

Inspection of Bolney CofE Primary School

Church Lane, Bolney, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 5QP

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 March 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and welcoming school. Pupils feel safe and flourish in its supportive atmosphere. Staff know pupils well. They help pupils explore all the wider enrichment opportunities that the school offers. These include performing in school productions, participating in sporting competitions and playing musical instruments. Staff give pupils the confidence to 'leave the school as fearless lifelong learners ready to meet the world with curiosity and resilience'.

The school has high aspirations for pupils' academic achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), work hard to meet these expectations. Pupils usually achieve well across the curriculum.

The school is calm and harmonious. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and pupils behave well. Pupils have confidence that staff will help them resolve any problems they may have. From the start of the reception year, children learn to follow the school's routines. As they progress through the school, pupils are given more roles to develop their sense of responsibility. For example, Year 6 buddy up with early years children in the playground. All pupils, staff and the school dog provide a warm welcome to any new entrants to the school community.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum that builds logically from the early years to Year 6. It prepares pupils well for secondary school. This is because pupils are given a firm foundation of the most important knowledge they need to recall before new learning is introduced.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They ask questions that help pupils to remember more. Pupils develop a good understanding of how they can use the knowledge and skills they learn in everyday life. For example, in computing, some pupils were creating a presentation for an upcoming assembly on negotiation. Typically, there are high expectations about what pupils can achieve in the different subjects. However, in writing, some pupils find it hard to express themselves. This is because there is not always enough focus on developing these skills.

The school has an effective approach to the teaching of early reading. Pupils learn to read well and fluently. From the beginning of the Reception Year, staff teach children the sounds and letters they need to know. Reading books match the sounds that pupils are learning. Additional support to help pupils catch up with the phonics programme is provided quickly.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND well. Typically, clear strategies are put in place to support pupils' learning. However, in some subjects, the school does not always adapt learning well enough. This means pupils do not develop their knowledge and skills as well as they could.

The early years provides a solid foundation on which the rest of the curriculum builds. Children learn well in the inviting and bright environment. Carefully selected activities broaden children's experiences. For example, they recently grew raspberries and made sorbets from the fruit to eat. There are high-quality interactions with adults that develop children's speaking and listening skills well. From an early age, children are given tasks that develop their sense of responsibility. For example, they take turns to call out the afternoon register.

Pupils get on well together at this school and behave well. They are quick to help each other. Incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are extremely rare. The school has introduced clear systems to monitor the attendance of pupils. Attendance has improved and, pupils now attend school regularly.

Pupils experience a curriculum beyond the academic that broadens pupils' life experiences. For example, there are strong links with schools overseas. Many pupils have meaningful responsibilities in school, for instance some answer the phone at lunchtime in the school office. Other pupils enjoy taking on roles in the different school groups such as the school council and eco-committee. All pupils benefit from the school's vast range of clubs. These help pupils to cultivate new interests and talents. Visits engage and enthuse pupils. They spoke with pride about recently singing at an event at the O2. Pupils understand and accept difference. They know that everyone has the right to be treated equally. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff work well together. They say they feel valued by leaders who are considerate of their well-being. Staff are positive about their own development and workload. Those responsible for governance carry out their roles effectively. They accurately understand the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, learning is not adapted well enough to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. When this happens, pupils do not progress as well as they could through the curriculum. The school needs to ensure that learning is suitably adapted in all subjects so pupils can build their knowledge over time.
- Expectations regarding developing pupils' writing skills are not always high enough. This means some pupils find it hard to express themselves well in their written work. The school needs to provide regular opportunities to practice writing to develop pupils' accuracy and confidence.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	126007
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10341624
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Clem Sutters
Headteacher	Emma Lofthouse
Website	bolneyschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Chichester. The last section 48 inspection for schools with a religious character took place in January 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection is due shortly.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic

began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders in the school and wider staff. The lead inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also met with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Chichester.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and computing. For each deep dive, where possible, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. They also spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspectors gathered the views of pupils and staff through Ofsted's online pupil and staff surveys, as well as through interviews and discussions.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings, local authority visit reports and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

James Freeston

Ofsted Inspector

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