

Exeter Road Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	113095
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	378639
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2012
Lead inspector	Andrew Saunders

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	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pam Brice
Headteacher	Paul Gosling
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 September 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Saunders

Additional inspector

Helen Griffiths

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 12 teachers, including sessions to support pupils with special educational needs, or who speak English as an additional language. Observations totalled nine hours. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, teachers and governors, and inspectors spoke to parents and carers informally. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as documents provided by the school, in planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's systems to track the progress of pupils, records of monitoring of the quality of teaching, minutes from meetings, 133 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and the school's improvement plans.

Information about the school

Located in a central part of Exmouth, this school is of average size. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, although the proportion of pupils from a wide range of other backgrounds is increasing; a very small proportion of these are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with disabilities is above average. These pupils have a wide range of learning needs, including behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. More pupils than usual join or leave the school other than at the expected times. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Reception class. The school meets the current government floor standard. There is a privately run pre-school and a children's centre on the school site; these are subject to separate inspections. Among other awards, the school has achieved the Healthy Schools Plus award and was a finalist in a prestigious national science competition in 2011.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. The strong leadership of the headteacher means that teaching has improved since the last inspection. Consequently, attainment has risen, particularly in reading, and pupils make at least good progress; their achievement is good.
- Some pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make outstanding progress. This is because the support they receive is highly focused and is delivered by well-trained, caring staff.
- The behaviour of pupils is a strength of the school. During lessons, they are cooperative and focused well on the work they are given to do. The high levels of respect and courtesy that the adults show each other and the pupils are reflected in the attitudes of pupils towards each other.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and can identify situations which may be unsafe. They are aware of what constitutes bullying and feel that this almost never happens at their school. They feel confident that they can discuss any issues they are worried about with an appropriate adult and that it will be dealt with quickly.
- The themes chosen to focus the curriculum are engaging and provide rich experiences and interesting tasks, often based on real-world examples.
- The school provides pupils with extensive opportunities to reflect on the lives of others and to think about the wider world around them, through visits, the topics they study, links with many other schools and opportunities for competition, such as the prestigious national science competition. Pupils respond positively to these opportunities and are thoughtful towards each other.
- Leadership and management are widely shared and focused well on evaluating the work of the school accurately. Strategies introduced are proving effective in raising attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2, to be in line with

national averages by July 2013, by:

- increasing the independence of pupils in working towards the helpful learning goals set for them
- ensuring pupils respond to the comments made in their books when teachers mark their work.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

While attainment was low in 2011 in national tests, it continues to rise steadily. When they join the school in Reception, children have skills and knowledge levels which are below those typical for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Well-prepared resources, good use of the space available including the outdoor area, and caring, knowledgeable staff mean children quickly settle into the routines of school and enjoy learning. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage they are well prepared for the next stage of their learning. As they proceed through Key Stages 1 and 2, all groups of pupils continue to make up ground because of the good progress they make in lessons. In English, pupils develop good skills in reading because there is a consistent approach to teaching sounds and letters (phonics) and reading is given a high priority by all adults and every opportunity is used to promote it. Pupils' attainment in reading at Key Stage 1 is broadly average; by the time they leave school it is average. Pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language are supported well, both by dedicated adults in school and partnerships the school has developed; they make good progress. The pupils' increasing confidence in reading is helping to improve the writing of all pupils, as is the thematic approach to the curriculum. The chosen themes always include a particularly interesting visit or visitor, so that the pupils have rich experiences on which to base their writing. From observations during the inspection, it is clear that pupils are not always sufficiently independent in their determination to reach the targets that have been set for them. At times, they rely too heavily on the regular input of adults to maintain their focus on what they need to do next. As a result, improvements in writing are not yet as strong as those in reading. The school recognises that attainment in mathematics is not yet high enough, although the focus on improving the teaching of mathematics is having an impact. In the lessons observed, work was matched closely to the widely varied needs of pupils; tasks were interesting and provided the challenge pupils needed. For example, pupils with special educational needs made outstanding progress because they were helped to develop their skills in subtraction through physical activities and practical resources. Other pupils who are particularly able in mathematics were given opportunities to work in groups on problems that were more complex; they made good progress. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they agree that their children make good progress and were helped to develop skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics. Many of the pupils commented that they enjoy learning and that the teachers make sure that the work they get is interesting and hard enough. Inspectors agreed that pupils are learning well and that they make good progress from their starting points, whenever they join the school.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They assess the progress pupils have made regularly. Work is well planned because teachers use the wealth of information the school has about pupils' performance to make sure that tasks match pupils' needs closely. Together with strong subject knowledge and the carefully planned curriculum, this means lessons are delivered with confidence. Teachers make good use of questioning to clarify pupils' understanding and adapt the task or explanations in light of the information gained. Throughout the school, questions are valued and pupils are becoming more confident in explaining their ideas and views, as well as in developing their own questions about their learning. Teachers give regular feedback, through verbal comments, noting progress towards targets, and marking in books. However, marking is not always as effective as it might be, as pupils are not expected to respond to these comments routinely.

