

Wembdon St George's Church of England Primary School

Brantwood Road, Wembdon, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 7PS

Inspection dates 27–28 June 2013

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Since the last inspection, there has been a very determined effort to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement.
- Teaching is now good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers are particularly good at marking pupils' work and telling them what steps to take next in their learning. This has been a key feature in improving pupils' progress and raising attainment.
- As a result, progress is now good in both English and mathematics, and standards are above the national average in both subjects. Pupils have made especially good progress in writing.
- Provision for Reception-age children has also improved and is now good.
- Pupils enjoy school and behave exceptionally well at all times. They are keen to support one another and get on very well together. They say 'There are no bullies in this school' and are confident that the school will keep them safe.
- Excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development creates a very positive climate for learning and underpins their good progress.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are a strong team. Their resolve to improve has been successful because of their concentrated effort to finely hone teaching skills through a committed programme of professional development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet a high enough proportion of outstanding lessons.
- Occasionally, introductions in lessons are too long so that the pace of learning slows.
- Sometimes, tasks are not matched precisely enough to pupils' different abilities. This means that in a few lessons a very small minority of pupils do not make the progress they could.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 21 lessons and observed 15 teachers. They also talked to pupils about their work and heard pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6 read.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures, the school’s self-evaluation and planning for improvement, records of monitoring of the quality of teaching and the governing body minutes.
- The inspectors looked at samples of pupils’ work across a range of subjects and ages.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils. Individual pupils were spoken to in lessons and around the school. A telephone conversation took place with a School Improvement Partner from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed in 31 online responses from Parent View, a telephone call and comments during informal meetings with parents and carers before school. There were no responses from staff in questionnaires.

Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Westall

Additional Inspector

David Williams

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Wembdon St George's is a larger-than-average-sized primary school and all pupils are taught in both single-age and mixed-age classes throughout the school. Pupils attend from the surrounding area.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average, as is the proportion of those at school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children looked after by the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed services) is below average. There are a small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups; a few pupils are in the early stages of learning English.
- There is a breakfast club and after-school club on-site but they are not run by the school.
- The school does not have access to any alternative or specialist provision.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics and English.
- The school has recently been awarded the bronze level Science Mark.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - thoroughly embedding the coaching programme and developing the system further so as to more fully share outstanding practice to improve teachers' skills
 - ensuring that the pace in lessons is brisk and that tasks match the needs of all groups of pupils so that they make as much progress as they can.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- In some areas of learning, the skills and knowledge children have when they join the school are similar to those expected for their age. Children come from a very wide range of pre-school experiences and many do not have the abilities expected in applying sounds to letters (phonics), or the expected calculation skills, when they enter the Reception Year. Once in Reception, however, children make good progress, due to considerably improved provision since the last inspection.
- Children's interest is captured by exciting and stimulating topics. For example, in conjunction with reading 'The Rainbow Bird', children were encouraged to explore the story creatively, developing their learning through writing, painting, and re-enacting the story.
- Phonics are taught particularly well, especially in Reception and across Years 1 and 2 where pupils are grouped according to ability for a dedicated time every day. This ensures that pupils make good progress with early reading skills and spelling, which is now a strong feature throughout the school. This was seen in one lesson where pupils listened very carefully to the teacher as she corrected their pronunciation, enabling them to blend sounds properly.
- The school has developed a strong reading culture. Pupils especially enjoy group reading times and there is good support for reading at home. Pupils work out difficult words such as 'dialogue' using a mixture of the strategies they have been taught and demonstrate a good understanding of the text. They read books appropriate for their ages with fluency and expression.
- Standards in writing have improved significantly throughout the school. Work that inspectors scrutinised during the inspection and school assessments showed that all pupils in Year 6 have reached the level expected nationally this year. An above-average number of pupils have reached a higher level.
- A number of other initiatives have been successful in raising attainment. For example, pupils are encouraged to talk with a partner before writing so they have lots of ideas and good opportunities to organise their thoughts. During a Year 3 lesson where pupils were learning how to write a special kind of poem called a calligram, one said, 'Talking gives us lots more ideas for writing.'
- When marking work, all teachers consistently tell pupils what is good about their writing. Pupils also respond very well to the initials 'EBI' from teachers, meaning that their work would be 'even better if', after which they are given ways to improve. They know their targets clearly and what steps to take next to develop their work.
- Good progress and high attainment in mathematics have been sustained. Less-able pupils were seen making exceptionally good progress when learning about Venn and Carroll diagrams because of the practical nature of the task and the challenging questions they were asked. Pupils said, 'We can do it but we have to think hard!'
- Pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, are very well supported and, as a result, make similar progress from their starting points as all other pupils.
- Interventions put into place for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, such as small group-work in learning key skills, are very effectively enhancing provision. Consequently, attainment and progress for these pupils is similar to, and in some individual cases exceeds, that of all other groups of pupils.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Very good relationships and mutual respect exist between teachers and pupils so that pupils are motivated to learn in a very positive climate. They concentrate well and work hard.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan lessons carefully for different groups of pupils. They share the learning objective for the lesson very clearly with pupils, knowing exactly

what they expect them to learn. As a consequence, pupils are confident about tackling their work, and make good progress.

