

# Doddiscombsleigh Community School

Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter, EX6 7PR

**Inspection dates** 24–25 September 2013

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

- Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress because they are taught well. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond to these by working hard. Teachers monitor pupils' work regularly to ensure they are fully challenged at all times.
- The headteacher and governors have taken effective action to maintain the good quality of teaching at the school. This has resulted in the consistently good rates of progress being made in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are eligible for additional funding from the pupil premium, make at least good progress from their individual starting points in English and mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average, which prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils are rightfully proud of their school. As one pupil noted, 'We all have a connection with each other, we are good friends in and out of school.' In lessons, their attitudes towards their work are exemplary, demonstrating their love of learning and thirst for knowledge. Around the school, they are highly respectful and considerate.
- Children receive a good start to their education within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The substantial improvements in provision, secured since the previous inspection in this area, ensure that pupils make at least good progress.
- The governing body provides good support to this small school, securing its future, as well as challenging the headteacher and staff to do even better.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always provide pupils with work that encourages them to think and learn by themselves, in order to fully develop their independent learning skills.
- Pupils, especially those in Key Stage 1, do not have enough opportunities to write by themselves to produce extended pieces of writing.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited eight lessons and observed four teachers, as well as a teaching assistant working with a small group of pupils. Observations included some looking at the teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds). The headteacher joined the inspector for a number of observations.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, parents, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plans, priorities for development, achievement data and documents relating to safeguarding children.
- The inspector took account of the 15 responses to the online Parent View survey along with the five responses to the staff questionnaire during the inspection. He also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead Inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Doddiscombsleigh is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception and Key Stage 1 class. Currently there are two other small classes for pupils in Key Stage 2 during the mornings, with the pupils joining together in the afternoons.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average, as is the proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for some pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- A privately run pre-school is located within the school but is inspected separately.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding overall, by ensuring teachers:
  - provide work for pupils that encourages them to think and learn by themselves in order to help develop their independent learning skills
  - provide pupils, especially those in Key Stage 1, with more opportunities to practise their writing independently with extended writing tasks.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Children start in Reception with skills, knowledge and experiences that are generally similar to the levels that would normally be expected for their age but the small cohorts in each year vary considerably, with pupils demonstrating a range of abilities. Good arrangements to support their transition to school ensure that they can make good progress from the start.
- The good teaching and learning in Reception ensure that children continue to make good progress. Lessons are planned well to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed-age class by ensuring that pupils across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are taught by ability rather than age as much as possible. Consequently, most children move into Key Stage 1 with attainment in all areas of development that is above average.
- Good progress continues across the school for all groups of pupils, with some individuals recording exceptional gains. The proportions of pupils who make and exceed their expected progress compare favourably with the national averages in English and mathematics. This is leading to attainment in English and mathematics being above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs all make at least good progress throughout the school from their individual starting points. Additional support, skilfully delivered by teaching assistants, ensures that the needs of these pupils are fully met and complements the work being done in lessons. The pupil premium funding is used well to support individual pupils, which demonstrates how well equality of opportunity is promoted in this truly inclusive school.
- The recent introduction of a programme to support the teaching of phonics has rapidly improved pupils' progress in reading and writing. This is especially the case for the younger pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to read fluently and with expression, reflecting their above-average attainment in reading.
- Standards in mathematics have improved strongly since the previous inspection and are well above average. Attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 trails reading slightly, especially for pupils who are more able. However, this has been identified by leaders at the school and is now improving and resulting in the gap successfully closing.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Teaching is consistently good, with some that is outstanding. This is resulting in the pupils' good achievement across the school. Parents and pupils unanimously agree that teaching is good at the school and pupils say that teachers are caring and lessons are fun.
- All pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those in receipt of pupil premium, have excellent attitudes towards their learning, are keen to work together and are eager to succeed. Around the school, classrooms are full of pupils who work hard and achieve well.
- In the best lessons, teachers expect pupils to be able to think and learn by themselves. In a Year 5/6 English lesson, pupils, working in groups, were given the task to match simple interpretations of lines from 'The Listeners', a poem by Walter de la Mare to lines in the original poem to understand the impact of poetic writing. The teacher enabled them to make outstanding progress by not providing the answers and by challenging them to find out by themselves. However, this is not always the case and occasionally teachers plan lessons that do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to think and learn by themselves.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide excellent 'next-step' comments, which are used by pupils to improve their work. Pupils understand what they are expected to achieve in lessons and can recognise their own success by self-assessing their work using the traffic-light colours to indicate their confidence in understanding the work.

- Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often, resulting in their above-average standards. Books are taken home and reading logbooks contain comments from pupils, parents and teachers.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils undertake regular 'Big Write' tasks where they are expected to undertake an extended piece of writing that they have planned, independently. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 are not being offered this experience as regularly and consequently fewer pupils are attaining the higher levels in writing than they do in reading or mathematics at Key Stage 1.
- Teaching in the Reception class is highly effective. Work is planned to reflect the backgrounds of the children and their aspirations. In a child-initiated learning session in Reception, two boys chose to play with toy cars and use ramps to see how fast they would go. When one was asked why one car went faster than the other, he was quick to say that the faster car was built to go faster as the front was 'pointed'.
- Teachers use questioning well to monitor pupils' progress in lessons. Pupils' responses are used to reshape their work, enabling them to make accelerated progress. Teaching assistants are fully included in the planning of lessons and support pupils well.

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

- Pupils' attitude to learning is outstanding. They are always ready and keen to learn, to share their successes with others and eager to take on new challenges. In lessons, they contribute fully and respect their teachers and other adults, including supply teachers, highly. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary.
- All pupils, including children in the Reception class, say that they feel safe in school and very secure. All parents agree. Pupils say that the adults in the school support them well and will deal with any problems that they may have quickly and effectively.
- The systems at the school to manage behaviour are very well understood by both staff and pupils. However, the procedures are only required very occasionally, as the vast majority of pupils are very able to manage their own behaviour, understanding the differences between right and wrong.
- Pupils are proud of their school and are keen to come to school with a real excitement to learn. Their attendance is average and pupils are punctual coming to school. This is reflected in the highly positive 'buzz' around the school at the start of the day when pupils do not delay getting into class ready to work.
- Pupils are fully aware of what constitutes bullying, including physical, emotional and cyber-bullying. Pupils say that there is no bullying at the school and the school records confirm this view. Parents report that bullying is not a problem at the school, supporting the view of pupils.
- Sporting activities provide pupils with an opportunity to represent the school. They report a wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them and are very keen to take a full part in all activities within the school such as the yearly 'Funny Run' where everyone in the school runs in fancy dress around the village for charity.

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

- The headteacher provides the school with passionate and committed leadership. Together with her small team, she shares a common purpose and the commitment to improve the life chances of the pupils at the school with a shared determination to continue to improve.
- The strong team of leaders and governors has worked hard to not only maintain standards at the school but to secure improvements since the previous inspection. The current focus for governors is securing the future of this small rural school, without losing any of the quality education it provides for pupils in this village community.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and has improved substantially since the previous inspection. Highly effective transition arrangements with the local pre-school group

ensure that children are ready to start at the school. High expectations and good provision while they are at the school in the Reception class provide these children with a superb start to their school life.

- School leaders have extremely high expectations of the teachers and check their performance regularly. Effective systems to manage teachers' performance are in place to make sure that the levels of pay awarded to individual teachers reflect how well their pupils learn and any leadership responsibilities that they have.
- Leaders track regularly how well pupils are doing using the data provided by teachers on pupils' attainment. Meetings to look specifically at pupils' progress are held regularly to identify pupils who would benefit from some additional support to accelerate their progress. This data is used to judge the effectiveness of this additional provision to ensure it is having the desired effect.
- Parents are extremely positive about how well the school is led and managed, a view shared by staff. The local authority recognises the successful leadership in securing good achievement at the school so has only needed to provide some 'light-touch' support.
- The curriculum is exciting and varied. It is well matched to pupils' needs and reflects the local environment well. It is planned effectively to ensure that all subjects are given equal status while ensuring that literacy and numeracy skills are developed at every opportunity. Residential and day visits are used to enhance the curriculum and develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The Residential visit to Embercombe, a local education centre focused on sustainability, develops pupils' social and moral skills while reflecting on their part in the global community.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and improvement planning is sharply focused on continuing to raise pupils' achievement. Staff training is linked to whole-school improvement issues, ensuring it has the maximum impact on raising standards.
- Leaders have worked in partnership with other local schools to make best use of the primary school sports funding. This has included using the funding to buy some expertise in sports coaching both to teach the pupils in each school and to provide some future sustainability through training in sports for school staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has a good understanding of the school. Governors are clear about how well pupils make progress and how well the pupils attain in national tests when compared with other schools nationally. They monitor the quality of teaching to check the effectiveness of teaching. Governors understand the areas for development and work with the school to see the improvement plans through. They understand how each member of staff is paid according to their experience and performance. Governors have a clear understanding of how the pupil premium is allocated and its impact on improving levels of pupils' attainment. The governing body ensures the school meets its statutory safeguarding requirements and is highly supportive of everyone there. Governors provide support and challenge to the school's leaders and benefit from training opportunities. New governors are supported with an induction programme they have developed.

## 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>	113198
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	426805

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	36
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bob Cope
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Evans
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 October 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01647 252253
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