

Yeoford Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	113115
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	378643
Inspection dates	24–25 May 2012
Lead inspector	Alex Baxter

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	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Tume
Headteacher	Sue Leyman
Date of previous school inspection	31 October 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Alex Baxter

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited 11 lessons taught by four teachers and listened to pupils reading. The inspector also observed break times, attended assemblies and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, and parents and carers. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. He observed the school's work, and looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. The inspector analysed 27 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those returned by 28 pupils and 11 members of staff.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below the national average, but is higher than this in some year groups. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the normal times is above average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Since January 2012, the school has been part of the Woodleigh hard federation of three primary schools in Devon. The federation is led by an executive headteacher and each school has a head of teaching and learning. The federation has a shared governing body. There has been significant instability in staffing over the past twelve months and the substantive headteacher remains on long-term absence. A privately funded after-school club operates on the school site; as it is managed independently it was not part of this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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

- Yeoford is a good school that has sustained its caring community ethos and pupils’ good achievement since the previous inspection. It is not yet an outstanding school because there is some variation in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Teaching is good, and often of high quality, typically when teachers’ questioning challenges pupils to reflect, and extends their understanding and breadth of vocabulary. Often, during group work, pupils’ eager sharing of ideas represents outstanding collaborative learning. However, pupils’ independent learning, self-evaluation and handwriting and presentational skills are not developed consistently.
- Pupils’ attainment is above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Pupils’ speaking and listening skills, especially their vocabulary, are significantly advanced. Pupils’ skills and love of reading are systematically developed through the school. Pupils across the range of abilities, including those arriving later than the normal time of entry, feel valued and make good progress from differing starting points.
- This is an inclusive school where practical outdoor learning provides first hand experiences, strongly promoting pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, pupils feel safe, they behave well and their attitudes to learning and relationships are extremely positive. Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school, as seen in the consistently above average attendance, which also reflects excellent relationships between home and school.
- The executive headteacher is well supported by senior staff and the federation’s single governing body. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and performance, focused professional development of staff and productive sharing of staff skills typify the school’s good leadership and management and determined commitment to improvement. The widened staff expertise within the new

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federation has already broadened the curriculum and enriched pupils' learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise pupils' progress from good to outstanding by building on existing strengths and by:
 - systematically developing pupils' independent learning skills, including their ability to evaluate the quality of their own work, as they move through the school
 - more consistently modelling and teaching an agreed style of handwriting and improving the way pupils record their work, including by helping them to understand the benefits of well-presented work.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The pupils' above average attainment by the end of Year 6 reflects good achievement. Pupils with more ability, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs all make good progress in lessons because of the additional individual support they receive from staff. Often, such individual support for pupils who find learning difficult, especially in reading, enables them to make accelerated progress and bridge attainment gaps with other pupils. Inspection findings show that parents', carers' and pupils' positive views about achievement are well-founded.

Higher than expected skills are often evident when children enter school, though there is some variation between year groups because cohorts are small. Children derive great pleasure from learning together and make good progress in Reception and Year 1, especially in developing their communication, language and literacy skills. In Year 1, for example, pupils are already writing imaginatively and at length about their 'Bean Birthday Party'.

Good and often better progress continues in Years 2 and 3, where pupils' willingness to discuss and explain their ideas in response to challenging teaching rapidly extends their understanding of words and range of vocabulary. As a result, by the end of Year 2, there are increasing numbers of pupils working at higher levels than expected nationally. Pupils have a particularly impressive ability to explain their thinking when writing and solving mathematical problems. Good progress continues through Years 3 to 6 as teaching successfully builds upon the pupils' eagerness to learn in pairs or in groups. For example, pupils were keen to explain to each other how they added adjectival phrases to enrich their writing. As a consequence, while overall attainment is above average in English and mathematics, pupils' speaking and listening skills and their ability to reflect are very well developed. At times though, the richness of their expressive writing is clouded by underdeveloped handwriting and presentational skills. Similarly, while pupils' collaborative skills are systematically

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encouraged, in contrast their independent learning skills lack such consistent emphasis and are not so well developed.

Examination of teachers' assessments, and listening to pupils' reading and talking with them about their home-school reading records, indicate above average reading skills at the end of Years 2 and 6 and reflect good progress in reading. In addition, observations of group reading in lessons showed that, in response to well-focused teaching, an increasing number of children in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 confidently blend letter sounds when tackling new words and are becoming competent readers. Pupils' skills and enjoyment in reading continue to be successfully fostered through Years 3 to 6 and enhance their successful learning across the range of subjects.

Quality of teaching

Inspection findings show that teaching is good overall. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire or talked with the inspector indicated that their children are taught well and most pupils share this view. Observations of lessons also indicated some outstanding teaching, especially during closely supported guided group work, well matched to pupils' ability. This type of approach is accelerating pupils' progress. Often such collaborative learning at these times is of a very high quality, particularly when pupils exchange ideas with their 'Talking Partners', and especially for more-able pupils. These greatly benefited, for example, in a lesson in Years 2 and 3 when pupils discussed the use of connectives when constructing and sequencing sentences.

