

Lympsham Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Rectory Way, Lympsham, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset, BS24 0EW

Inspection dates 7–8 January 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' attainment is high in all subjects at the end of Key Stage 1. The proportions of pupils achieving Level 3 in reading and mathematics is well above the national average.
- Pupils learn to read quickly and are able to practise their skills in school when they read to staff and volunteers.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and are well prepared for their next stage in education.
- Teachers plan lessons that are engaging and which the pupils enjoy. Most subjects are someone's favourite lesson.
- Pupils' behaviour is good both in terms of their social behaviour but also in the way pupils approach their learning.
- The school is very well led by the senior staff. They are supported by an effective middle leadership team and a very knowledgeable governing body.
- The school has a real sense of being a caring community. Both pupils and staff have fun working together. The school develops the social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness of the pupils very well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in writing is not as good as that in reading and in mathematics. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop and practise their skills by writing with a purpose in other subject areas.
- Pupils are not always given clear enough targets that show them what they have to achieve in lessons.
- Teachers' marking does not always let pupils know what they have to do to make their work better and pupils do not have enough opportunities to make the improvements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons and a whole school assembly led by the local vicar. Three of the lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and senior and middle leaders. The inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and scrutinised samples of pupils' workbooks.
- A wide range of documents was examined, including the school's information on pupils' recent progress, as well as planning and documentation about checks on teaching, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspector also took account of the 59 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views of staff through the 12 staff questionnaires

Inspection team

David Hogg, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lympsham First School is situated in a small picturesque village between Weston-super-Mare and Burnham-on-Sea. It is much smaller than the average infant or primary school. It draws most of its pupils from the local area, but an increasing number comes from wider afield.
- There are only a few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds attending the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families) is well below the national average. There are no looked after children or children of service personnel attending the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is low.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by ensuring that teachers:
 - provide pupils with guidance on how they can improve their own work with specific short-term targets that are linked to the activities they are working on
 - ensure that marking in all subjects consistently gives pupils clear feedback on how they can make their work better and then give pupils the time quickly to make any necessary improvements.
- Raise achievement in writing by giving pupils more opportunities to write in different styles in subject areas other than English so they can improve and practise their skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Reception class with skills that are in line with those typical for their age, but this can vary between years, and in each intake there is a wide range of abilities in the groups. Through effective and engaging teaching, children progress well and by the end of the year over half of them reach a good level of development. In the individual areas of personal, social and emotional development, physical development, and communication and language, progress is much higher and children are well prepared for their next step into Year 1.
- Reading is well taught, with pupils learning the sounds letters make (phonics) quickly. Pupils are able to use this knowledge effectively to blend letter sounds when building unfamiliar words. The development in the pupils' skills is evident in the above average outcomes in the phonics screening check over the last two years.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, the attainment of pupils has been well above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics for the last two years and previous declines have been reversed. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in the core subjects is above national averages as well. They are lower in writing compared with reading and mathematics but demonstrate the school's ability to stretch and challenge more able pupils.
- In Key Stage 2, the pupils make generally at least good progress in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing does lag a little behind that in the other core areas. The work in pupils' books indicates pupils have greater opportunities to practise their skills in mathematics than in written activities, and in topic areas they do not write for different purposes often enough. The school has recognised this and it is a priority in their school development plan.
- The numbers of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs across the school are low. The school checks how well they are doing closely and, over time, they make broadly similar progress to other groups of pupils; but this can show a degree of variation due to differences in the numbers of pupils in each year group.
- Similarly, the numbers of pupils who have free school meals and are eligible for the pupil premium grant are low and vary between year groups. In the most recent national assessments at Key Stage 1, the skills and understanding of pupils receiving free school meals were just over two terms behind other pupils in English and mathematics. The previous year they were ahead of others by a term and a half overall. The small numbers in the group make any identified patterns in achievement across the school unreliable.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching across the school is good and has enabled pupils to attain highly and make good progress. The teaching in mixed classes is generally pitched to make sure work is not too hard or too easy for the different abilities and age groups. The school works hard to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to develop and learn.
- Teachers provide learning opportunities that engage the pupils and stimulate their curiosity. Good use is made of the local area, with Forest School activities in the nearby Comple Copse. In one lesson, children in the Reception class thoroughly enjoyed exploring what they could do with circus skills equipment. They took great delight in balancing and spinning plates on thin rods and trying to juggle balls and clubs.
- Although pupils are provided with general targets to work towards, teachers do not provide them with sufficient information at the start of an activity that would help them check their own work as they are going along so they would know how to make it better.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly, but does not always provide pupils with sufficient guidance on how to improve their work. Even when marking is better, pupils are not always given the time to make the necessary improvements and errors are not always corrected.
- Teachers work closely with the teaching assistants. and they are used very effectively in the

