

# Withycombe Raleigh Church of England VC Primary School

Withycombe Village Road, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 3BA

**Inspection dates** 17–18 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- The senior leadership team and the governing body are determined to raise pupils' achievement back to the levels of the last inspection. Pupils' progress has varied, but these inconsistencies are reducing quickly.
- By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, they reach standards above the national average. This represents good progress and from their starting points.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics because teaching is good. Teachers mostly plan effectively and provide interesting and motivating activities to aid pupils' learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are polite and courteous, and are very respectful towards each other and all members of the school community. Pupils say they feel safe in school.
- The school's very inclusive ethos ensures all have equal opportunities to succeed. The nurturing environment and caring nature of all staff contribute to the school's very strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school makes excellent use of its grounds, wilderness area and extra-curricular visits to enrich the curriculum, which leads to high levels of enjoyment and learning in other subjects.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough pupils currently reach the higher levels of attainment to result in pupils' achievement being outstanding.
- Teachers do not always demand enough of pupils because not all activities are challenging enough to ensure they make faster progress.
- Not all actions to improve the effectiveness of the school have been fully successful, such as helping pupils achieve to outstanding levels.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons or parts of lessons, eight of them joint observations with members of the senior leadership team.
- They scrutinised pupils’ work in their books, as well as looking at displays of pupils’ work in the classrooms and corridors. In addition, they spoke to a range of pupils about their learning and other aspects of school life and listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- The inspectors held meetings with members of the school’s leadership team, as well as several governors. They also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed a range of documents, including the school’s self-evaluation, the school development plan, a range of policies including those relating to safeguarding, minutes of meetings held by the governing body, information about pupils’ progress, and records of behaviour incidents. They also looked at the school’s website and information on how the school’s results compare to others, and records relating to the quality of teaching and learning.
- Inspectors took account of 115 responses to the online Parent View survey, the views expressed by parents spoken to on the playground, and two letters received from parents. Inspectors also took account of the views of 36 staff who responded to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Anne Newall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Bowles

Additional Inspector

Phil Taylor

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average-sized primary school, where the large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding provided by the government to help the school meet the needs of pupils entitled to free school meals, children in the care of the local authority, or children of service families, is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rate of progress and pupils' achievement through the school, particularly for more able pupils by:
  - increasing the level of challenge in lesson activities and the amount of work expected, particularly for those who are capable of harder work
  - ensuring that pupils capable of harder work get down to starting it more quickly
  - ensuring teachers have higher expectations regarding pupils' capabilities and levels of understanding so that they achieve outstandingly well.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children generally start school with skills and abilities as expected for their age. Due to good levels of staff teamwork, interesting and carefully planned activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage meet the needs of children well. As a result, children are well prepared to start in Year 1 at a good level of development.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because they are taught well. For several years, results reached for Year 2 and pupils have been well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The percentage of pupils in Year 1 who met the expected standard in the government's phonics screening check improved this year by 20% because of improvements in the way phonics (letters and the sounds they make) are taught. Pupils throughout the school read a wide range of books with confidence and enjoyment.
- Despite a past dip in progress and pupils' levels of attainment at the end of Year 6, the school's checks on pupils' progress confirm that older pupils are once again making more consistently good progress and standards at the end of Year 6 in this year are above the national average. However, more able pupils do not always have enough challenging work to enable them to reach the higher standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils achieve well in other subjects, For example, a musical performance included sophisticated and complex rhythms, changes of pace and excellent choreography. Not surprisingly, they had the opportunity to perform at the Birmingham Symphony Hall.
- Pupils with a special educational needs or disability achieve well. Close checks on their progress by staff, who provide a good range of well-designed activities, meet these children's academic and social and emotional needs effectively. As a result, they make similar rates of progress to their classmates, and sometimes make better progress.
- In addition, the support provided for pupils entitled to the pupil premium ensures they make similar progress to their classmates, and often make better progress. Teachers' in-depth knowledge of each child ensures the right support is given. The gap between their attainment and that of their peers and others nationally which was evident in Year 6 last year has been closed for current pupils.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers plan interesting lessons which gain most pupils' attention quickly and ensure that pupils remain attentive. They use well-prepared resources, including the interactive audio-visual whiteboards and computer laptops, which enthuse most pupils to learn well.
- Skilful questioning to deepen pupils' understanding is a strong feature of the best lessons seen. For example, in an outstanding Year 3 lesson on money, the teacher's probing questions had pupils discussing their 'really tricky challenge' and commenting on the skills they needed, such as estimating, rounding and vertical addition.
- Teachers use the outdoors creatively to enrich the curriculum. In an outstanding lesson seen in Year 1, pupils were hugely excited to find evidence that a dinosaur had been rampaging through their classroom, leaving a trail of destruction. They followed its tracks through the wilderness area, and were sad that they could not find it. The pupils confidently spoke of carnivores, omnivores and herbivores, and discussed the names and characteristics of different types of dinosaur.
- In some activities, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils and consequently the level of challenge and expectation of how much they can do are not enough to ensure they make the faster progress of which they are capable. Occasionally, higher ability pupils have to wait too long before getting on with harder tasks.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to successful learning, either through working

