

Bassett Green Primary School

Honeysuckle Road, Bassett, Southampton, Hampshire SO16 3BZ

Inspection dates

28 February – 1 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
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 school that requires improvement.

- A decline in outcomes over time, hindered by historically inaccurate assessment, means that too many pupils leave the school without the skills they need to make a successful start to their secondary education.
- The number of pupils working below age expectations has not reduced quickly enough. Differences in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are too wide.
- Teachers, many of whom are new to the school, benefit from carefully planned, professional learning and regular coaching. However, inconsistencies in teachers' subject knowledge remain across subjects.
- Many leaders of subjects and phases are new. Many governors are recently appointed. They know the areas they need to improve rapidly. Much of their work is emergent, however, and therefore impact and evaluation are at an early stage.
- The curriculum is interesting and varied, so pupils enjoy their lessons. However, teachers' expectations in subjects other than English and mathematics are not consistently high enough.
- Parental support for leaders' efforts to provide quality learning is growing and so attendance is beginning to rise. However, too many pupils miss school more often than they should or are late to school.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher's resilient and tenacious leadership has challenged and eradicated historical weaknesses. Staff overwhelmingly see leadership as 'inspiring'.
- In the recent past, behaviour incidents were significantly high. New systems, a focus on shared values and a strong commitment to pupils' personal welfare and development are reducing incidents rapidly. Pupils say that bullying and poor behaviour are now a thing of the past.
- Current learning in the early years is preparing children to make a secure start to Year 1. More children this year are making good progress from the full range of starting points in their early language, reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- Parents and pupils are certain about the improvements they have seen over the last 18 months. Parental comments such as 'We struck gold when we chose this school' are typical.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen further work with parents to reduce the number of pupils who miss school more often than they should.
- Increase the precision of leaders' evaluative checks by:
 - setting clearer milestones for the progress they expect to see across a range of subjects
 - checking that additional funding is diminishing differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally across a wider range of subjects and year groups.
- Use pupils' starting points to inform further improvements to teaching so that:
 - more pupils enter each key stage with skills, knowledge and understanding appropriate for their age
 - expectations are sufficiently high across a wider range of subjects
 - teachers secure subject knowledge that enables them to respond promptly and accurately to the needs of the most able pupils in both English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has acted decisively to halt a period of decline. Over the past 18 months, she has developed a strong culture of trust and respect, tackled the significant weaknesses of the past and galvanised a new staff team to expect more from all of the pupils in the school. Parents are rightly delighted with the changes they see.
- The whole school community is benefiting from clear goals, structures and systems. There is a palpable sense of shared responsibility and accountability to transform pupils' experiences of learning. In all current leadership endeavours, evidence clearly shows that leaders have the right building blocks in place for sustained improvement.
- The leadership team has been revitalised and refreshed, and new appointments have added a great deal of value and skill. Leaders' current actions are ensuring that there is a strong foothold on which to build future success. However, some initiatives are very new and subject leaders' checks on the impact of their work are at an early stage.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is having a positive effect on these pupils' progress. As a result, differences are beginning to diminish, particularly in reading and writing. External reviews and strengthened evaluation help leaders to ensure that improvements are sustained.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities secures effective progress from mostly low starting points. A skilled team of additional adults is creatively deployed to meet pupils' needs very well.
- Leaders are working effectively to provide a curriculum that excites, motivates and inspires pupils in their learning. Pupils gain experiences through extra-curricular activities which provide them with the skills necessary for the next stage of their education. As well, older pupils recently undertook project work to consider a range of career choices, raising their ambitions for the future.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is woven through the curriculum. Pupils take interest in the diverse range of traditions, cultures and beliefs within their own school community and beyond. Pupils show respect for each other, telling inspectors, 'We are all the same inside.'
- Pupils' understanding of British values is developed well through leadership roles such as Eco Warriors, Play Captains and Attendance Ambassadors. They understand the democratic process of elections and that they can make and take decisions freely.
- Leaders make effective use of the additional funding for physical education and sport. Sports education is given a high priority in the school, and sessions seen during the inspection were of high quality across all age groups. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to experience a range of sports that are new to them.

Governance of the school

- Governance has been refreshed and transformed over the last 18 months. Consequently, there is a skilled, committed governing body which is able to hold leaders to account effectively. Governors understand the key challenges facing leaders

and have undertaken training which helps them to understand and support key priorities for improvement. They have made sure that teachers are held to account appropriately for the quality of their work. Governors use external validation from a range of sources to check the quality of their work to help them improve further.

