

Exbourne Church of England Primary School

Exbourne, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 3SQ

Inspection dates 14–15 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' progress in all year groups is strong and pupils achieve well.
- Reading is a strength of the school and, since the previous inspection, pupils' achievement in writing and the presentation of their work have improved significantly.
- Children in Reception and Year 1 make particularly rapid gains in building confident reading, writing and numeracy skills.
- Pupils are taught well across the school and teaching assistants provide effective support for learning.
- Activities are interesting and engage the pupils' curiosity and interest. Discussion and questioning by teachers help pupils to extend their thinking skills and express their views.
- In lessons, pupils work together well and contribute enthusiastically. They concentrate well and persevere with tasks.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and they say they really enjoy lessons. They have confidence in the adults who look after them and feel safe.
- Good leadership and management have ensured that weaknesses identified are tackled and improvements made. Regular checks made on the quality of teaching are helping the school to improve.
- Governors have strengthened school leadership because they know how well the school is doing, challenge leaders and hold them to account for improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are a few occasions when learning in lessons is not as brisk as it could be.
- Pupils do not have good enough opportunities to assess their own work and identify targets for improvement, this holds back higher achievement.
- Support and monitoring of teaching, including promoting high quality practice from across the federation, have not been sharp enough to promote more outstanding teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons of which one was observed jointly with the headteacher. He also scrutinised samples of pupils' work and heard children read.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 19 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' views were also gathered from informal conversations at the end of the school day. The views of staff were gathered through discussions and six questionnaire returns.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documents, including improvement plans, safeguarding documents, checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to attendance, and the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Exbourne Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized school.
- Numbers of pupils in some year groups are very small and there is a higher than usual proportion of pupils who leave or join the school other than at the usual times.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The pupils are taught in three classes in the morning: Reception and Year 1; Years 2 and 3; and Years 4, 5 and 6. In the afternoon there are two separate classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups, is very small.
- The headteacher started at the school in February 2013.
- The school is part of the Dartmoor Federation. This is a federation of five schools: Boasley Cross Primary; Bridestowe Primary; Exbourne Church of England Primary; Lydford Primary; and Okehampton College.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that most is outstanding and enables all pupils to maximise their achievement by:
 - making sure that activities in lessons enable pupils to learn as well as they can and attain the highest levels possible
 - giving pupils better opportunities to assess their own work and identify targets for improvement so that they can be more focused on their learning and always aim high
 - utilising strengths from across the federation to promote high quality teaching, for example through coaching, and sharper monitoring of learning outcomes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Given the very small numbers in some year groups, there is variation in attainment, and pupils joining and leaving the school at various times which sometimes affects results. However, generally, children come into school in Reception showing typical levels of development for their age and by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6 their attainment is above average.
- Over time, pupils' progress has been stronger in Reception and Key Stage 1 than across Key Stage 2. However, samples of work seen and the school's tracking show that pupils' progress across different year groups is uniformly strong in English and mathematics. Pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 are on course to achieve well and attain levels that are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2013, pupils' attainment in Key Stage 1 was higher in reading and writing than in mathematics and their progress more rapid. Since then, pupils' progress in mathematics has accelerated because this has been a focus of the school's effective improvement work. Pupils' attainment is rising as a result.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's skills in reading, writing and numeracy are developed strongly in lessons. Year 1 pupils tackle difficult texts and use their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics) with considerable confidence and perseverance to read unknown words with accuracy.
- Reading is a strength across the school. Older pupils in Years 3 to 6 read with considerable enthusiasm and share their favourite books with each other. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 have good reading habits and, for example, appreciate the humour in stories. The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is well above national expectations.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in line with their classmates. Their additional needs are well understood and additional help is provided so that they learn successfully.
- The very small number of pupils supported by the pupil premium makes comparisons in attainment unreliable. School records and samples of work show that the current progress of this group of pupils is similar to other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- As part of their drive to raise aspirations and make the school even more effective, leaders have rightly set a target to increase the proportion of pupils working at the high Level 6 by the time they leave the school in Year 6.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching across the school typically promotes pupils' good progress in English and mathematics. Activities provided for different groups of pupils mostly help them to make good progress, and additional support is given where necessary to accelerate learning. Good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching ensures that pupils of different abilities have equally good chances to achieve well.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are a strength of the school and learning in lessons is purposeful and enjoyable. Pupils comment that teachers are 'strict but fair' and that they are 'always treated with respect'. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and try their best to do well.
- Pupils' work indicates that pupils mostly finish tasks and to do their best work. Pupils' topic work in geography in Years 5 and 6, for example, is well presented and shows that pupils care about, and take pride in, their work. Pupils help each other when working in groups, for example when finding ways to investigate number problems in mathematics.
- Teachers assess new pupils' starting points and give these pupils work to move their leaning forward and, as a result, they make up any lost ground quickly and learn as successfully as

others.

