

Bury CofE Primary School

Westburton Lane, Bury, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 1HB

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher arrived in January 2017 at the end of an unsettled period for the school during which outcomes had dipped sharply. He has provided strong, inspiring leadership and has united the school community in a successful drive to improve teaching and ensure that pupils achieve well.
- Staff have had extensive training to improve their practice. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved because teachers have a shared, accurate understanding of what constitutes effective teaching.
- The curriculum is a treasure-trove of exciting learning opportunities for pupils. It is focused on providing pupils with the knowledge they need to become successful in a range of subjects.
- Pupils behave well, both in lessons and at free times. Older pupils look after younger ones, leading to a happy, harmonious school community.
- Parents are full of praise for the school. They recognise the improvements since the headteacher took up post. All agreed that they would recommend the school to a friend.
- Governors know the school well. They have effective systems in place to monitor all aspects of the school's performance and hold leaders to account.
- Children get off to a strong start in the early years. Staff seize every opportunity to engage children in learning and provide them with the early skills of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities have their needs well met by well-trained staff. These pupils make good progress.
- Pupils currently in the school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, improvements in progress have not had time to be reflected in standards at the end of key stage 2.
- Teachers expect pupils to work hard and do their best. However, the presentation of written work in pupils' books is inconsistent. The school does not have an agreed approach to developing handwriting, so pupils are not clear about how to present their work consistently and neatly.
- At times, pupils are not moved on to more challenging work when it is clear that they have understood the current work.
- Gaps still remain in pupils' learning as a result of historically weak teaching. These gaps are particularly noticeable in mathematics and spelling.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Consolidate and build on the improvements in the quality of teaching and thereby improve outcomes by ensuring that:
 - teachers identify and eradicate historical gaps in learning, especially in mathematics and spelling
 - teachers move pupils quickly on to more challenging work when it is clear that they have understood the current work
 - all staff have consistently high expectations for the presentation of pupils' written work
 - leaders implement a consistent approach to develop pupils' handwriting across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher arrived in January 2017 when the school was at a low ebb. There had been considerable turnover of staff and there had not been a permanent headteacher. Outcomes for pupils had suffered as a result of weak teaching and low expectations of what pupils could achieve.
- He quickly united the staff and governors in a drive for high achievement for all, and concentrated on providing the best possible education for all pupils. Despite some further staff turbulence, his focus on improving the quality of teaching, and thereby outcomes for pupils, had an immediate positive impact.
- Teachers and support staff have been provided with extensive training and professional development so that all agree about what constitutes effective teaching. The headteacher draws on research to inform approaches to teaching and learning in the school. Staff actively engage with a local research school to deepen their understanding of how to make teaching as strong as possible.
- Staff seek out opportunities to develop their skills so that they can be more effective in their work. Expectations are now higher and this is reflected in the many professional discussions that happen around the school.
- The school has developed a number of partnerships and working relationships with other schools and organisations, such as the National Trust. Teachers are keen to learn from others and to share the increasingly strong practice seen at the school.
- Morale among staff is high, because they are a united team, striving to improve the school for the benefit of its pupils.
- Although most are recently in post, middle leaders understand their role in driving improvements in their area of responsibility. They share the same high aspirations as the headteacher and governors. Teachers and leaders check regularly on the progress of pupils. They use various strategies, including looking at pupils' work and analysing the results of standardised tests, to make sure that all pupils are doing as well as they should.
- Parents are wholly supportive of the school and the improvements that have taken place under the current headteacher. One said, 'The school has gone from strength to strength under the leadership of Mr Moore. He was a breath of fresh air immediately upon arrival.'
- The curriculum is a particular strength of the school. It is focused on providing pupils with the knowledge that they need to become successful learners. Teachers plan topics with a clear understanding of the key information that pupils need to learn, and the specific vocabulary that they will require to understand and articulate their learning.
- Pupils benefit from a tremendous range of learning activities. Many of these occur in the woodland area of the school, but good use is also made of the local community as well as further afield. The Bury Rangers initiative enables pupils to learn a range of curriculum subjects out of doors, which deepens their knowledge and fosters entirely positive attitudes to learning. The inspector observed the oldest pupils in the school

collecting berries, leaves and seeds to make their own dyes and inks. The discussion around the campfire reflected the knowledge that pupils had gained. Staff and pupils discussed Anglo-Saxon lifestyles, the science behind making dye and aspects of the work of the artist William Morris. Pupils achieve high standards in art, using a wide range of materials and media to create striking work. Some of their three-dimensional collages of British birds featured on the BBC's Springwatch programme.

