

Ottertton Church of England Primary School

1 Church Hill, Budleigh Salterton, Devon, EX9 7HU

Inspection dates 29–30 November 2012

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well.
- Older pupils and those with additional needs make especially good progress.
- By Year 6, standards are above average. Most pupils attain the expected levels in English and mathematics. A good and increasing number exceed this.
- The quality of teaching is nearly always good. An increasing proportion is outstanding.
- Teachers are very successful in interesting and motivating pupils so that they want to learn, try hard and strive to succeed.
- Pupils' behaviour is impressive and they understand this is necessary to underpin successful learning. They feel exceptionally safe and secure in school.
- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. Despite many changes in staffing and school organisation over the last year, her clear vision and focus on school improvement has ensured teaching has been strengthened and rates of progress increased.
- Action taken to improve teaching by the headteacher and other key staff, through very effective checking of its quality and the setting of clear targets for improvement, has led to rising standards.
- The governing body has a very clear idea of the school's strengths and is committed to further school improvement. Governors have managed the school's move to federate with another local school very well.
- Parents and carers are highly positive about the school, an opinion shared by the pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Time in lessons is not always used to maximum effect.
- Younger pupils' lack of skill in forming letters correctly and neatly is slowing their progress in learning to write.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day's notice and took place over two days.
- The inspector had meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors. She held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence including: the school's improvement plan; the school's data for tracking of pupils' progress; monitoring reports; the work pupils were doing in their books; and a range of the school's documentation, including that relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in eight lessons and listened to two groups of pupils read. She also made a number of short visits to other lessons.
- The headteacher conducted four joint observations with the inspector. The inspector also observed the headteacher reporting back to a teacher on the quality of learning and pupils' achievement in a jointly observed lesson.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour and scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector met some parents and carers both formally and informally. There were 34 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) which were taken into account, as were 14 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Rowena Onions, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average sized primary school.
- A well below average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- One year before the inspection the school began sharing a headteacher with another small primary school. The schools were formally federated in April 2012 and so have a single governing body.
- There is no alternative provision for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure time is used to maximum effect in lessons by:
 - being precise in planning what different groups of pupils are expected to learn at each point in a lesson
 - communicating this expectation clearly and effectively to pupils.
 - Improve progress in writing by ensuring that the youngest pupils are taught to form letters and write words correctly and neatly.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Good teaching makes sure that children make above average progress during their Reception Year. They rapidly gain important personal skills, as well as skills in early literacy and numeracy.
- Good progress is maintained throughout the school. It accelerates as pupils reach upper Key Stage 2, where progress is now outstanding. Standards in Year 6 are set to rise again this year.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 declined between 2009 and 2011. School improvement work has halted this decline and in 2012, standards were average. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points. This development continues and standards are on track to be higher this year.
- All groups of pupils, including those supported by extra funding, achieve well. Overall, boys do as well as girls. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make strong progress through very well-taught and targeted individual work programmes.
- Last year a need was identified to improve pupils' ability to solve problems in mathematics and to talk about their work in the subject. The school successfully put in place a range of initiatives to improve this situation. As a result, standards in mathematics have recently risen significantly and are now high.
- The youngest pupils learn to read using phonics (pupils learning letter patterns and the sounds they represent) to decode words. Improvements in the quality of teaching have accelerated pupils' progress in reading and current Year 2 pupils are well on track to attain above average standards. By Year 6, pupils read fluently and widely and standards are also above average. Many pupils spoke of how much they enjoy reading at home, as well as in school, demonstrating that the school has successfully promoted a love of books.
- Standards in writing are also rising and, by Year 6, pupils are able to use their writing skills to good effect in a wide range of subjects and genres. However, too many younger pupils have poorly formed handwriting and quite a few do not form their letters correctly. This makes their work very difficult to read and reduces their ability to write fluently.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good, with examples of outstanding teaching, such as in a mathematics lesson when pupils were really challenged by being asked to use what they knew about the price of one quantity of soft drink to price other quantities.
- The headteacher and other leaders check the quality of teaching throughout the school regularly and accurately. School leaders are accurate in their assertion that outstanding teaching is on a sharp upward trajectory, while lessons that require improvement are very rare.
- All teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise, which they use effectively to develop pupils' skills in both literacy and numeracy. Reading is promoted effectively through guided reading sessions and individual help for pupils who need it.
- Teachers use their accurate assessments of pupils' progress to set challenging, interesting tasks in lessons. Every opportunity is taken throughout lessons to promote pupils' personal as well as academic skills. Activities often require pupils to think deeply, to collaborate with each other and to apply what they know from one context to lessons in another context, for example, when Year 6 pupils made notes of their discussion about whether one of the Ten Commandments has relevance to modern living.
- The way lessons are planned to link, as often as possible, to a real experience means that pupils find learning relevant and this motivates them to learn. In one such lesson, the youngest pupils were captivated and enthused by a visit from a 'farmer' (their teacher dressed up!) to explain to them why their plan to house some of their animals on his land did not please him!
- There are a few occasions however when, in their desire to inspire pupils, teachers do not clearly