Typically, teachers promote high expectations, set challenging work and manage behaviour effectively. Teaching is also well planned, proceeds at a good pace and mostly sustains a productive balance of whole-class and group activity. Teachers set well-chosen extension tasks for pupils to undertake when they have completed their work. For example, during a mathematics lesson in Years 3 to 6, more-able pupils devised their own problems, continuing the investigation of areas and perimeters of ancient Greek temples. Similarly children in Reception often benefit by choosing practical learning activities for themselves. However, opportunities for pupils to follow their own lines of enquiry and to extend their self-evaluation skills by checking their own work are not always taken as they move through the school, limiting pupils' independence and ability to contribute even more to their achievement.

Staff, often aided by parents, carers and visitors, successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across a broad and well-balanced curriculum. Outdoor learning, for example Forest School, within the school's attractive grounds and the local community, and daily assemblies encourage pupils to reflect and appreciate the world around them. Opportunities such as video-conferencing to share ideas with pupils in the partner schools, including for the very youngest children, also develop respect for the views of others.

Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to develop pupils' learning, especially in

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support of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, whose accelerated progress also stems from well-implemented and sharply focused individual education plans. Teachers use assessment effectively to build on previous learning. Marking, especially during 'focused feedback sessions' when teachers talk with individual pupils and enter next steps in their books, is a strong feature. However, the effective use of assessment to develop pupils' handwriting and presentational skills is less consistent.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour and safety are good and are sustained by very good relationships and diligent staff supervision. Pupils talk knowledgeably about bullying, for example its deliberate nature and the various kinds of bullying that can occur, such as verbal and physical abuse and cyber-bullying. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying at this school, but say that behaviour is better now than at times in the past. Parents and carers expressed no concerns about behaviour, but a few comments in the questionnaires also intimated an improved picture. Observations of lessons showed that learning is often enriched by excellent attitudes and behaviour. However, a few pupils, especially smaller and younger pupils, are occasionally troubled at break times by older pupils playing football over-boisterously on the small playground, especially when rainfall limits the use of the school's poorly drained grassed area.

Even so, parents, carers and their children agree that pupils are very safe at school because, as one parent commented, typically reflecting most of the views expressed, 'This is a fantastic school offering a range of activities and experiences in a safe and supportive environment.' Pupils are very polite and their enthusiasm in sharing ideas with Talk Partners and when working in groups gives a powerful impetus to their learning and progress. Pupils enjoy a variety of responsibilities out of class, for example as Young Ambassadors organising sporting events and when looking after playground and gardening equipment. However, pupils' independent learning skills are not developed to the same high level. The staff work very closely with parents and carers who in turn give full support to the work of the school. Pupils are confident that adults will sort out any problems they may have.

Leadership and management

The experienced executive headteacher, well supported by senior colleagues and the governing body, deploys the increased breadth of staff skills available within the federation to sustain an effective drive and ambition for continued improvement. In addition, by inducting and developing new staff effectively the school has emerged well from a period of instability in staffing and sustained its capacity to improve further. This is seen in the good progress made by all pupils, which also illustrates the school's diligent elimination of discrimination and inclusive promotion of equality of opportunity. Effective self-evaluation is informed by regular monitoring of teaching and scrutiny of the pupils' work and progress. Strengths and areas to develop have been accurately identified and, for example, the quality of pupils' expressive writing and problem-solving skills are noticeably improving. Close links across the three

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schools in the federation and excellent relationships with parents and carers are also extending the curricular learning opportunities for the pupils. As a result, joint activities such as developing global awareness, including through links with a school in Tanzania, have enriched the promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Members of the single governing body are drawn from all three schools and, by sharing expertise, fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. For example, responsibilities for safeguarding are secure because they ensure staff are vetted, risks assessed and pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are supported.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



25 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Yeoford Community Primary School, Crediton EX17 5HZ

Thank you for your warm welcome and for your very helpful support during the recent inspection. You will be pleased to know that I agree with you that Yeoford is a good school. I really enjoyed talking with many of you and am grateful to the two groups that I interviewed, including members of the school council. You made it very clear that you greatly enjoy school because of the many friends that you make and because of the caring support that you receive from all the adults. I was also pleased to hear and read in your questionnaires that you feel very safe in school and that you think behaviour is good, having improved over the past year. You told me that you have lots of interesting things to do in your school grounds; for example, how much you enjoy gardening. You also told me, though, that sometimes football dominates playtimes, especially as the field is often too wet to use, and that some pupils could show more consideration of others at this time. I have passed your views on to the school and have suggested they continue to consult with your representatives on the school council about how playtimes could be improved.

These are some of the other things I liked most.

- You show very good attitudes to learning and make good progress. You develop your speaking and listening skills extremely well.
- Teaching is good overall and occasionally it is outstanding.
- Staff work very closely with your parents and carers and your attendance is above average.
- Your executive headteacher, senior staff and governors are a good team. They make sure that you achieve well and that the school keeps improving.

To bring further improvement, I have asked the teachers to give you more opportunities to learn by following your own ideas and enquiries and to help you in learning how to check your own work. I also want the teachers to improve your handwriting and the way you present your work in books. You can help by always trying to do your best with this.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter
Lead inspector

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