

# Bowmansgreen Primary School

Telford Road, London Colney, St Albans AL2 1PH

**Inspection dates** 10–11 February 2016

**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                          | Good                 |
| Early years provision                        | Good                 |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Senior leaders with good support from governors are driving improvements forward, especially in teaching and learning. They have implemented a strong ethos for effective teaching and good behaviour across the school. Together they are ensuring that the school continues to improve.
- Leaders at all levels are promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, as well as their physical well-being.
- Good teaching across the school, including in the primary support base, is enabling all pupils to learn effectively. Teachers have developed a strong ethos for learning in their classrooms. They make good use of well-chosen activities and resources to motivate pupils.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils' learning and behaviour. All staff have good relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour well.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and throughout the school, including in the primary support base, is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning which is reflected in their good punctuality and attendance. Effective welfare arrangements ensure pupils are safe and promote their good personal development.
- Pupils across the school, including those in the primary support base, make good progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' work shows they make good progress across a wide range of subjects.
- In the early years provision, skilled leadership, effective teaching and strong links with parents, ensure children make good progress from their different starting points. Children stay safe and their behaviour is good.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always given sufficient time to respond to teachers' advice and guidance.
- Teachers' assessments are not always accurate. Occasionally they miss opportunities to extend the thinking of more-able pupils at Key Stage 2.
- Subject leaders have not developed accurate systems of assessment within their subjects.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment, and raise achievement, by making sure that:
  - teachers always give pupils enough time to respond to their advice and guidance
  - teachers' assessments accurately reflect the progress seen in pupils' books
  - teachers always extend the thinking of more-able pupils at Key Stage 2 by setting harder tasks
  - subject leaders develop accurate assessment systems within their subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher is providing good leadership and benefits from effective support from the deputy headteacher and governors in driving improvements forward. Parents are very positive about the work of the school and staff morale is good. This is reflected in discussions with parents and the very positive returns expressed in the online questionnaire Parent View, and completed questionnaires submitted by staff.
- The senior leadership team and governors provide good leadership in continuing to improve the school, through good monitoring of teaching and learning to eliminate weaknesses of low expectations and a failure to set learning activities which pupils found neither too easy nor too difficult. They have implemented robust procedures for managing the performance of teachers, which has ensured that teaching is now good.
- The early years leader and the leader of the primary support base are providing effective leadership in ensuring good teaching and good progress. Subject leaders are developing their roles effectively and have begun to monitor the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress. However, they have yet to develop new systems of assessment for their subjects and ensure teachers use them accurately.
- The school's own evaluation of its strengths and areas for improvement is accurate. It is used effectively to identify whole-school priorities for improvement based on raising achievement, and improving teaching and learning.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of different pupils. It covers a wide range of subjects including Spanish, humanities, music, art, technology and science with a strong emphasis on developing communication, language, literacy and numeracy across the school. Music is a strength of the school, with pupils having the opportunity to perform at Wembley arena.
- The curriculum promotes good learning and enjoyment, and good spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, including British values. Pupils in every year group compare Christianity with other world religions, noting similarities and respecting differences. In an assembly, pupils had good opportunities to reflect on the plight of refugees and what it might be like to live in a cardboard box instead of a warm house. Displays about British values show that pupils learn about rights and responsibilities, the rule of law and democracy. They use the World Cup and the Olympics to learn to value and respect other cultures.
- Parents rightly say there are many trips to support their children's learning, that after-school clubs are excellent and they are involved in assemblies. The careers week, held during the inspection, involved 60 parents who supported children throughout, with some accompanying children on the careers week trip. This prepares pupils well for their future lives.
- The local authority adviser is providing good support and challenge for the school. They do this through regular reviews of the impact of the school's work on pupils' learning and well-being, and external moderation of the accuracy of teacher assessments. This has led to a recognition that such assessments are sometimes too conservative and do not truly reflect the good progress seen across a range of subjects in pupils' books.
- The school makes good use of the pupil premium funding to narrow the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. Small groups and one-to-one interventions are ensuring that the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally, particularly in Years 5 and 6, are narrowing despite the legacy of underachievement in earlier years.
- Leaders use primary sports funding well to promote pupils' physical development and well-being. Pupils participate in the St Albans basketball competition and in the table tennis tournament. There has been a significant increase in after-school clubs in sports since the last inspection and all are oversubscribed. Teachers also work alongside the sports coach to develop their own teaching skills.
- The school ensure all pupils, including those in the primary support base, have the same opportunities to participate in all the school offers. Leaders promote equality of opportunity well by making sure there are no significant differences in the progress different groups of pupils are making. They tackle any form of harassment and discrimination well by promoting good relationships throughout the school.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors are ensuring the school is held to account for its work. They visit the school regularly and report back on the progress the school is making in improving provision. They have recently been trained in the use of data and are now holding the school to account for the progress different groups of pupils are making.
  - Governors have an accurate view of teaching and a good understanding of the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. They implement robust arrangements for managing the performance of the headteacher, and ensure good teaching is recognised and weaknesses are tackled.

