

Barcombe Church of England Primary School

Barcombe Cross, Lewes, BN8 5DN

Inspection dates 24–25 June 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher provides exceptionally strong leadership for this friendly, hard-working and inclusive school. All members of staff say they are proud to work in the school.
- The headteacher is supported by a highly effective team of senior and middle leaders. They model the highest standards of professionalism in all they do and make a substantial contribution to the school's success.
- Outstanding teaching ensures that most pupils achieve extremely well in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and much higher than the national average at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' outstanding attitudes to learning and excellent behaviour make a significant contribution to their progress and to their enjoyment of school. They are courteous, confident and cooperative learners.
- Leaders make full use of the primary sport premium to engage pupils in physical activity. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the extensive range of sports activities available in the school.
- Pupils know that adults value what they have to say and are wholly confident that they will sort out any concerns. They feel very safe and make a confident contribution to school life.
- Improvements in early years provision during the past few years have accelerated children's progress. Careful planning ensures children very rapidly acquire early reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- Developments in the teaching of phonics (the sounds linked to letters) have led to a dramatic improvement in pupils' achievement in reading and writing.
- The school is exceptionally well led and managed. The governing body has a thorough knowledge of the school's work and is fully involved in ongoing reviews and improvements.
- The inclusion leader makes a significant contribution to ensuring that pupils receive the support and care they need to achieve well, including those eligible for support provided by pupil premium funding.
- Teaching has improved strongly over the past few years, lifting pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics to the current high levels.
- Pupils are extremely well prepared for life in modern Britain. They embrace and demonstrate British values throughout their time in school and respect differing viewpoints.
- Leaders recognise the need to embed and strengthen recent changes in the curriculum to ensure high levels of achievement are maintained.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or part lessons with the headteacher, including small groups of pupils working with an adult other than their teacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, members of staff, a representative of the local authority, parents and pupils. A meeting was also held with a group of governors, including the Chair of Governors.
- The inspector took account of 38 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as several letters received from parents. In addition, she considered the views expressed by a number of parents who spoke with the inspector informally at the start of the school day. The inspector also took account of the 17 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school's work and considered a range of documents and policies, including the school's improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, attendance records and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The inspector looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. She also listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reading.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below that found in most schools. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average.
- The school provides full-time early years provision in the Reception class.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher, inclusion leader and all teachers have been appointed since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed and strengthen recent changes in the curriculum to ensure that high levels of achievement are maintained.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's clarity of thinking about the quality of the school's work is central to the school's success. He has exceptionally high expectations of his own practice and that of his colleagues. All staff share his vision and ambition for the school and its pupils, and staff morale is extremely positive. One member of staff said, 'Barcombe is a very caring school. All members of the school community are valued equally and work together with a common aim.'
- The headteacher combines rigorous analyses of pupils' progress with an excellent awareness of their individual needs. He and other senior leaders provide strong leadership of teaching. They regularly meet with teachers to discuss pupils' progress and to identify those in need of extra help to achieve their potential.
- Teachers are clear about their role in ensuring pupils achieve well and in the school's ongoing development. Leaders agree annual targets with individual staff, with a sharp focus on pupils' achievement, so that high quality teaching is maintained and enhanced even further. Teachers benefit from opportunities to learn from strong practice within the school, as well as in other schools locally.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and to express their views. For example, older pupils act as 'buddies' for the youngest children during playtimes, while trained playleaders help to organise games and look after the equipment.
- Pupils throughout the school behave exceptionally well. The school very successfully encourages mutual respect, teaching pupils that each and every one of them has the ability to make a positive difference. Any concerns about pupils' behaviour are followed up promptly.
- The sports leader's excellent use of primary sport funding has improved pupils' achievement in sport and encouraged more pupils to have a go at new activities. For example, leaders have secured the help of county cricket team coaches and specialist sports teachers from a local school to develop pupils' cricket skills. The school participates in many sports competitions and tournaments and regularly enjoys success. For example, during the inspection, pupils thoroughly enjoyed hosting a rounders tournament with local schools.
- The deputy headteacher makes an excellent contribution to the school's development. She works closely with the headteacher, sharing his determination and commitment to give every pupil the very best education possible.
- The inclusion leader works assiduously to ensure that any pupils who would benefit from extra help are identified as early as possible and well supported. She works extremely well with teachers, teaching assistants, parents and agencies to check pupils' progress and to make any changes necessary to improve their learning.
- Subject leaders are strong practitioners, providing high quality role models for their colleagues and pupils. They regularly check pupils' work across the school and visit lessons, so they know about the quality of teaching and learning and how this can be improved even further. They keep parents well informed about developments. For example, the English leader has held several meetings to advise parents about the school's approach to the teaching of phonics and reading so that they can help their children at home.
- The school's well planned and stimulating curriculum ensures pupils are thoroughly well prepared for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils have regular opportunities to debate challenging issues, such as the impact local flood relief would have on the surrounding land. Leaders have reviewed and updated the curriculum in the light of recent changes nationally, ensuring that pupils continue to learn a wide range of skills to a high level and to apply them in different subjects. Leaders have rightly identified that the school now needs to embed these changes.
- The school gives good attention to the importance of developing and celebrating British values. For example, the school promotes a different value each term, such as tolerance, resilience and generosity, through lessons and assemblies. Every year, each class chooses a different charity, finding out about its work and raising money to support its work. In so doing, they develop a good understanding of personal responsibility and learn how they can help others.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to consider and discuss different beliefs, faiths and customs. Visitors and visits help them to understand the important part religion plays in many people's everyday lives. Pupils are very respectful during assemblies, listening quietly and carefully to visitors and speakers.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this successful school. For example, it has checked and confirmed that teachers' assessments of pupils' work are accurate.
- Subject leaders and teachers work together very well to develop the quality of teaching in different subjects. They tailor support for individual pupils by asking pupils about their experiences of learning and