- Governors have a clear sense of their statutory duties, fulfilling them effectively. They have reviewed the use of additional funding in the last academic year to ensure that the approaches used make the most difference to pupils. Some strategies that were used in the past have, rightly, been discontinued. Although governors are beginning to carry out some checks on the impact leaders' actions make, these are at an early stage. However, some of the strategic plans do not yet have clear enough milestones to enable governors to measure the impact of leaders' work precisely enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Day-to-day routines are sound, and policies, procedures and systems are robust, including checks on staff. Pre-employment checks to confirm the suitability of staff are fully in place. Staff and governors have attended relevant and up-to-date training. Leaders ensure that staff are confident to identify and respond to a wide range of potential risks and keep high-quality, detailed records to evidence this work.
- The school's culture to protect children and ensure their safety is well developed. Staff, including non-teaching support staff, were fully able to explain the arrangements to protect pupils in the school from harm. All parents spoken to during the inspection feel that their children are safe at school. Pupils told inspectors that they feel the school is a safe place to be. They are knowledgeable about the potential dangers of using the internet. They feel safe from bullying and told inspectors that bullying happens very rarely. They are confident that adults in the school help them if they are worried or feel unsafe at any time.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet having sufficient impact on the progress that some groups of pupils are making. This is especially so for pupils who begin each key stage at or above age expectation. These pupils are not consistently well challenged in their learning across a range of subjects.
- Leaders are having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching through well-targeted support and coaching. Teachers who are new to the school and to the profession are making a positive start, showing a range of effective strategies to help pupils catch up. Nevertheless, improvements have not been in place for long enough to have made a significant impact on pupils' progress. Teaching is not yet securely good enough to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' books show inconsistencies in teachers' expectations across subjects. For example, high-quality challenge is more prevalent in pupils' writing than in their mathematical work. Pupils' work in geography, history and science does not help them to see and appreciate the links between areas of learning that they encounter. Some

teachers have lower expectations in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics.

- Teachers track and record information about pupils' attainment and progress. However, pupils' starting points are not consistently used to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching responds well to the needs of the lowest-achieving pupils. These pupils make stronger gains because they are steered to revisit and practise basic skills systematically. Pupils are particularly proud of their improving recall of times-tables facts, for example. All pupils work diligently in lessons but often the most able group of pupils know and could do more. Insecurity in teachers' subject knowledge prevents them being able to stretch the thinking of this group of pupils, particularly so in mathematics.
- Pupils say that they talk to their teachers about their work regularly. Pupils' books show that their skills are improving as a result of these conversations, particularly in writing. This ensures that pupils write for a range of purposes with increasing accuracy and a widening range of vocabulary over time.
- Teachers select resources with care, including the reading books that are used to support pupils' comprehension and writing. Pupils across the school were seen engaging with high-quality texts to explore complex themes. For example, in Year 6, pupils used 'Private Peaceful' by Michael Morpurgo to explore loss, bravery and conflict successfully when writing diary entries.
- The teaching of phonics is improving. Nevertheless, the 2016 outcomes remained below the national average. Changes to the delivery of phonics are still at an early stage. In the past, fewer pupils began Year 1 with a secure grasp of the sound and letter correspondences they needed to progress rapidly within the Year 1 curriculum. This is changing because expectations in the early years have risen. However, some pupils, including boys, have not yet caught up.
- All adults support the needs of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well. Training across a spectrum of additional needs is effective. Consequently, pupils receive support which is precise and helps them make good progress. Leaders know, however, that a small number of these pupils, whose starting points are not low, require additional challenge so that they reach their full potential.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils show tolerance and understanding of different points of view in their relationship with others. They know how to use these skills to resolve conflicts and small disagreements.
- Pupils have high levels of respect for each other and contribute actively to making the school a better place to learn. This is because school values strongly underpin their learning. Pupils know that good behaviour and concentrating on what they learn are crucial to their success.
- At work and at play, pupils demonstrate the school's values of 'respect, challenge, resilience and teamwork'. Parents and pupils agree that these values are having a

positive effect on pupils' self-esteem and the quick progress they are beginning to make in their learning.

- Pupils have a good awareness of personal safety and the safety of others. They are alert to risks, such as those posed online. They take good care in their routines to move about the school safely, watching out for pupils who are younger than themselves.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Good attitudes to learning prevail across the school. Pupils are eager to learn and welcome new challenges. In every class, pupils shared and relished new learning and showed genuine interest in a wide variety of subjects. Pupils show pride in their school and behave well in a range of situations.
- Pupils who receive additional support for their behaviour are making great strides forward. They respond positively to praise and are motivated by the new behaviour ladder being implemented consistently across each class. All pupils take equal pleasure and pride in reaching the top, showing 'excellent learning behaviours'. Stickers celebrating respect, challenge, resilience and teamwork provide an effective visual reward. Incidents of poor behaviour have reduced significantly as a result, ensuring that the school is a happy, safe place to learn.
- In mathematics and English, pupils take great care with the quality of presentation of their work. In the wider curriculum, pupils do not show that same level of pride in their work because teachers' expectations are not consistently high.
- An increasing number of pupils come to school regularly and on time and enjoy all of the opportunities that the school gives them to learn new things with their friends. Leaders take quick action to spot and tackle any issues with absence; however, despite improvements, too many pupils miss school more often than they should.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Historical inadequacies in provision resulted in an overall decline in pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders' actions are reversing this underachievement, and progress is improving. However, underachievement at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 persists, as seen in the published data for 2016, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The number of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below the national average in the last three successive years. Teachers' recent assessments and inspectors' work alongside pupils show that more pupils are securing the skills they need this year. However, boys still have some catching up to do.
- Reading progress has been prioritised and is improving. Pupils in Year 2, whose phonics skills were below average, now accurately decode unfamiliar words at an age-appropriate level. Disadvantaged pupils' progress in reading is increasing rapidly. Over two thirds of the pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 receiving bespoke support over the last four

