

Exminster Community Primary School

Main Road, Exminster, Exeter, EX6 8AJ

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2013

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.

- Senior leaders' drive to improve the quality of teaching has resulted in pupils making more rapid progress in their learning since the last inspection.
- Pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6, in the past two years, have been significantly better than seen nationally.
- The headteacher inspires teachers to try new ideas and improve their teaching. As a result, teaching is now consistently good in all years.
- Pupils make good progress because all teachers set high expectations and skilfully structure tasks in lessons that move pupils on to their next step in learning.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about learning because lessons are interesting and they have ample opportunity to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects.
- Pupils value teachers' marking of their work because it informs them on what to do next and they have the opportunity to improve work after it has been marked.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make rapid progress because they are provided with exciting and stimulating activities that enable them to achieve well.
- Governors provide excellent support for the school because they hold leaders and managers to account and ensure that spending is targeted at improving learning for pupils.
- Pupils feel safe and behave well. They have a high regard for the school's vision and values to make them better learners. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Senior leaders do not set high enough expectations for rates of progress in Years 3 and 4, as they do for other years.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to experiment with their own ideas and take the lead in their learning, especially the most-able pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 19 lessons. These included joint observations with the headteacher and two other members of the school's leadership team. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons, and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members, the headteacher, members of the leadership team and other teachers. A discussion was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 59 responses to the online Parent View survey, the views of parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, and responses to the school's own questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, the plans for improvement, and policies on how the school keeps pupils safe. Minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour and attendance were also examined.
- Inspectors analysed the school's data on pupils' current progress and evaluated work in pupils' books. They also examined teachers' plans for lessons and documentation on how the leadership team monitors teaching and the performance of teachers.

Inspection team

David Howley, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Kim Dorian-Kemp	Additional inspector
Patricia Dodds	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the additional government funding known as the pupil premium is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise senior leaders' expectations for the rate at which pupils progress in Years 3 and 4, so that it is similar to that achieved in other years.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that teachers provide more opportunities for pupils, especially the most-able, to experiment with their own ideas and take the lead in their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school's own accurate assessment of pupils' learning and the evidence from national data show that pupils have made good and improved progress since the last inspection. By the end of Year 6, in both 2011 and 2012, pupils' attainment and the rate at which they had progressed were significantly better than that seen nationally.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below, and sometimes well below, the levels expected for their age. They make good progress because they are provided with exciting and stimulating activities that enable them to experiment in different ways and achieve well. At the early stages of their reading development, children gain in confidence. They also develop well in their literacy because teachers pay close attention to carefully structuring children's understanding of the sounds made by different letters and groups of letters (phonics).
- Pupils say they find learning interesting, and lessons are well structured and challenging. There are now no differences in the quality of pupils' learning across the school, because of the rigour with which senior leaders have addressed any weaknesses in teaching. All pupils are treated equally, discrimination is not tolerated and consequently, all pupils across the school now make good progress.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding progress well because the support they receive is carefully tailored to their individual needs. Their attainment, as compared with the national picture by way of their average point scores, is also higher than average. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as pupils who speak English as an additional language, similarly make good progress because of regular programmes of support and high expectations.
- Progress in reading is good because pupils are enthusiastic about reading, and benefit from programmes and activities, such as reading with parents at home, that encourage them to read widely and often. Year 1 performance in the national phonics reading check was better than average.
- Pupils' confidence as writers and the rate at which they make progress in writing have improved since the last inspection. Their writing skills are continually being developed through a range of topics and interesting activities in all subjects. This approach has particularly stimulated boys' interest in writing, and they were eager to talk about how they check their writing targets in lessons other than English. Similarly, in mathematics, pupils make good progress because of the visual and practical approaches to the learning of basic skills and the opportunities provided for them to learn through the regular solving of problems.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because for most of the time teachers set high expectations and use assessment information to check pupils' learning. They plan lessons that will move pupils' learning on to the next step.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and skilfully structure tasks to ensure that pupils of different abilities are challenged, moving them on to more challenging tasks if their progress in lessons is swift. Teachers also carefully question pupils during lessons to check their understanding. They adjust tasks, when necessary, in order to ensure that all pupils are learning well. As a result, pupils are engaged and find learning interesting and enjoyable. However, teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to experiment with their own ideas or to take the lead in their learning, especially the more-able pupils.
- Pupils are encouraged by teachers to regularly check their progress against their learning targets. Similarly, regular and informative marking by teachers enables pupils to know how they can improve their skills and understanding. Teachers also provide opportunities for pupils to

check their work and to improve it once it has been marked. Pupils regard teachers' marking and the way in which it is followed up as the main reasons why their work improves.