through observations of learning during lessons. Often very small changes, such as changing seating arrangements during lessons, make a significant impact on pupils' learning. One leader commented, 'It's attention to the little things that personalise learning for pupils.'

- Leaders have exceptionally high expectations of all members of staff and pupils. All staff are committed to ensuring that every pupil has equal opportunity to learn and excel. The headteacher and inclusion leader regularly meet with teachers to make sure pupil premium funding is used fully to support pupils' achievement. Leaders will not tolerate discrimination in any form.
- Parents are full of praise for the school's work. Several described the school as 'fantastic' and 'amazing'. Almost all those who completed the on-line questionnaire said that they would recommend the school.
- Safeguarding arrangements are given a very high priority and meet statutory requirements. As a result, pupils are very safe and secure. All training is up to date so that staff are well qualified and knowledgeable. Records of staff suitability to work with children are rigorously maintained by the bursar and regularly checked by senior leaders and governors. Leaders are constantly alert to any potential risks in the school environment and make sure that pupils are appropriately supervised at all times.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very knowledgeable about the school's work. The governors provide strong challenge and support for school leaders so that they are held to account for pupils' progress.
 - The Chair of Governors routinely attends meetings between senior leaders and the local authority and reports back to the governing body. This helps to ensure that governors have up-to-date information about pupils' achievement and about the school's performance compared with schools locally and nationally. Governors regularly visit the school and have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. They use targets for whole school development to focus visits and to inform subsequent reports to the governing body. Governors have a thorough understanding of systems to support and manage staff performance and discuss any proposed salary increases robustly. They know what is being done to reward good teaching and recognise the difference well focused training and support have made to teachers' practice.
 - Governors work very well with leaders to check that funds are used fully to support pupils' learning. For example, the inclusion leader provides regular reports about the use of pupil premium funding and the contribution it makes to pupils' achievement. They are justifiably proud of the way sport premium funding has been used to boost physical education for all pupils.
 - Governors complete termly audits of safeguarding arrangements to ensure they are complete. Regular training ensures their knowledge of requirements are current.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave exceptionally well in all aspects of school life. They are polite, enquiring and interested in learning.
- Relationships are excellent throughout the school. Pupils are very successfully encouraged to make the right choices, forgive others and to try again if they make a mistake. Pupils of all ages trust their teachers and are confident that their classmates will support their efforts and contributions. They readily share in each other's successes and are quick to praise their classmates when they have done well.
- Pupils eagerly take on special responsibilities, such as serving on the school council or looking after the younger children during playtimes. During the inspection, a prefect explained his pride in wearing the prefect badge because it shows he has achieved 'something special'.
- Pupils take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour as they move up through the school. For example, during the inspection, a group of Key Stage 1 pupils waited very patiently and quietly for a guitar lesson, becoming quickly engrossed in the books they had chosen to read while waiting.
- Pupils of all ages behave extremely well in the dining hall when eating their lunch. During the lunch break, Reception children told the inspector that their teacher always expects them to set an example in the way they behave, going on to say, 'It's not just about the oldest children setting an example you know!'

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Staff are extremely attentive and caring, giving careful consideration to pupils' views and to their feelings. As a result, pupils feel very safe in school.
- Leaders use annual questionnaires to alert them to any concerns amongst pupils and address any issues arising. Pupils say they feel confident that any worries will be sorted out quickly. All parents who

completed the on-line questionnaire feel children are safe and happy in school.