- The curriculum provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' rich and varied diet includes assemblies and lessons about different faiths. They also learn about and discuss topical news events. The whole community is particularly keen on environmental issues and leaders have taken steps to keep the school free from unnecessary plastic. The school's Christian values support pupils' learning about fundamental British values. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively. Although there are very few disadvantaged pupils in the school, the money is used to help overcome their barriers to learning and enable them to make good progress from their starting points.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is well used. Pupils benefit from participating in a range of sporting activities, both in lessons and after school.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is well used and this is evident in the range of, and participation in, sports activities and clubs, as well as in lessons.
- The local authority knows the school well and has provided support to guide it through its recent turbulence. It recognises the significant improvements that the headteacher has brought to the school.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has seen considerable turnover in its membership in recent years. Governors have learned valuable lessons from the past and have implemented a number of systems to safeguard against the kind of deterioration that had happened previously.
- Governors know the school well. They recognise the strengths and the areas that need to improve further, especially improving outcomes for pupils. They now have the right combination of professional knowledge and experience to offer a strong balance of support and challenge to the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The well-being of each pupil is at the heart of the school's work. Leaders and governors ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. The school's work to protect pupils is underpinned by the right training, procedures and checks, such as those on people who apply to work in the school.
- All staff understand and embrace their responsibility to keep pupils safe. Staff have a clear, shared understanding of how to recognise and report any signs that a pupil may