- They ensure safeguarding meets requirements, regularly reviewing the impact of policies and procedures on pupils' safety and well-being, and ensuring these are up to date. They oversee the promotion of SMSC and British values effectively.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Robust procedures are in place to ensure staff and visitors are suitable to work with children and all training in safeguarding is up to date.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** is good

- Good teaching and learning permeate the school and have a positive impact on the progress pupils are making. Teaching has improved well since the last inspection, moving from 'requiring improvement' to good. Teachers make good use of well-chosen resources and activities to motivate pupils. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher gave pupils beads to count in twos, which they did accurately and with enthusiasm. In a Year 2 English lesson, the teacher modelled the use of adverbs using a planning sheet and moved around groups of pupils to correct their use of subject vocabulary for grammar. As a result, pupils understood the meaning of conjunctions, adverbs and tenses.
- In the primary support base teachers made good use of well-chosen three-dimensional and flat shapes in a mathematics lesson. This helped pupils to re-engage quickly with learning and make good progress in understanding the differences in properties between flat and solid shapes. Pupils' books also show that resources are used consistently well to engage pupils' interest.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and maintain good relationships with them. In a lunchtime mathematics club, all pupils were engaged in their activities, well motivated to extend their learning. In a Year 5 physical education lesson all adults worked well together to support pupils, some of whom were reluctant at first to join in with circuit training.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for learning. In a Year 2 lesson, where adults helped to keep pupils on task, a teaching assistant encouraged pupils to improve the presentation of their work in history. In a music assembly, staff ensured pupils were kept on task, through encouragement and by singing alongside them.
- Staff provide good support for those who need to catch up quickly, those with disability and special educational needs, pupils who speak English as an additional language and disadvantaged pupils. For example, in a Year 3 guided reading lesson, low-attaining pupils received good support to enable them to sound out unfamiliar words.
- Staff provide an effective ethos for learning in classrooms, as seen in displays of pupils' work, the celebration of success in learning and good use of working walls. In Year 5, displays celebrated well-presented work with pupils' good use of sophisticated vocabulary. Year 2 books show how pupils build rapidly on prior knowledge and skills because teachers challenge them to move from using number squares to writing calculations, and then expect them to explain their answers.
- Teachers implement the school's marking policy well and provide good feedback on how well they are doing in lessons and how to improve further. However, occasionally pupils are not given enough time to respond to the advice and guidance teachers give. This limits pupils' progress because they are not practising the skills to develop their understanding well enough.
- Pupils said teachers always make learning fun and set the right amount of homework to consolidate their learning. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils proudly displayed examples of the high-quality work they had completed in a wide range of subjects to illustrate how much they enjoy learning.
- The teaching of basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics is good. In Year 4 books, many examples were seen of teachers challenging pupils to develop problem solving. In religious education books, teachers have high expectations of pupils to present their work neatly, which they do. In Year 5, books for history, geography and religious education demonstrated how teachers promoted literacy well, setting high expectations for using the correct spelling, grammar and punctuation in these subjects. Teachers also promote mathematics well in geography and science.
- New systems of assessment have recently been introduced yet teachers are a little too cautious in determining how much progress pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, they regularly exchange information gathered from pupils' books to plan sequences of lessons which build on their current knowledge and skills. However, at Key Stage 2 teachers do not always use the information from pupils' books to extend the thinking of more-able pupils by setting them harder tasks.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Parents rightly praise the school's welcoming family-type atmosphere, which promotes pupils' welfare and safety well. Good arrangements for pastoral care, with counselling support and nurture groups, enable pupils to settle into school, build confidence and develop friendships.
- Staff, pupils and their parents agree that the school supports pupils well. Pupils are encouraged to help one another, and to be kind, considerate and honest. At playtime older pupils who are play leaders promote good relationships. Pupils show respect for each other, and are courteous and polite to staff and visitors. They show good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, in respecting and celebrating each other's differences, in taking turns, in their understanding of right from wrong and in reflecting on important issues such as the refugee crisis. This contributes well to their improved behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying and say that this is rare. Staff teach pupils about prejudice-based bullying and continually foster good relationships among pupils. In discussion with inspectors, Year 6 pupils carefully explained how bullying can badly affect others.
- Staff ensure the school grounds are secure and pupils are safe. They implement good procedures to ensure pupils feel safe in school and when attending trips outside of school. Pupils use equipment including computers safely. Parents agree that their children are safe in school. Pupils in the primary support base and children in the early years also feel safe.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is good throughout the school, including the early years and the primary support base. There are very few incidents of racism or bullying and low-level disruption of any kind is rare. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Good behaviour was seen in assemblies, in the dining room, during lunchtime activities and at breakfast club. Breakfast club is very popular with pupils and parents. It prepares pupils well for the beginning of the school day and is having a good impact on punctuality and attendance.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning, enjoy coming to school and take a pride in their work. This is reflected in their good attendance and punctuality. Attendance has been rising steadily since the last inspection. Only a very small number of pupils are persistently absent and very occasionally pupils disengage with learning.

## Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils throughout the school are making good progress and building on their previous knowledge, skills and understanding in different subjects. All groups of pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in the early years are making good progress from their different starting points, which are generally below expectations for their age. Most achieve a good level of development and are well prepared for Year 1. There has been a steady rise in the proportions of children making at least expected progress in the early years. Current children are making equally good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils build on the good progress in Year 1, with a well-above-average proportion reaching the expected levels on the phonics screening test in 2015. Since the last inspection there has been a year-on-year rise in the proportions reaching the expected standard of the phonics screening check. Current pupils are on course to do equally well as those in 2015.
- In 2015, pupils in Year 2 reached broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This also represents a steady year-on-year rise in standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils in Year 2 now are on course to reach age-related expectations with a significant number likely to exceed these.
- In 2015, Year 6 pupils reached broadly average standards in reading but below average standards in writing and mathematics as a result of the legacy of underachievement since the last inspection. Nevertheless, there has been a steady year-on-year rise in attainment in Year 6 since the last inspection. Internal and external moderation of pupils' books in Years 5 and 6 shows good progress of current Year 6; this was confirmed by careful scrutiny of books during this inspection.
- The school has recently begun to use a new system of assessment but teachers are a little cautious in determining how much progress pupils are making using this system. There was occasionally a discrepancy

between the progress seen in pupils' books and the school's new tracking information, which was also confirmed by the local authority's moderation and the scrutiny of pupils' work by senior leaders. Nevertheless, the local authority confirmed from the most recent review that teacher assessments are now more accurate.

