

Pilton Bluecoat C of E Junior School

Abbey Road, Pilton, Barnstaple, EX31 1JU

Inspection dates 10–11 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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 learn well and make good overall progress in English. In mathematics, a high proportion of pupils make better than expected progress and progress is outstanding.
- Achievement is rising rapidly. An above average proportion of pupils attain the expected Level 4 in English. In mathematics many more pupils than average attain the higher Level 5.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those entitled to support under the pupil premium make outstanding progress. Their attainment is above that of all pupils nationally.
- The innovative and inspiring curriculum makes learning relevant and exciting for pupils.
- A large majority of teaching and learning is good with some that is outstanding. Teaching is improving rapidly because realistic but challenging targets are set for teachers.
- Behaviour and safety over time are outstanding. Pupils are polite and courteous and have a very strong understanding of how to stay safe. The school is a harmonious community.
- Leadership and management, including governance, are outstanding. The school has very secure systems for analysing its own strengths and weaknesses. The information gained is used very effectively in the school development plan. As a result, sustained and rapid improvement has taken place and is continuing as the school focuses on the next priorities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in English, although good overall, is not as high as in mathematics.
- Less able and more-able pupils achieve well in writing, but too few pupils of average ability make better than expected progress.
- Although teachers mark work thoroughly and make helpful comments on how pupils can improve their work, too few pupils respond to these comments.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 26 lessons or parts of lessons, some in partnership with the headteacher or deputy headteacher, and observed nine teachers.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff and a discussion was held with the school's improvement consultant.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at the school's strategic plan for raising achievement and evaluated samples of pupils' work.
- Other documents looked at included: curriculum planning, documents relating to attendance, safeguarding and child protection, records of pupils' attainment and progress, records of behaviour, records relating to the monitoring of teaching and minutes of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of the 40 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Some parents and carers were spoken to at the start of the school day.
- Inspection questionnaires received from staff were analysed.

Inspection team

Stephen Lake, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Stepnahie Thomas	Additional inspector
Alan Jones	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average size school serving mainly the local community.
- The large majority of pupils are White British with a smaller than average proportion of pupils from other ethnic groups. Only a few pupils are believed to speak English as an additional language and none is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average
- An average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or with statements of special educational needs. The most common identified needs are moderate learning difficulties, but a few have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.
- Just under a quarter of the pupils are entitled to support under the pupil premium. This is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is no alternative provision for pupils.
- Pilton Bluecoat C of E Junior School converted to become an academy school on 1 July 2012. When its predecessor school, Pilton the Bluecoat Church of England Junior School was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of all pupils further, particularly in writing, by:
 - making more consistent use of assessment data to plan tasks that challenge more robustly pupils of average ability so that more of these pupils make better than expected progress and achieve the higher Level 5, especially in writing
 - providing clear medium-term targets to pupils that show them precisely the steps that they can take to achieve their longer-term targets.
- Improve the consistency of marking by ensuring that pupils follow up the areas for improvement identified in their books and benefit more from the comments made by teachers on how they can improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils start in Year 3 with attainment that typically is above average. They improve on these skills. By the end of Year 6 attainment is securely above average in English and mathematics and improving rapidly. Attainment in mathematics is particularly high with almost all pupils attaining the expected Level 4 and an above average proportion attaining the higher Level 5. This represents outstanding progress. A large majority of those parents and carers who responded to Parent View believe their children make good progress.
- Attainment in reading is above average. Almost every pupil attains the expected Level 4 and over half attain the higher Level 5. All pupils make at least good and at times outstanding progress.
- Achievement in writing is average. Although less able and more-able pupils make better progress than similar pupils nationally, few of those who enter the school with average attainment make better than expected progress. The picture is improving at a speedy pace because the school has targeted writing as a key area for improvement this year. Pupils in the current Year 6 are already improving their attainment as a result of initiatives put in place.
- Pupils entitled to support through the pupil premium are making outstanding progress because of the good quality support that they receive. Their attainment and average points score (APS) compare favourably with those of other pupils in school and are above those of all pupils nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress with almost all achieving the expected Level 4 in both English and mathematics. This ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils have strong information and communication technology (ICT) skills and much good quality work was observed in art, design and technology, history and geography.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers plan carefully to provide lessons that stimulate and motivate pupils to learn. They make very effective use of ICT to support learning. The large majority of those parents and carers who responded to Parent View believe that teaching is good.
- The revised curriculum is delivered effectively through activities such as the 'Big Event' where as much of the work as possible is based around the theme for the term. This is bringing a purpose to learning and making lessons relevant to pupils, for example, integrating subjects in a piece of work that requires pupils to plan a journey. In an outstanding mathematics lesson observed in Year 5, pupils demonstrated their mathematical skills as they calculated the fastest and shortest routes around the village for two of the characters in their book, 'Rubbish Town Hero'. Discussion of the moral dilemmas and the social conditions found in the African town made a very significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Particularly good use is made of visits and visitors to provide stimulation for learning. Pupils are enthused by visits, such as that to the 'Big Pit'. They speak enthusiastically about the visits that they make and many examples of outstanding work linked to these can be seen in the school.
- Teachers make very good use of the strong links with schools in other countries, such as India and Kenya and several European countries. Pupils develop their writing skills through email communication with pupils in these schools using a secure blog.
- As part of the drive to improve writing, teachers place a high focus on talk before writing especially when linked to the main topic. In an outstanding lesson in Year 4, drama was used very effectively to enable pupils to talk about what they may see, hear or smell in a Tudor street scene. This enabled them to organise their thoughts effectively before beginning their writing. Activities such as this are beginning to improve pupils' achievement in writing although it is too soon to see the full impact in national assessments at Year 6.