- Teachers regularly encourage pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills, because of the strong links between subjects, and through the 'Rainbow Days' that focus on developing pupils' self-awareness, motivation and empathy with others. The whole-day focus on the 'worldwide village' encouraged pupils to use their communication skills in literacy and numeracy in discovering about life in other countries. For example, pupils learning about Japan spoke about how it is better to learn things through knowing how other people like to live.
- Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to practise their research and communication skills through the use of information and communications technology (ICT). For example, pupils are confident in using tablets to discover facts about India. Consequently, pupils' skills in the use of computers are much improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and effective in supporting teachers in the classroom and providing help for individuals or groups of pupils through programmes specifically designed to meet their needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are happy and polite. They behave well in lessons because they are always engaged in their learning and know how well they are doing. However, teachers do not always provide pupils with enough activities where they can take the lead in their own learning and this restricts opportunities to show independence.
- Pupils feel safe and are confident that an adult is always there to help them. All the parents and carers that responded to Parent View indicated that their child feels safe in school. A very small minority perceive that the school does not deal effectively with bullying, but pupils say that there is no bullying in school, and inspection evidence confirms this.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school, and attendance is similar to the national average. They enjoy having responsibilities, and the school council has influenced the development of the 'outdoor classroom'. Pupils mix together well on the playground and pupil 'play buddies' organise group games well.
- The school ensures that children have a good understanding of how to manage risks. For example, pupils talk confidently about managing e-safety and they are knowledgeable about cyber bullying. Similarly, assemblies and the way in which topics and subjects are organised ensure that pupils have a good understanding of other faiths and cultures. This contributes strongly to their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The leadership and management are good

- Governors, senior leaders, teachers and other adults in the school share the same vision and ambition for the school. This is because the headteacher inspires people and values their contribution. Teachers openly praise the support they receive from senior leaders and the extent to which they are encouraged to try new ways to improve their teaching.
- The school has an accurate view of its strengths and a clear understanding of the priorities for improvement, indicating clear capacity to continue to improve. Senior leaders accurately evaluate pupils' learning in lessons; pupils' progress is monitored regularly with the class teacher, and teachers have been placed strategically in order to improve pupils' progress where it had been slipping. Teachers are given clear guidance on how to improve, and the quality of teaching is now consistently good across the school. However, although teaching in Years 3 and 4, in particular, has improved rapidly, senior leaders have not so far set high enough expectations for the achievement of pupils in those years.
- The dynamic leadership of English and mathematics inspires pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. This has made a major contribution to the improved progress that pupils have made since the last inspection.

- The school has developed a strong working relationship with parents and carers, engaging them in their children’s learning, for example, through running a workshop on how to pronounce letters and groups of letters phonetically. A very large majority of parents and carers that responded to Parent View indicated that their child is taught well and that the school will respond to any concerns that they have. As one parent or carer wrote to the inspection team, ‘Everyone, without exception, is helpful, knowledgeable and approachable.’
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides excellent support for the school because it holds leaders and managers to account and ensures prudent financial management. As a result, spending is carefully targeted to improving pupils’ learning. Governors are knowledgeable because they are clear about the information they require and ensure that their training is up to date. They scrutinise information on pupils’ achievement and monitor the impact of plans for improvement through visits to the school and talking to teachers and middle leaders. Governors ensure that performance management based on accurate evaluation of the impact of teaching on pupils’ progress influences teachers’ progression through the pay scales. They ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively, for example, through individually tailored programmes of support for speech and language development. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met, particularly those related to safeguarding.

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	113201
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	403196

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glen Woodward
Headteacher	Bob Foale
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 June 2008
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