class. In one Year 2/3 mathematics class, a teaching assistant skilfully reviewed the learning of the different groups of pupils in a summary activity.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel very safe and well cared for in school. They are confident in the security of the building, pointing out that strangers cannot get into the school. Pupils have a good understanding of keeping themselves safe when using the internet. They are aware of the problems that can arise when using social media games out of school. They understand the need to be careful near roads, even in their small village
- The behaviour of pupils is good and contributes to their learning well. Pupils themselves contribute to the well-being of others. Year 4 pupils are buddied up with the new children in the Reception class. The older pupils then act as role models and friends to the new pupils.
- The social behaviour in and around school is very good. Pupils say there is little, if any, bullying, although they do say pupils do fall out at times but always quickly make friends again. If problems do continue they say adults around them will help sort things out. At break and lunchtimes, older pupils take on roles as play leaders to help organise activities. Parents also say their children are well cared for and behaviour is good.
- In lessons pupils engage well with the tasks that are set and demonstrate skills in discussion and cooperative learning. They can also work independently of adults on activities that range from traditional workbook tasks to using a range of information technologies including hand held tablets. Teachers encourage pupils to develop or use their skills in technology and pupils take their own photographs and videos of activities.
- Relationships within the classroom are good. There is a tangible sense of fun and enjoyment in the pupils' learning.
- The school has worked hard over the last year to improve the attendance in school, which is now a little above the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the senior teacher work very well together to lead the school and are ambitious in their vision to make the school better. Their self-evaluation is realistic and includes input from staff, the governing body and from pupils. There is a clear commitment to the school from staff and volunteers to bring about school improvement.
- The school reviews the progress the pupils make closely and is providing training to staff to enable them to take on a greater role in the review and analysis of how well groups of pupils and individuals are progressing. The progress pupils make is used to help review the effectiveness of the teachers and to ensure that salary progression is linked closely to pupil outcomes.
- With such a small staff, all of the teachers have roles and responsibilities. The middle leaders have a clear understanding of their roles. The headteacher has begun a programme of peer observations by teachers to share the good practice that is in the school. The efforts of the teaching team as a whole, led by the headteacher and senior teacher, are delivering good outcomes for pupils and clearly demonstrate the school has the capacity to develop further.
- The school has bought in additional support through the local authority to provide training to staff and governors. The school has also used the support to review its own analysis of the quality of teaching and to review the progress pupils are making. The support has helped the school develop.
- The school works through a Christian ethos that encourages and promotes spiritual and moral awareness. It has active links with the parish church and pupils enjoy the visits to the school by the local vicar. The school works to raise pupils' awareness of the diversity in cultures of the wider community locally and on a national perspective. Intolerance is challenged and pupils are

taught to be kind and welcoming.

- The curriculum provides engaging learning activities for the pupils. It is under constant review and has a flexibility that allows the school to embrace exciting opportunities, such as an invite from the local Member of Parliament for pupils to visit the Houses of Parliament. The school uses the local area for learning opportunities and even the names of casualties that are listed on the marble roll of honour in the school hall have been used to form the basis of work on the First World War.
- The school has reviewed its physical education provision and has targeted the additional resources that are available through the primary sports funding to developing the skills of the teachers. By having teachers working alongside a professional coach in a range of sports, the staff will be able later to take a lead in running more activities for pupils. The plans have clear outcomes that will be reviewed by the headteacher and the governing body over the year.
- Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place and the school monitors the welfare of all pupils carefully.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well established and has a good understanding of the strengths of the school and aspects to develop further. The governors are active in school, meeting with staff and carrying out subject reviews. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching gained from direct observation, sitting in on lessons, along with feedback from the headteacher and the school improvement consultant. The minutes of the governing body show that governors challenge the school and hold it to account for the progress pupils make, for example those who are eligible for additional support through the pupil premium grant. The governing body has a good understanding of the link between improved pupil outcomes and the salary progression of the teachers. The financial position is monitored closely and how effectively specific resources are being used, such as the primary sports funding grant. Safeguarding and child protection procedures are audited annually.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 123810 |
| Local authority | Somerset |
| Inspection number | 434614 |

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

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| Type of school | First |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4-9 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 109 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Robert Kail-Dyke |
| Headteacher | Fiona Robertson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 July 2009 |
| Telephone number | 01934 750473 |
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