- Teachers' expectation of pupils' potential achievement is usually high. Lessons are interesting and introductions engage pupils straight away. In almost all lessons, effective and challenging tasks enable pupils to learn quickly. Very occasionally, where explanations are too long or tasks are not matched accurately enough to the needs of some pupils, they do not make progress as rapidly as they could.
- Teachers use questioning very skilfully to probe pupils' understanding, very often asking pupils for explanations about their answers. This enables teachers to assess the level of pupils' understanding and move learning forward at a good pace.
- Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons and receive very good support and provision from the leader for special educational needs, teachers and skilled teaching assistants.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to work together, discussing their ideas and supporting each other in their learning. This is a considerable strength of the teaching and makes a substantial contribution to the development of pupils' social skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The school's excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and the calm, friendly and respectful way in which pupils are managed by adults, underpins their exemplary behaviour. They are very polite and well mannered.
- There have been no exclusions since the last inspection, and incidents of bad behaviour or bullying are extremely rare. This view is fully supported by comments from pupils, adults in the school, and the response from parents and carers.
- Pupils get on exceptionally well together, and have an excellent attitude to learning and to school life in general, taking full advantage of all the opportunities the school offers. This makes a considerable contribution to their good progress.
- The school ensures that pupils have a very good understanding of the different types of bullying, especially when using the internet. Pupils feel very safe in school and are very confident about who to go to should they experience a problem they cannot deal with themselves.
- They take pride in being peer mediators to help solve their own problems and enjoy being buddies to younger pupils. Members of the school council take their responsibilities in making decisions about school activities very seriously.
- All of this provides very good opportunities for them to develop their personal and social skills.
- Attendance is average. Despite rigorous school procedures, further improvement is hampered by a small number of parents and carers who choose to take their children on holiday during school term time.

The leadership and management are good

- Determined leadership from the headteacher, a dynamic senior leadership team, and strong support and challenge from governors has secured good improvement since the last inspection.
- A consistent drive towards improving the quality of teaching has been successful. A strong whole-school team has developed through teachers working alongside each other and sharing good and outstanding practice in the classroom. There are firm plans in place to continue with this strategy and fulfil the school's ambition to secure a high percentage of outstanding teaching.
- Robust monitoring procedures, especially related to pupils' attainment and progress, are in place, giving the school a clear idea of what it must do next to ensure further improvement. There are clear and correctly prioritised plans for development.

- By using the national teaching standards, the headteacher has managed teachers' performance rigorously and identified both individual and whole-school professional development needs in the teaching of mathematics and writing. Successful training to improve teaching in these subjects has been another major contributory factor in raising pupils' achievement.
- All of these successful initiatives demonstrate that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.
- Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved provision and secured a good start for all children when they join the school.
- A creative way of teaching different subjects by linking them together provides very good opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills across subjects. Learning is significantly enriched by visits, visitors and many after-school clubs. There are particular strengths in music, art and sport.
- The school has excellent partnerships with other schools and takes full advantage of the opportunity to share their experiences and expertise, for example in art, music, sport, science, design and technology, and modern foreign languages. External agencies are used productively to support the needs of pupils' learning and development.
- Equal opportunities for different groups of pupils are promoted well and the school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. The governing body and the school staff ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously and all requirements are fully met.
- The local authority offers a light-touch support.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development well because they monitor its work closely. For example, they undertake learning walks around classrooms and carefully interrogate reports about the school's work. In addition, training in understanding school performance data, finance and safeguarding, to name but a few, ensures that they are able to ask challenging questions as well as supporting the school in its development. Governors carry out their statutory duties very diligently, ensuring that the headteacher's performance is rigorously assessed through annual objectives, and they receive detailed information about teachers' performance and salary progression. Governors are well informed about the use of the pupil premium and its impact on the progress of more-vulnerable pupils.

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	123825
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	402202

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

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	335
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Cannell
Headteacher	David Hatrey
Date of previous school inspection	5 May 2010
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