- Leaders ensure pupils understand how they can play a part in their own safety. For example, regular training events keep pupils well informed about how to use the internet safely. Pupils know that school computers block some programmes and are clear about what to do should they come across anything worrying.
- Pupils are clear about the different forms bullying can take and about what they should do if they have a concern. They are absolutely confident that there is no prejudice-based bullying in the school and horrified at the thought that this might occur in any school.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and set them interesting and stimulating work. For example, during a Year 6 lesson, the teacher used role play to challenge pupils' understanding of characters in a book they were studying and to lift the quality of pupils' work to a higher level.
- Teachers regularly ask thought-provoking questions which challenge pupils to think hard. For example, during a Years 2/3 science lesson, the teacher instigated a lively discussion about the characteristics shared by living things.
- Teaching assistants provide confident and well focused support for pupils who need extra help with their learning. They are sensitive to pupils' changing needs as pupils move up through the school. For example, in the older year groups, they intervene to provide extra help only when necessary, so that pupils develop the confidence to work without adult help.
- Teachers have a confident understanding of how to teach phonics and reading. They use a range of entertaining games and activities very well to engage and motivate pupils to practise phonic skills in the younger year groups; whilst in the older year groups, pupils have regular opportunities to develop their understanding of texts. Teachers use extracts from the work of authors such as Charles Dickens and Rudyard Kipling to ignite pupils' interest in a wide range of books. Pupils in Year 6 confidently discuss book characters, making perceptive suggestions about their actions based on their knowledge of the story.
- Teachers effectively guide pupils to check and improve the quality of their written work. They teach pupils how to write for different audiences and for different reasons. Teachers have the same high expectations of the written work pupils produce in all subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics is well planned to cover all aspects of knowledge, whilst ensuring opportunities for creativity are maintained. For example, during a mathematics session in the Reception class, children were encouraged to describe the difference between two- and three-dimensional shapes. One child responded, 'One is puffed up and the other one is flat.' Another suggested that the points on a three-dimensional shape were 'spikes' or 'noses'. The teacher welcomed all contributions and used these to strengthen children's understanding.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils make rapid progress, both socially and academically, in all year groups and achieve exceptionally well. In 2014, pupils' attainment was above average in reading, writing and mathematics at both key stages, and much higher than average by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 say they feel ready for the move to their next schools, with one commenting, 'This school has done a good job.'
- Pupils of all ages love reading and read regularly in school. They develop a view about what types of books they like to read, but are also happy to read those recommended by teachers and friends. Pupils readily tackle texts of increasing difficulty and complexity as they move up through the school.
- Younger pupils use phonics knowledge well to help them to read more difficult words, while the older pupils read confidently and with expression. Improvements in the teaching of basic reading skills meant the results of the Year 1 phonic check increased substantially in 2014 to above average levels. School information indicates further increases in 2015, continuing a three-year trend of improvement.
- Pupils become confident writers. Pupils learn how to write in different styles and for different purposes, reviewing and improving their work with teachers' guidance. For example, during the inspection a group of Year 1 pupils confidently checked and discussed whether the sentences they had written made sense, making any changes necessary.
- Pupils make excellent progress in mathematics. They develop a very secure knowledge of basic mathematical knowledge which they use well to solve problems. Teachers very effectively strengthen

pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts by routinely asking pupils to explain their thinking.

- The most able pupils achieve extremely well. Above average proportions of pupils attained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of both key stages in 2014. This year, the school is set to secure further increases, with more Year 6 pupils on track to achieve the higher levels in all three subjects than in 2014. In addition, some are on track to attain Level 6, the highest level available at the end of Key Stage 2, in reading and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good and outstanding progress. Skilful teaching builds strongly on pupils' knowledge and understanding, so that pupils have a good sense of their own progress and gain self-esteem.
- The few pupils eligible to receive support through additional pupil premium funding in each year group make the same good or better progress as their peers. As there were very few eligible pupils in Year 6 in 2014, their progress and attainment are not reported.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Leaders have secured substantial improvements in teaching during the past three years in the Reception class. As a result, children have made increasingly rapid progress during the early years, lifting the proportion of children achieving a good level of development to above average levels in 2014. Leaders point to further substantial increases in 2015, based on the school's assessments of children's current learning.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good, and sometimes outstanding. This ensures that children are extremely well prepared for learning in Year 1, with many achieving levels higher than those expected for their age by the end of Reception.
- Excellent relationships make a strong contribution to the development of children's confidence and learning, ensuring children feel safe and secure. Children listen to each other carefully and accommodate each other's ideas very well. Their behaviour is excellent.
- Children are attentive when adults speak and quick to apply their learning to the world around them. For example, when one child pointed out that an adult's badge was a rectangle during a mathematics session, the others looked carefully to check it out for themselves.
- Adults teach phonics thoroughly and effectively, so that children quickly develop the skills needed to write well. Teachers skilfully use story telling to increase children's understanding of how to structure their own writing.
- Early years is extremely well managed by the headteacher and early years leader. Parents are very positive about their children's experiences in the Reception and happy about their progress. For example, one commented on the excellent arrangements which helped her child to settle quickly when she joined Reception.

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	114488
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	448759

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	130
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Milmine
Headteacher	Stewart James
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 December 2009
Telephone number	01273 400287
Fax number	01273 401187
Email address	office@barcombe.e-sussex.sch.uk

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