Pupils with special educational needs are identified accurately and benefit from a wide range of support. The support strategies are monitored closely for effectiveness, including after pupils have completed them. Consequently, the school is clear about which strategies are most effective for particular pupils and that these pupils have often closed the gap to their peers and no longer require additional support. The teaching of small groups or individual pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities is often outstanding. Excellent relationships between the adults and strong communication benefit pupils' learning further. Pupils help to set their own targets and are beginning to participate in identifying when they have achieved them. This starts in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where teaching is highly effective. As a result, younger pupils establish excellent habits as learners. In almost all lessons, pupils are motivated highly to produce their best work. Occasionally, some pupils are too reliant on the teacher to maintain their momentum and they become stuck, without the determination to find a way through the difficulty for themselves. However, the focus on teaching pupils explicitly about learning means that most pupils are developing the resilience and confidence to tackle challenging work. The emphasis on providing good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences helps pupils' development further. Almost all parents and carers felt that their children are taught well. Most parents and carers agreed that they are helped to support their children's learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

During the lessons observed, the behaviour of pupils was at least good. Records show that this is typical of the behaviour over time. Pupils display positive attitudes towards school, their teachers and each other consistently. They appreciate particularly the wide range of activities, trips and visits available to them, such as growing and cooking food, learning to play musical instruments and table tennis. Attendance has improved and is average; it is affected by the seasonal nature of employment in the area. The school works hard to promote the importance of being at school regularly. Most parents and carers agreed that there is a good standard of behaviour in the school; some indicated that they felt that the behaviour had improved noticeably. A few felt that some lessons were disrupted by the poor behaviour of a very few pupils. Pupils acknowledged that this does occur

occasionally, but that the systems to help manage behaviour work well. While they are aware of the different forms of bullying, they said that it almost never happens; if it does, they were confident it would be dealt with effectively. Pupils who face particular difficulties in their lives are supported exceptionally well through a range of innovative opportunities and partnerships. For example, some pupils participate in outdoor learning at another school, helping them to develop social skills as well as learning. The school works effectively with families, for example through the family 'SEAL' programme to help develop social and emotional aspects of learning. The positive relationships across the school mean that pupils feel that they help each other to behave well and they said that they feel safe. The emphasis on making a positive contribution to the school means that younger and older pupils get along well. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds get along noticeably well also; the different cultures represented are valued and celebrated. For example, Year 6 pupils have enjoyed learning some phrases in Mandarin.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has an accurate view of the work of the school, because he has analysed and evaluated each aspect vigorously. He has supported other senior leaders to develop their roles, identifying key issues and introducing effective strategies to tackle these. For example, best practice is shared between colleagues, as well as sought more widely at partner schools. Professional development has been tailored carefully to the needs of teachers and support is provided to help each teacher improve. As a result, a vision for ensuring high-quality teaching and learning is shared widely and has meant the school has improved since the last inspection. The school is regarded as leading best practice in supporting pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities, because of the expertise and strategies it has developed. The curriculum is good. It provides a rich range of experiences, within which pupils develop their skills. It promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils well, because of the breadth of experiences pupils have and the focus of staff on encouraging pupils to think more widely. The way that all groups are valued and nurtured and the way progress of different groups is monitored closely are symptoms of the seriousness with which leaders at all levels promote equality and tackle discrimination. The governing body brings a wide range of experience and skills to its role. It ensures that requirements for safeguarding pupils are fully met. The governing body is increasingly confident and robust about holding the school to account for the outcomes achieved by pupils, by improving its understanding of the data. Together with the depth of analysis by the senior leaders and the improvements already brought about towards raising attainment, this means that there is strong capacity to improve.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Exeter Road Community Primary School, Exmouth, EX8 1PU

Thank you for welcoming us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed seeing the work you were doing and hearing what you think about your learning. We have judged that your school is a good school.

The headteacher and other leaders have made sure that the teachers have lots of information about how well you are doing. They use this to make sure that the tasks they give you to do are just hard enough and give you the challenge you need. They have focused particularly on making sure all of you can read well. Your writing and mathematics have also improved, although not yet as much as reading has. Those of you who find learning more difficult get excellent support from the adults who work with you so that you make outstanding progress.

Teachers have worked together to give you interesting themes to study and we could see how much you were enjoying learning about lots of different aspects of Asia. You help each other to behave well and get along with one another; we were particularly impressed with the way you think about other people and are polite.

Although it is a good school, the headteacher and other adults are determined it will improve even more. We have asked them to do the following.

- Help you to do even better in your tests at the end of Year 6, and through Key Stage 2, especially in your writing and mathematics, by making sure you do not rely too much on the teachers, and that you do what they ask when they mark your books.

You can help by thinking how you can get on with your work yourself, before you ask for help from an adult. Above all you should continue to enjoy your learning, and helping to make your school such an enjoyable place to learn.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Saunders
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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