

Chilthorne Domer Church School

Main Street, Chilthorne Domer, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8RD

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- The results achieved in English tests at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average and this is now also the same for mathematics. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has also risen to be above the national average. All groups of pupils including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in acquiring reading, writing and mathematical skills and apply these well to a range of subjects.
- Teaching is planned well so that activities are well matched to the needs of all groups of learners. Pupils enjoy learning, are motivated because of the interesting topics and demonstrate independence from the Reception class and throughout the school. They understand how to improve their work because marking gives clear guidance.
- Pupils behave well and there are high-quality relationships at all levels of the school. Parents say that it is like a family. Pupils feel safe, report that 'bullying does not happen and if it did it would be dealt with well'.
- The headteacher and all the staff, including the governing body, share a common ambition to improve the school and have successfully raised the achievement in mathematics for all groups of pupils by improving teaching and assessment for learning. This means the school is well placed to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always anticipate how to move pupils' learning on in lessons quickly enough, in a few lessons more able pupils are not given difficult enough work to do from the start or when they complete activities quickly.
- The school's records of its performance and plans for its improvement do not yet record clearly what success will look like and leaders and managers at all levels are not fully involved in checking the school's progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons of which three were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector listened to pupils read and made short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher and middle leaders and informally with parents.
- The inspector took account of 22 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), results of a previous questionnaire held in school and letters from parents.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at school documents including the school's record of the results of end of Key Stages 1 and 2 tests taken in 2012, school data relating to assessment and pupil progress, planning for school improvement, monitoring of teaching and learning, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Janet Dinsmore, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a slightly smaller than average primary school serving a village and outskirts of the neighbouring town.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is slightly less than average and there are average proportions of those who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or supported at school action plus is slightly lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards for the achievement of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that a greater proportion is outstanding by ensuring:
 - that teachers anticipate when to intervene to accelerate learning further
 - that all groups are challenged in all lessons, especially more able pupils.
- Develop leadership capacity by:
 - ensuring that all staff and members of the governing body carry out monitoring activities
 - improving the recording of self-evaluation so that there are clearly measurable criteria for successful outcomes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils are now achieving above national expectations for attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. This means that there has been significant and rapid improvement in achievement in mathematics in all year groups in the past two years. Each cohort has a wide range of abilities and individual characteristics and all pupils make expected or better progress from their starting points.
- Children in the Reception class had only been in school for a week at the time of the inspection. They are keen to learn and explore and some have already developed independence in counting and ordering numbers and talking to each other about what they are discovering.
- Year 1 pupils demonstrate good independent learning skills in completing tasks such as counting in tens to fill in the blanks on a hundred square and grouping objects. Higher ability pupils at the beginning of Year 2 are confident in using two- and three-digit numbers for finding ten more and ten less. The proportion of pupils attaining above expected levels in mathematics at Key Stage 1 is now twice the national average.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs are well supported by skilled teaching assistants. For example, they use physical representations of numbers to ensure concepts are understood, and specific short-term programmes to support literacy development. This ensures that these pupils make expected or better progress from their starting points.
- Pupils reach above average levels of attainment in reading in Key Stages 1 and 2 and read an extensive range of books. The youngest children enjoy changing books each day and sharing these with parents and carers. They progress to learning the letters and sounds they make so that they can read for themselves by the end of Year 1.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use reading skills well to explore personification in poetry, highlighting text and working well with each other. The proportion of pupils in Year 6 in 2012 who reached the higher Level 5 in reading, writing and mathematics was above average. Current pupils are on track to achieve at the same level because they have made better than expected progress, particularly boys in reading and girls in writing.
- Pupils learn to write well and use it for a range of purposes. They confidently use knowledge of sentence structure to develop their writing, for example in describing a woodland scene in Year 5. Years 3 and 4 pupils developed their use of vocabulary for articulating feelings of characters after seeing a film clip. In Year 2, pupils used role play and drama well to develop conversation, vocabulary and retell a story.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers plan each mathematics lesson well to build on the work of the previous day, consolidating learning for those pupils who are not yet sure and providing challenge for those who are. This is done through accurate assessment and weekly targets for the pupils, who can also challenge themselves by choosing work at their next level of attainment.
- Pupils are fully aware of their next steps in learning and report that the development points given in daily marking really help them to improve. They respond to this marking and also review their partner's writing against criteria so supporting learning. This begins with the youngest pupils checking each other's work and pointing out errors, for example in recording numbers.
- During lessons most teachers check and question pupils well to assess their progress and provide more challenge when they complete activities quickly. Sometimes teachers do not anticipate this quickly enough to move pupils' learning on.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in mathematics and use questioning, resources and

assessment tools well so that all groups have activities that are well matched to their abilities. Teaching assistants also question pupils well and support pupils' learning.

