74969
Email address	secretary@berrycoombe.cornwall.sch.uk

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