

Lympstone Church of England Primary School

School Hill, Lympstone, Exmouth, EX8 5JY

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Teaching is not always good enough, particularly in Key Stage 2, because some pupils do not make as much progress as they should, especially in mathematics.
- Mathematics is not taught with sufficient consistency across the school and this inhibits pupils achieving as well as they should.
- The quality of teachers' marking varies and, at times, pupils are not given enough advice about what they need to do to improve work further.
- Not all senior and middle leaders have been given the opportunity to keep sufficient check on the quality of teaching, learning and standards in the subjects for which they are responsible.
- Learning activities do not always match the pupils' abilities. Occasionally, activities are too easy for them and some lessons do not capture pupils' interest and full engagement. This is especially the case for some older pupils in mathematics.

The school has the following strengths:

- Lympstone is a popular school and parents and carers, children and staff are very proud of it.
- Pupils make good progress in Reception and Key Stage 1 classes because teaching in this part of the school is consistently good or better.
- Good relationships with parents and carers and high-quality pastoral care ensures that the personal needs of pupils, especially those with complex disabilities and special educational needs, are met very well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are respectful of adults and highly supportive of each other. They work and play together happily in the attractive outdoor spaces, which are used well for learning, and this promotes above average attendance.
- Senior leaders, including governors, are proud of the school's strengths, know what areas need to be developed and they have the capacity to make the necessary improvements to help pupils learn more effectively.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons, one of which was undertaken jointly with the headteacher. They also visited one assembly, observed play and lunchtimes, listened to pupils read and made a number of short visits to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, a group of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone conversation was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- A range of evidence was reviewed, including the school’s improvement plan, the school’s data for tracking pupils’ progress, monitoring reports, local authority visit notes, the work pupils have been doing in their books and a range of the school’s documentation, including that relating to safeguarding.
- The lead inspector met some parents and carers informally before the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of 54 parents’ and carers’ responses to the online Parent View survey in planning and undertaking the inspection and also received one letter written to them by a parent or carer.
- The inspectors also took account of 28 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Nick Riddiough, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alex Baxter

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for looked after children, children of service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average. Approximately a third of the pupils are from service families based at the local Royal Marine base.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the normal times is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, especially in mathematics across Key Stage 2, by:
 - making sure all pupils are equally challenged and supported, including those who find learning more difficult, so that they make faster progress
 - developing more consistency in the quality of teachers' marking so that pupils know how they can improve the quality of their work even further
 - reviewing how mathematics is taught so that children develop their skills in a progressive way as they move through the school.
- Develop the role of subject leadership, especially in English and mathematics, by:
 - making more effective use of leaders' skills in checking and improving the quality of teaching and pupils' learning
 - giving leaders more opportunities to observe and work with colleagues and to share effective practice.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that not all pupils are making good enough progress throughout Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics. Pupils are not always challenged or inspired by the work they are set in lessons and so do not always make the progress of which they are capable. As a result, they do not achieve as well as they should.
- From wide-ranging, but typically expected, starting points for their age, pupils make securely good progress during their time in Reception and Key Stage 1. This is because the teaching is consistently effective, often promoting practical investigation whereby pupils find things out for themselves, for example in the 'Nature School' area.
- Progress slows on occasion during Key Stage 2 so some pupils are not able to build well enough on this good start. Pupils' progress in reading is typically better than in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' good progress in reading throughout the school stems from an improved and now consistent focus on developing pupils' phonic skills (knowledge of letter sounds) and ample opportunities for pupils to read at home and at school. The improved teaching of phonics has also resulted in more pupils doing well in the Year 1 phonics screening check last year and a similar picture is expected again this year.
- Even so, pupils' attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6 in English. As a result of the positive actions taken by the school, a higher proportion of pupils are now demonstrating above average skills, especially in writing and mathematics. For example, pupils in Year 6 used scale perceptively. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school because of the strong support and learning activities they are given, including those provided by capable teaching assistants. At times, other pupils who find learning difficult are not given the same quality of support and challenge that they need to accelerate their progress, especially in mathematics.
- Pupil premium money is used well to meet the individual academic and pastoral needs of those who are in receipt of this extra funding through targeted additional adult support. As a result, these pupils make good progress. For example, the Year 6 pupils in 2012 who were eligible for pupil premium made better progress overall throughout Key Stage 2 in English than their peers. These pupils are currently about a term behind their peers in both English and mathematics but the gap is closing. Pupils arriving other than at the normal time of entry, mostly from service families, are also integrated well and achieve as well as their peers.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is variable across the school and too much, especially in Key Stage 2, is not yet consistent enough to enable some pupils to make the accelerated progress that they are capable of, particularly in mathematics. The work that pupils are set is sometimes too easy and they are expected to complete worksheets too often instead of applying their mathematics skills in a more practical way.
- Pupils sometimes become confused because basic numeracy skills are not taught and developed progressively as pupils move through the school. Consequently, they are not able to use and apply them when solving trickier mathematical problems.
- The quality of teaching in Reception and Key Stage 1 is consistently good. Lessons are planned carefully to meet the needs and interests of the learners. The work they do sustains their interest, learning activities are inspiring, for example role play in the 'jungle hut', and the adults' expectations of what all pupils can achieve are high.
- When teaching is most effective, pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils make the most progress when their learning activities involve practical investigations, working together and learning, especially in the school's outdoor areas. This was seen, for example, in Year 1,

when pupils were exploring the outside space to find materials to make a stick man after reading a picture book of the same name.