- In Reception, children work well alongside the Year 1 pupils and join in with counting activities. They make rapid gains with reading and writing because basic skills are exceptionally well taught. Teaching ensures that they can apply their knowledge of phonics to read unknown words. These strong gains are clearly reflected in the samples of work in Reception and Year 1.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support for different groups of pupils, including helping less-able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to get the most out of the work they are set. Their contribution also ensures that Reception children listen well and concentrate hard on challenging work.
- The use of targets, to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve, is developing but is not yet fully established. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to assess their own work in detail and set themselves clear goals for improvement; as a result, they are not able to maximise their efforts on improving their work. Marking typically gives pupils clear information about how to improve; pupils value the comments made and respond to them in future work.
- There are occasions in lessons when learning is not as rapid as it should be. This happens, for example, when not enough work is covered in the time available and it takes too long for the pupils to move on to more demanding work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour and safety of pupils are both good. Pupils respond with considerable enthusiasm when asked about why they like coming to school. They are proud to show the range of certificates they receive in assembly for their good work and effort. They come to school regularly and attendance is improving due to the school's effective actions and parents' support.
- Pupils get on well together and know that discrimination is not tolerated. Older pupils organise a range of play activities at break and lunch times and ensure that nobody feels left out. Cooperative games using skipping ropes are popular. At the end of play sessions they come into classrooms sensibly and safely, ready for learning.
- Discussion confirms that pupils feel safe and secure in school and they say there is an absence of bullying. Older pupils often take on the responsibility as peer mediators to resolve any minor disagreements. Pupils have a clear awareness of e-safety and the potential dangers of cyber bullying and using the internet.
- Parents and staff rightly think that pupils' behaviour and their safety are strong aspects of the school. New pupils coming into the school are welcomed and quickly made to feel part of the school community. Parents' responses to the online survey are highly positive about the school and about how well their children are cared for and like coming to school. These were cited by parents as strong reasons why they send their children to this school and would recommend it to others.
- Pupils say that it is very unusual for their learning to be disrupted and that this has improved over the past year, when relationships and behaviour in the school were not as positive as they are now. This improvement is also reflected in the school's behaviour log.

The leadership and management are good

- Good leadership and management ensure that teaching enables pupils to achieve well. The headteacher, who moved to the school from within the federation, quickly identified those areas of the school which required improvement and began to move things forward. Professional development and robust monitoring have strengthened the quality of teaching.
- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage by middle leaders are highly effective and underpin the very positive start children receive.
- Staff work well together as a team to implement change. The school's work to improve writing and presentation has been successful. Leaders, including governors, recognise the potential of

the federation to focus teaching on ensuring challenging Level 6 activities are available for the most able pupils, together with wider opportunities to promote their outstanding achievement.

- The curriculum reflects the school's religious character through regular opportunities for pupils to reflect and pray during assemblies and at the start of lunchtime. Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is nurtured successfully by a range of well-chosen activities.
- Leaders have used the additional money from the primary school sports funding to provide additional training for staff and to increase pupils' participation in sport. Attendance at the after-school sports club has more than doubled since the beginning of September 2013. There are several sports events with other schools in the federation which pupils enjoy.
- The local authority rightly has confidence in the headteacher and has judged that the school requires only light touch support. Additional funding was provided to the federation to support the change in leadership.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The federation governing body has a good understanding of Exbourne School, supporting and challenging school leaders well. The governors regularly review their own effectiveness to ensure that they maximise their impact on improving pupils' achievement, both within this school and across the federation. Governors understand how well pupils achieve when compared with other schools nationally and they challenge school leaders to expect high quality teaching from all teachers. Appropriate monitoring procedures ensure that governors have a clear understanding of how teachers' performance and experience are linked to pay. Governors understand the specific needs of the school and work closely with the school to see the improvement plans through. They have checked on the use of pupil premium funding and how well it is improving pupils' progress. The governing body ensures the school meets its statutory safeguarding requirements. They have undertaken sufficient training since becoming a federation to ensure that they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

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	113410
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	423423

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	49
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Courtney
Headteacher	Alison Ewen
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 June 2011
Telephone number	01837 851205
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