emphasise and demonstrate the learning objective of the lesson during introductory activities. This can then mean that when pupils start to work individually within small groups they are unsure of what they are supposed to do and need further support and explanation from the teacher. This can affect the amount of time pupils have to complete their work and also to a loss of focus.

- Teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is very effective, promoting good learning especially for those pupils with additional difficulties.
- Much of the marking of pupils' work is supportive and tells pupils the next steps they need to take to improve their work and to move on to the next level.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils demonstrate remarkable personal attributes and understanding. Older pupils discuss with maturity the need to support their own learning and that of others by behaving as well as possible in class. To hear a pupil being asked to conform or pay better attention in lessons was a rare occurrence throughout the inspection.
- It is evident from discussion with pupils that this is typical of pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils conduct themselves very well indeed around the school. They get on extremely well with each other and are proud of each other's achievements. A particular strength is the way older pupils support younger ones. When, for example, a younger pupil received an award in assembly, older pupils behaved more like proud parents than peers!
- The school very successfully supports a small number of pupils with behavioural difficulties, including some who have been excluded from other schools. These pupils quickly learn to make improvements in their behaviour and this improves their academic progress.
- All pupils spoken to had developed an excellent understanding of the different kinds of bullying, such as cyber-bullying and racist comments, and reported that there is no bullying in the school. They also said they felt very safe and explained ways that they have learned to keep themselves safe, both in and out of school.
- Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection agreed that behaviour is a strength of the school and this opinion was supported further by responses to the online questionnaire.
- As a result of a concerted effort by the school, attendance has improved over the last year and is now above average. Pupils arrive at school punctually.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Over the last year, there have been a considerable number of changes to both staffing and school organisation. Not only has this not been a constraint on school development, but it has been used as a catalyst for improvement. The new headteacher has rapidly shaped a team of staff, encompassing both schools, who are dedicated to school improvement. There is a strong ethos of ambition to make the school outstanding, summed up by the Chair of the Governing Body who said, 'We are going to be the best school federation in the country.'
- The school's leadership is not content with teaching that is less than outstanding. Leaders use performance management and training very effectively to promote continuous improvements in teaching. Teachers support each other well and there is a culture of exchanging ideas and expertise. This has been significantly enhanced through the development of the federation. Salary progression and promotion are used effectively to ensure that there is the expertise to match the school's needs and ambitions.
- The drive for improvement is relentless but has been very sensibly prioritised. Some initiatives have already had a demonstrable effect, including the improvement in the provision for Reception Year children, the improvement of attainment in mathematics and the rise in attendance. For others, for example the raising of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1,

although already showing a very positive impact, a little more time is needed for the work to have full impact.

- Strong use is made of the progress data of individual pupils. This and the strong emphasis on equality of opportunity and tackling any form of discrimination, ensure that no groups of pupils are disadvantaged. Last year, very careful intervention work ensured that a number of pupils who were in danger of underachieving made at least the expected progress over Key Stage 2.
- An innovative curriculum captures pupils' interest really well, so that they describe school as 'fun'. There are good opportunities built in for consolidating skills learned in one subject within work in others. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seamlessly woven into each day, and has extremely effective outcomes.
- The local authority supports the school and the governing body appropriately.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of how standards compare with schools nationally. Governors regularly attend training to broaden their skills and play a strong part in evaluating the quality of provision and holding the headteacher and teaching staff to account for improving standards of attainment in the school. They are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and understand the action being taken to improve teaching performance and its links with salary progression. They expect this to have direct impact on pupils' achievement and check pupils' progress regularly. Governors are proactive in ensuring that financial decisions are effective in supporting school priorities and in meeting all pupils' needs, including those pupils who receive pupil premium funding. They have contributed some outstanding strategic leadership in partnership with the school's senior leaders in ensuring the smooth and extremely effective move to federation.

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	113435
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	403207

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Francesca Mills
Headteacher	Carron Saunders
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2008
Telephone number	01395 568326
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