months have made accelerated gains of up to 11 months. However, despite these improvements, too many pupils are not yet reading at a level that matches their age.

- Pupils made average progress in their writing in 2016. However, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard was below average. Pupils' writing is improving consistently well as seen in current workbooks across the school. This is due to teachers' improved subject knowledge in this area which is strengthening pupils' accurate use of vocabulary and grammar more rapidly than in the past.
- In 2016, too few pupils left the school with the mathematical skills they needed to start Year 7 successfully. Pupils' current rates of progress are rising because their recall and application of number facts are increasingly accurate. Current work in pupils' books shows that more pupils this year are currently working within or towards the standards expected for their age in both key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Historically, very few pupils secured the highest standards of attainment at either key stage 1 or key stage 2. Leaders are challenging historical expectations for the most able pupils in the school. These pupils are currently working at greater depth in their independent work, particularly in reading and writing. However, levels of challenge, particularly in mathematics, remain inconsistent and this affects pupils' progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making stronger gains in their current work in reading, writing and mathematics. From starting points at the beginning of the year, the proportion of pupils moving towards the standards expected for their age is increasing. In 2016, these pupils achieved outcomes close to other pupils nationally in early years.
- Current pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good gains in reading, writing and mathematics, given their starting points. Interventions are planned quickly and carefully and led by skilled adults to ensure that they meet their needs precisely.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders ensured accurate moderation of judgements at the end of 2016 through the use of external validation; they regularly check the accuracy of their baseline information with local authority moderators. This lends confidence to the view that children are making good progress from their starting points in a number of areas of learning. Observations during the inspection confirm this. In particular, building on success in 2016, the most disadvantaged children are well placed to secure strong outcomes which are close to those of other children nationally.
- Leaders are challenging themselves to expect more from their very youngest children. In early years, a growing proportion of children, above that seen in the past, show the skills required to exceed the early learning goals in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders rightly identify this as an area for continued improvement.
- Leaders work hard to make the curriculum responsive to children's interests. The 'Pudding Lane Bakery' was extended to incorporate a café area at the request of children who were keen to serve the cakes they 'made', taking orders and giving change from the till. Early reading, writing and number skills are given high priority. The outdoor area is carefully set up to support these skills with a range of activities for children to practise and apply skills in independent play.

- Recent training has focused on adults using language to widen children’s vocabulary and to promote the accurate use of grammar. Adults are making the most of opportunities to reinforce oral sentences and this is helping children to be more accurate when asking and answering questions orally.
- Regular observations, both online and paper-based, contribute effectively to building an accurate picture of what children know and can do. Practitioners check the validity of these judgements with external agencies. Some parents are beginning to contribute to children’s assessments by sharing what their children know and can do; a number do not do this yet.
- Leaders work very well with other agencies. Safeguarding practice matches the good practice across the rest of the school. All welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	131839
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10024810

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	547
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maureen Smith
Headteacher	Deb Sutton
Telephone number	02380 676262
Website	www.bassettgreen.southampton.sch.uk
Email address	info@bassettgreen.net
Date of previous inspection	26–27 September 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Bassett Green Primary School is a larger than average-sized primary school with a rising roll.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is above average.
- In the early years provision, children in Reception attend full time.
- The school has a breakfast club that is managed by the governing body.

- The school met the current government floor standards for 2016, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons or part-lessons in all year groups and classes, some of which were joint observations with leaders.
- Meetings were held with leaders, staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised during the inspection, including the school’s evaluation of its own performance and information about pupils’ attainment and progress. Inspectors also checked the effectiveness of the school’s safeguarding arrangements and attendance information.
- The inspection team scrutinised the quality of pupils’ work over time across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils to seek their views about the school and considered 45 responses to the online pupil survey. The views of other pupils were gathered during lessons, playtimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 read.
- Inspectors spoke to parents informally and took into account their 13 written comments and 173 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also reviewed 53 responses to a staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Abigail Wilkinson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Brian Macdonald	Ofsted Inspector
Bill James	Ofsted Inspector
Judith Grevett	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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