be at risk. The designated leaders of safeguarding in the school are quick to enlist the support of external agencies to work with potentially vulnerable pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good and improving as a result of extensive professional development provided to all staff. Staff recognise that weak teaching in the recent past prevented pupils from achieving well. All now share a clear understanding that teaching needs to be of the highest quality to enable pupils to achieve their full potential.
- Lessons build well on pupils' prior learning, extending their knowledge in a range of subjects. Teachers think carefully about the knowledge that pupils need to acquire. They also place a strong importance on equipping pupils with the right vocabulary to fully understand the subject being learned. For example, when writing about a celebration at an Anglo-Saxon mead house, one teacher was careful to explain the meaning of the word 'reeve' so that pupils could use it accurately. Older pupils discuss the meanings of words in some detail and are able to distinguish between shades of meaning of similar words.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge, ably supported by teaching assistants, some of whom are experts in such subjects as art and history. Staff use this knowledge to offer helpful guidance to pupils, enabling pupils to learn from their mistakes and to improve their work. Teachers ask searching questions that challenge pupils' thinking and draw out their understanding.
- Pupils across the school are making good progress in reading. Staff foster a love of books and words in pupils by reading to them and suggesting ideas for books that individuals might enjoy. One boy in Year 6 was reading a collection of stories of Norse mythology. He had his interest sparked by wanting to know whether the Thor seen in recent Hollywood blockbusters was the same character written about in ancient myth.
- Reading lessons help pupils to become interested and informed readers, able to retrieve information from the text, even when they need to read between the lines for the answer.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make the most of every opportunity to reinforce basic phonics knowledge. This is particularly true for children in Reception and for those in Year 2 who did not achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check.
- Pupils increasingly enjoy writing, because teachers find many exciting opportunities from across the curriculum to engage their interest. For example, to commemorate the First World War, pupils recently made ceramic poppies and produced imaginary letters from the front and poems to remember local villagers who had died in combat. Making the learning relevant and close to home helped to fuel pupils' enjoyment of the work.
- Pupils use social media to engage with authors of books that they have read to seek feedback for their work. The fact that the authors responded to their messages with advice and congratulation has had a dramatic positive impact on pupils' enthusiasm for writing.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities learn well, because staff tailor learning activities to their needs. Teaching assistants play an important role in helping these pupils to make strong progress towards their individual targets.
- Teachers plan lessons that help pupils towards a mastery of mathematics. Pupils have many opportunities to practise number facts so that they can recall them quickly and accurately. Teachers also plan opportunities for pupils to apply this knowledge in solving problems and tackling investigations that require mathematical reasoning.
- Homework helps pupils to develop the habit of regular reading. They also practise number facts, such as times tables at home. As pupils reach Year 6, they are given more homework to prepare them for the greater demands of secondary school.
- Teachers typically have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, including pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and the very few disadvantaged pupils. However, they do not routinely insist that pupils present their written work neatly, so that work seen in pupils' books is at times inconsistent and untidy. There is no agreed approach to developing pupils' handwriting across the school, so pupils are not clear how to write neatly with a consistent style.
- At times, teachers do not move pupils on quickly when it is clear that they have understood the current work, especially in mathematics.
- Teachers use a range of assessment information intelligently to identify gaps in pupils' learning and prevent pupils from falling behind. They also use this information to plan next steps for individuals and groups of pupils. However, some gaps in learning still prevent pupils from achieving as well as they should. Work still needs to be done to provide pupils with a more secure foundation of knowledge and understanding, particularly in spelling and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school is a harmonious, happy community where respect and kindness prevail and where pupils become thoughtful, tolerant individuals. Parents wholeheartedly agree that this is true. One said, 'The whole atmosphere of the school is warm and welcoming and my son feels happy, safe and secure.'
- Pupils are confident and assured as learners. They have positive attitudes to learning, work hard and enjoy talking about their work, their interests and their achievements. Pupils appreciate the importance of learning and the value of knowledge.
- Bullying in the school is very rare. Most pupils struggle to recall an incident of it. They appreciate the difference between this and the occasional argument and falling out.
- Pupils have complete confidence in the vigilant, well-trained staff to listen to any concerns they have and to tackle any issues quickly as they arise. They rightly trust the adults in the school to have their best interests at heart.
- Pupils learn to keep themselves safe, including online. They benefit from visits from people such as the fire brigade and older pupils have lessons to help them ride bicycles

safely. Pupils also learn how to stay safe when learning in the woodland area, including when collecting seeds and berries, or building a fire.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Parents, staff and pupils all agree that pupils behave well and take good care of each other. Pupils are polite, confident and thoughtful.
- Pupils behave equally well in lessons and around the school at free times, such as lunchtimes. All pupils eat their lunch together, adding to the sense of the school being like a family. Older and younger pupils get on well together. In assembly, pupils behave impeccably. Only on the rare occasions in lessons when pupils are stuck or have finished their work do they lose concentration, chatter and drift off task.
- Attendance is in line with national figures seen in recent years. Pupils enjoy coming to school and arrive on time.
- Senior leaders use exclusion sparingly but effectively. In the very few cases where this has been necessary, it has brought about an improvement in pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils are welcoming and inclusive. They appreciate that differences in people's appearances, abilities or backgrounds are to be celebrated and present no barrier to being friends. Some pupils referred to the book 'Wonder', and one commented, 'You can't change the way they look, but you can change the way you look at them.'

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Cohorts of pupils in the school are typically very small and sometimes contain several pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. However, attainment across the school has been well below that seen nationally in recent years, because of a legacy of previously weak teaching. Pupils have not made enough progress and too few have achieved or exceeded the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- In 2018, pupils made much stronger progress in writing in key stage 2, and a greater proportion achieved and exceeded the expected standard. However, both progress and attainment in reading and mathematics were still well below those seen nationally in recent years.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching are resulting in pupils across the school making stronger progress in reading, writing and mathematics. A greater proportion are now on track to achieve and exceed the expected standards for their age.
- Staff provide very effective support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Consequently these pupils all make good progress to achieve well from their different starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils have their needs met well, but there are too few in the school to make secure judgements about outcomes for this group of pupils.
- In the past, too few pupils have achieved the expected standard in phonics. However, the teaching of phonics is improving. For example, by the end of Year 2 in 2018 almost

all had achieved the expected standard and had become confident, resilient readers, ready for the greater challenges of key stage 2.