- Teachers mark work frequently, regularly noting clearly how pupils could improve their work. However, these comments are not followed up consistently to ensure that pupils have responded to the marking. This reduces the impact of the marking.
- Good quality assessments of pupils are used to monitor and guide progress and set longer-term targets for pupils. Pupils understand their Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum targets well. Nevertheless, in some classes the intermediate steps to achieving these targets are not always clear enough to enable pupils to check their own progress towards the longer-term targets.
- The vast majority of the capable teaching assistants provide good, and at times, outstanding support for disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those supported through the pupil premium. These pupils are kept fully included in lessons by tasks matched closely to their assessed needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The outstanding behaviour and safety over time are due to the high expectations that all adults have of pupils and the consistently applied procedures for dealing with these areas. Effective reward systems ensure pupils are motivated to behave well and engaged in learning. Almost all parents and carers who responded to Parent View agree that there is a good standard of behaviour.
- Systems for keeping pupils safe are very secure and robust. Pupils show an excellent understanding of these, including how to stay safe when using computers or mobile telephones.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are extremely polite, courteous and engaged in learning. During discussions pupils listen very carefully to each other and show respect for each other and for adults. Pupils' outstanding attitudes towards learning support the improving progress being made.
- Pupils have a very good awareness of different types of bullying, including, physical, verbal, and emotional and discrimination-based bullying. They have a clear understanding of cyber bullying and are aware that sometimes messages on their computers or phones may not be pleasant but they should not send similar ones back.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and that incidents of bullying are rare. They are very confident that all adults will deal effectively with any bullying that might occur. Most parents and carers who responded on Parent View believe that the school deals effectively with bullying and that the school is a very safe place for their children.
- Pupils say that disruption to lessons is most unusual. Inspectors found pupils respond excellently to teachers' directions and instructions. They show great respect for the contributions of others and cooperate extremely well in lessons.
- It is evident that pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and all that the school has to offer. This is reflected in the above average attendance rates.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- All leaders, staff and governors share an ambitious vision of how the school can improve and a relentless drive to bring this about. This is central to the rapid improvement taking place and the maintenance of strengths.
- The large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View agree that the school is led and managed well.
- The senior leaders have ensured that very effective professional development, linked closely to performance management, is improving the quality of teaching and developing the high-quality leadership and management skills of middle managers. Led by senior leaders, extremely robust procedures are in place for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning. Subject leaders provide very good guidance to teachers on how to plan and deliver more

effective lessons.

- A very well-planned curriculum ensures that strong links are made between subjects and a great focus is placed upon learning key skills. Every year group works from a class book which is topic related and this core text drives literacy and writing across the curriculum. The theme is extended across all subjects for example in mathematics a very large proportion of tasks set for pupils are directly related to either the topic theme of the term or the class book.
- The provision within the curriculum for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The impact of this can be seen very clearly in pupils' behaviour and attitudes. High-quality opportunities to reflect upon moral and social issues are central to the curriculum. The topic themes encourage pupils' curiosity and creativity and the cross-curricular themes enable pupils to develop these aspects frequently and regularly.
- Procedures for safeguarding are secure and meet requirements. Training in safeguarding and child protection is up to date for staff and governors.
- The school takes great care and commitment to ensure equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination. The progress and attainment of all groups is monitored very rigorously by senior leaders to ensure that all pupils and especially those supported by the pupil premium are making at least good progress. The information gained is used effectively to target extra support when necessary. This has been particularly effective in ensuring that those pupils supported by the pupil premium now attain at the same level as other pupils in the school.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have very accurate information on the school's performance. Areas for development are clearly identified and acted upon swiftly and effectively to bring about sustained and embedded improvements in teaching and achievement. The structure of the school development plan allows for changes in direction based upon regular evaluations of the impact of actions taken to bring about improvement. This indicates a very secure capacity to improve further.
- The school has benefited from good support in enabling it to convert to an academy and its ongoing development.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is extremely effective in ensuring high-quality provision for all pupils. Governors consult regularly with parents and carers, staff and pupils and listen to what they have to say. Effective and rigorous systems for monitoring the work of the school enable the governors to understand where improvement is required. They use data effectively to evaluate how well the school is performing in relation to other schools. Information gained in this way is linked securely to the performance management of the headteacher. Governors have strong understanding of the quality of teaching and check thoroughly that the headteacher is using performance management to tackle any underperformance and to improve further the quality of teaching. The budget is managed very effectively, especially the expenditure of the monies allocated through the pupil premium. The governing body checks rigorously upon the impact of spending decisions including those relating to how teachers are rewarded for good performance. Governors make good use of local authority training courses for governors to improve their skills and knowledge.

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	138315
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	406875

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kelly Smith
Headteacher	Paul Mulligan
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
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