alongside pupils within their classes, or teaching interventions for individual pupils and small groups.

- As recommended at the last inspection, the quality of marking and feedback has improved and is now mostly good, helping pupils understand how to improve their work. Regular time is set aside for teachers to discuss with pupils how they can further develop their skills.
- Pupils are very positive about their teachers, and say they are very open and welcoming, and 'go the extra mile' to help them learn.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- The pupils' attitudes to learning are typically exemplary; they behave extremely well in lessons and around the school. They are invariably polite and helpful, and show great respect for each other and the staff.
- Pupils say they feel very safe and well cared for in school, and say that if they do have a concern, it is quickly dealt with. The school's meticulous records show that bullying, on the extremely rare occasions it might occur, is dealt with firmly and fairly. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, and were able to confidently discuss how to keep safe when using the internet or mobile phones.
- The behaviour policy and 'rainbow rules' are consistently followed and ensures all pupils know exactly what is expected of them. The school's excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and spiritual development ensures that pupils know right and wrong and issues linked to behaviour and friendships.
- The majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, and all of the parents spoken to directly as well as those who wrote to inspectors, are positive about the behaviour and safety of their children.
- There are many pupils in the school with complex medical needs; consequently, staff are appropriately trained to deal with day-to-day first aid issues, as well any more serious incidents.
- Pupils enjoy attending. Levels have improved and absences are closely monitored. There are currently no persistent absentees.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Following the last inspection, standards fell sharply for those pupils leaving the school. The headteacher and senior leaders recognised this and put into place a range of measures to improve the quality of teaching and to monitor more closely the progress of pupils. Consequently, while progress and pupils' attainment are improving, they are not yet at outstanding levels.
- The school uses the expertise of existing outstanding teachers to develop the skills of others. Combined with effective professional development, closely matched to the school's development priorities, this has resulted in a rising proportion of high quality teaching.
- School leaders have also put into place more rigorous and accurate checks on pupils' progress to help maintain a culture where each teacher takes responsibility for ensuring their pupils achieve well. Regular meetings between teachers have led to greater confidence amongst senior leaders and governors that all teachers now have a better understanding of their pupils' achievement. This helped identify, for example, that not all pupils, particularly the more able, consistently have challenging enough work for them to reach even higher standards.
- The school works well with parents, who regularly come into school. For example, in the Reception classes, parents regularly come and learn how the school approaches the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). Regular newsletters keep parents informed of events and successes, and the overwhelming majority of parents responding to the Ofsted online questionnaire are very satisfied with the school.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and exciting, and enriched with topics such as 'Extreme Environments' or 'Dinosaurs' that maintain pupils' enthusiasm and contribute to their excellent

behaviour in lessons. Opportunities are taken wherever possible to enrich the curriculum with physical and creative activities. For example, parents enjoyed the amazing Year 6 music and dance performance of different rhythms played on instruments made from recycled materials. 'Planet Farm' is another example of an innovative curriculum which appeals to pupils who sometimes find learning in the classroom difficult. Occasionally, the curriculum is not planned to best effect for the most able pupils.

■ The local authority carries out 'light touch' monitoring of this school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– The governing body has a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are robust and meet statutory requirements. They attend training to ensure they have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles effectively. They have a good committee structure which enables them to concentrate on different aspects of school life, for example the current building project. They make a strong contribution to school self-evaluation and development planning. Governors have become more aware of pupils' progress, and are increasingly able and willing to challenge the school's leaders about how the school compares with others locally and nationally. They understand how the pupil premium is allocated and know the impact it has had on the closing the gap with other pupils nationally. Governors are fully aware of the school's performance management systems and the quality of teaching, and know how teachers' salaries are linked to performance. Governors keep a careful eye on school finances, and fulfil their statutory duties.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113355
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	412338

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	473
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nickie Mallett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephen Powley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6–7 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01395 263397
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