Early years provision

Good

- Children get off to a strong start in the early years. Staff get to know children quickly and this helps them to settle quickly and follow the clear routines and systems in the school. Children are confident, behave well and enjoy learning.
- The leader of the early years has a very clear understanding of the importance of equipping children with the early skills of reading, writing and number. Staff plan activities to engage children's interest and draw them into learning. This results in children concentrating well, and working and playing together for sustained periods.
- Children learn to read using phonics right from the start of their time in school. Early on, children write as part of their play and are taught correct letter formation.
- In mathematics, children who are in their first term in school learn to count, order numbers and spot gaps in simple number sequences. Staff plan interesting activities to engage children's interest and give them an enjoyment of mathematics.
- The indoor and outdoor learning spaces provide rich opportunities for children to access all areas of the curriculum. Staff make good use of the rural environment and the many leaves, berries, seeds and fruit that grow nearby.
- Children learn quickly to cooperate and play together, taking turns and sharing equipment. They are friendly and good-natured, taking care of each other. For example, one girl noticed a wasp flying close to her friend. She calmly warned her of this and her friend stayed very still until the wasp had gone.
- Staff are skilled at observing children's play and drawing alongside to suggest ideas that will help them to take the next step in their learning. For example, some boys were running around outside playing 'cops and robbers'. The teacher said that if they were going to be police officers they would need to look for clues. She armed each with a clipboard and pencil and encouraged them to record their observations. Before long, several boys were writing eagerly, using their early phonics skills.
- Parents are wholly positive about the way that children have started their first year in school. They report on happy children who have already started to make good progress.
- Arrangements to help children be happy as they start school are comprehensive and effective. Each child receives a professionally produced picture book about the school before they start. This, together with various visits to the school, helps children to look forward to starting school and to settle quickly when they arrive.

School details

Unique reference number	126022
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10059280

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	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephanie Fane
Headteacher	Thomas Moore
Telephone number	01798 831 502
Website	www.bury.w-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	office@bury.school
Date of previous inspection	12–13 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school has undergone a period of turbulence since the last inspection, with a high turnover of staff. The school was without a permanent headteacher for over two terms until the present headteacher started in January 2017.
- Bury CofE Primary School is much smaller than the average primary school. Some of its year groups of pupils are very small. For example, Year 6 in 2017 consisted of three pupils. There were no pupils in the early years in the last academic year and only four in Year 1.
- There are three mixed-age classes. One comprises key stage 1 and the early years. Another has pupils from Years 3 and 4, while the third has pupils from Years 5 and 6.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is in line with that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above the national average.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well below the national average.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Bury CofE Primary School is a Church of England aided school. It had its most recent section 48 inspection in June 2018.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all classes across the school. Almost all of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher. This included a visit to observe pupils learning in the school's woodland area. In addition, the inspector scrutinised pupils' work with the headteacher and the subject leader of English. He listened to some pupils from Years 2 and 6 read.
- Meetings were held with the following people: a group of 10 pupils; the chair of the governing body and two other governors; a representative of the local authority; and the headteacher, middle leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector had a telephone interview with a representative from the local diocese.
- The inspector undertook a check of the school's policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils, including the statutory checks made during the recruitment of new staff.
- A range of information produced by the school was considered. This included information on pupils' progress and attainment, behaviour and attendance, and the school's own evaluation of its work. The inspector considered reports to the governing body, minutes of their meetings and the school's plans for further improvement. Reports of visits by the local authority were also taken into account.
- The inspector considered the 18 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, together with 14 text responses from parents. He also spoke to parents in the playground at the start of the day.
- The inspection also took into account four responses to the staff questionnaire for staff and seven responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Bruce Waelend, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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