- Pupils' progress across a range of subjects is also good. In physical education, pupils build their hockey skills rapidly and in Year 3 were seen dribbling the ball accurately and safely with hockey sticks. In music, all year groups are successfully following the Trinity School music awards in singing. In religious education, pupils are learning about a wide range of world religions and learning from these religions how to respect others.
- Current pupils are making good progress across the school, as seen in pupils' books. For example, pupils' books in Year 4 show they have moved from working below the expectations for their age to working within expectations for their age. In science, all year groups of pupils are developing their understanding of fair testing. They are formulating hypotheses and drawing accurate conclusions from their investigations. In computing, Year 6 pupils are using programming to create computer games and using software to good effect to produce their own story books. In art, Year 6 pupils use different media to good effect to produce Maori artwork and art in the style of the impressionists. Year 6 pupils also spoke enthusiastically about their pop art work to replicate the style of Andy Warhol.
- Pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs in the primary support base make good progress. This is because they quickly re-engage with learning as a result of highly structured routines and consistent approaches by all staff in setting high expectations in managing their learning and behaviour.
- Disadvantaged pupils did not do as well as their classmates or other pupils nationally in 2015 due to the legacy of underachievement. They were approximately three terms behind other pupils and their classmates in mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling, and two terms behind them in reading and writing. Nevertheless, the gap has narrowed slightly from the last inspection and current tracking information shows that the gap is narrowing for disadvantaged pupils, who are approximately one term behind other pupils nationally but in line with their peers.
- Pupils with disability and special educational needs are making good progress because good support is provided for their learning.
- Those who speak English as an additional language and those who need to catch up quickly are making good progress because good support is provided to develop their communication and literacy skills.
- The more-able pupils usually make at least the progress expected of them in achieving the expectations for their ages, and a significant number exceed this. For example, more pupils in Year 6 are currently on course to achieve significantly above age-related expectations in mathematics than in 2015. However, occasionally at Key Stage 2 their thinking is not extended enough by setting harder tasks, which limits the progress of a few.

## Early years provision

**is good**

- Good leadership of the early years has led to good teaching, and effective tracking of progress with good engagement of parents in the process using a commercial system.
- Children arrive happily to Reception and are clear about their routines. They were seen taking responsibility for registering their own attendance and helping others to do so during registration.
- Leaders ensure that parents are effectively engaged in initial assessment, in workshops and in supporting their child's learning. During the inspection a good number of parents read with their children on the carpet.
- Teachers and support assistants make good use of well-chosen activities and resources to ensure children make good progress. As a result, nearly all are making at least expected progress across all areas of learning. For example, in a lesson linking the letter names to letter sounds, children wrote 'j' on whiteboards before they sounded out and blended each letter in 'jam' then wrote it out correctly using good pencil control. A few parents also noticed good improvement in handwriting at home.
- Children who arrive at school at a very early stage of learning English make good progress in communication, language and literacy, and in their personal, social and emotional development because good support is provided for them. All staff work together to support each child's learning, and children make full use of the indoor and outdoor learning environments to develop their imaginations and curiosity.
- Children's behaviour is good and they stay safe because staff promote good relationships between children, set high expectations for good behaviour, encourage them to stay safe and provide close supervision during activities to ensure they feel safe and secure.



## School details

|                                |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 117187        |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Hertfordshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 10001908      |

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

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 405  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Simon Morriss  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Deena Chetty   |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01727 767772   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.bowmansgreen.herts.sch.uk">www.bowmansgreen.herts.sch.uk</a>   |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:head@bowmansgreen.herts.sch.uk">head@bowmansgreen.herts.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 17 October 2013  |

## Information about this school

- Bowmansgreen is larger than most primary schools.
- The school has a six-place specially resourced unit on site, known as the primary support base. This caters for pupils with an education, health and care plan, or those with a statement of special educational needs arising from social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The proportion of pupils with disability and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- More pupils than average start or leave the school part of the way through their primary education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- Since the last inspection, the school received a monitoring visit by Ofsted to determine how much progress it was making in meeting its areas of improvement.
- Since the previous inspection there has been a significant increase in pupil numbers and a high turnover of staff. The leadership team has been restructured to include new phase leaders and single subject leaders for English and mathematics. The school has recently introduced a breakfast club for its pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 17 lessons, mostly with senior leaders, and three activities, including singing.
- They heard a few pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work in different subjects, across all year groups, including in the primary support base.
- Inspectors looked at data and the school's tracking information to determine the progress pupils across the school and children in the early years are making.
- They examined 129 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and held informal discussions with a few parents who brought their children to school. They also looked at the responses of staff in their completed questionnaires.
- Inspectors held meeting with school leaders, five members of the governing body and two groups of pupils. They also held informal discussions with pupils at lunchtime and breaktimes to seek their views.
- They examined a range of documentation including: safeguarding policies and procedures; records of behaviour and attendance figures; minutes of governing body meetings and records of their visits to school; the school improvement plan and the summary evaluation of its work.

## Inspection team

|                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Declan McCarthy, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Tania Perry                     | Ofsted Inspector |
| Richard Hopkins                 | Ofsted Inspector |



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2016