- All staff are diligent in making sure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and there is often exemplary care for those pupils with very complex needs.
- Adults generally give good oral guidance to the pupils, but the quality of teachers' marking varies across the classes. At its best, teachers indicate to the pupils what they have done well in their work and what they could do to make it even better; the pupils then respond to the teachers' comments. Too often, though, pupils are not given enough written guidance on how to improve and this constrains their progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils, both in class and around school, is consistently good and often better; a view that is shared by staff, parents, carers and pupils. However, when teaching is not good or the learning activity does not challenge them, a few children can lose concentration and cause some low-level disruption.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning when their learning activities are engaging. This is especially so when they are being challenged to think or work together, for example, when using computers or learning outdoors.
- Relationships across the school are very respectful reflecting the high-quality care provided by all the adults who work in the school. One pupil said, reflecting the views of others, 'The grown-ups care for all of us and make sure we are happy in school.' Pupils are polite and considerate to each other and to adults. They are appreciative of the support given to them by adults and there is a great empathy for children with complex special educational needs, who are fully included in all activities.
- Pupils say that adults treat them all fairly and they feel very safe in school. Bullying very rarely occurs, but pupils know to tell an adult if they experience any unkindness; they are certain staff would sort it out quickly. Pupils know how to stay safe and understand the various forms that bullying can take, for example, discrimination and cyber-bullying.
- Pupils move around the school safely, including in the 'Nature School' and sensory garden. Because of the location of the school, there is a strong focus on safety around water, enabling most pupils being able to swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school.
- Senior leaders have worked hard to sustain attendance at an above-average level. Additionally, the level of unauthorised absence has been reduced significantly this year, reflecting the school's strong links with parents and carers and pupils' enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Senior leaders ensure that the personal needs of the pupils are met extremely well. However, opportunities for subject leaders to check and improve the quality of teaching and the rates of pupils' progress, especially in English and mathematics, have been limited. Consequently, the best practice in school is not shared enough with colleagues in order to raise standards.
- The school's improvement plans accurately identify several of the key areas for improvement and evaluate the impact of the actions taken to address these. Targets set for the teachers are related to these areas for improvement. However, the way pay decisions are related to the successful completion of these targets is not robust enough.
- The headteacher currently takes responsibility for judging the quality of teaching and this information, which is sometimes too generous, contributes to the school's self-evaluation procedures. This information has helped to ensure that a proportion of the more-able pupils in Year 6 are expected to reach the higher levels of attainment in writing and mathematics this year.

- Senior leaders have increased the rigour with which they track the progress of individual and groups of pupils and report this to governors. They are increasingly using this information to target additional resources for pupils who are not making the progress that is expected of them. This year actions taken have resulted in more pupils exceeding the expected levels of attainment in writing and mathematics.
- Checks of children's progress in Reception and Key Stage 1 and particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are good. As a result, the provision for these pupils is effective and they make good progress.
- Pupils benefit from the way the school grounds have been developed and various other experiences which enhance their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. For example, links with the local parish church have led to a weekly 'Big Story' group, which meets around a camp fire in the 'Nature School'.
- The school engages effectively with parents, carers and other agencies to benefit pupils, in particular disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. This was summed up by one parent or carer, who said, 'Every day I bring my child, I am grateful we have such a caring local school.' The diligent and high-quality care and procedures implemented by all the staff also reflect the secure way that the school safeguards pupils' welfare, ensures equal opportunities and prevents discrimination.
- The local authority provides effective support by monitoring the school's progress in raising the progress and attainment of pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school is good. Governors are improving their procedures for visits to check at first hand the work of the school. They now have a more secure awareness of the strengths of the school, including the strengths of teaching, and aspects that require further improvement. Their skills in analysis are also growing as they receive more information about pupils' progress. Governors are keen to ensure improved outcomes for pupils eligible for additional funding from the pupil premium grant. They know how these pupils are being supported and are beginning to evaluate the impact of how this money is spent. Through their various committees, members of the governing body liaise closely with the headteacher to make sure that the salary progression of teachers and their training opportunities are linked to the priorities in the school development plan to advance pupils' achievements. Governors check the school's financial position carefully, make sure safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and check on arrangements to make sure pupils are looked after and cared for well in school.

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	113358
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	412095
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Turgoose
Headteacher	Anthony Priest
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 May 2009
Telephone number	01395 266580
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