- Teaching engages pupils well in their learning and they show resilience and independence in tackling challenging tasks, for example applying their number skills to adding a string of numbers at speed. Lessons are well paced and there are high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils supported by pupil premium receive well-targeted support specific to their individual circumstances, enabling them to make expected or better progress.
- Teaching is adapted well to meet the needs of disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, enabling them to achieve well. Signing to reinforce initial letter sounds, symbols and vocabulary in Polish for example were used well in the Reception class when teaching parts of the body.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and many report that it is what they like best about school. Parents and carers report that behaviour is good and a few say that their children have been transformed by moving to this school.
- Pupils are confident and articulate about how they all get on well together. Behaviour and bullying logs demonstrate this and record that behaviour is good over time.
- Pupils understand about different forms of bullying including homophobic and cyber bullying. They know how to stay safe on the internet.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average. Well-targeted actions include certificates and rewards for 100% attendance and working with families to ensure punctuality. Pupils enjoy coming to school and promptly move to lessons after playtimes and between activities in lessons.
- Pupils play well together, with older pupils taking responsibility for younger ones in the playground, and enjoy an extensive range of fixed play equipment that promotes their understanding of keeping safe and their physical development.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers have halted and turned around previous under achievement in mathematics by improving teachers' subject knowledge, assessment tools and tracking of pupils' progress. These were areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection and all have been tackled systematically so that a larger-than-average number of pupils at the end of each key stage attained the higher levels in mathematics in 2012. This demonstrates capacity for further improvement.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out using a range of activities including lesson observations, work scrutiny and tracking of the assessments of pupils' progress. The headteacher has high expectations of teachers' performance and secures improvements in teaching by coaching the staff team well. Performance management is used effectively in developing the skills of middle leaders.
- Partner schools, through the local authority programme, have provided support to the school and opportunities for teachers to visit and observe good and outstanding colleagues to improve their practice and assessment procedures. This has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching.
- School improvement plans are clearly focused on improving pupils' achievement. However, they are not always formulated with clear measurable criteria for success and monitoring activities are not carried out by all staff and members of the governing body.
- Parents and carers say that they are pleased with the progress their children are making and the reporting arrangements make it clear how well pupils are doing in relation to national expectations. Workshops and parents' evenings are well attended so that parents and carers know how to help their children at home. The school works well with all groups

of parents and carers because of the high-quality relationships that are maintained.

- The pupil premium is used effectively to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for accessing extra-curricular activities as well as providing specific interventions in reading and mathematics and supporting homework within school so that these pupils make expected, or better, progress alongside their peers.
- The curriculum provides memorable experiences, for example den building and investigating shelters, which are followed up well in school with writing and design and technology activities. The school has an active partnership with a school in Nigeria and reciprocal visits by staff have significantly contributed to pupils' understanding of another culture and children in very different circumstances to their own. They also have experienced wider aspects of modern democratic Britain and its variety by visits to a school in a multicultural urban area.
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding is embedded strongly in all aspects of the school's work and pupils engage in performance, experience cultural opportunities in music, work with local ministers and the church. Pupils have good social understanding and emotional awareness promoted in all lessons and through specific teaching and this results in confident, considerate and articulate young people.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - has been clearly focused on raising achievement in mathematics and holding leaders to account for pupils' achievement
 - been fully involved in successful appointments of new staff
 - ensures new members of the governing body are well trained in understanding data so that they can support and challenge effectively and undertake their responsibilities for safeguarding
 - is ambitious for further improvement so that the school is 'at the top'.

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	123815
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	406197

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	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Waters
Headteacher	Theresa Hobbs
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 May 2011
Telephone number	01935 840407
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