

Bridestowe Primary School

Bridestowe, Okehampton, EX20 4EL

Inspection dates

14–15 January 2014

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.

- Attainment has been consistently above national averages in English and mathematics in recent years. Pupils achieve well, whatever their starting points.
- The quality of teaching is good, with some examples of outstanding practice.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement to outstanding.
- Pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress in all year groups.
- The transition of pupils to secondary school is well managed and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Marking is thorough and helps pupils understand how well they are doing and how to improve.
- Pupils' behaviour is of a good standard and contributes to the family ethos at Bridestowe. Pupils feel safe and mix well together, making the most of every day. Attendance is above average.
- The great majority of parents and carers are pleased with the quality of care and teaching that the school provides for their children.
- The school successfully promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The curriculum provides a wide variety of enrichment activities, events and visits.
- The staff know all the pupils extremely well as individuals, which means they keep a close check on their learning and well-being on a daily basis.
- Pupils' progress is carefully checked and any underperformance is quickly identified and responded to effectively.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Not enough teaching is of the highest quality.
- Standards achieved in writing are not as high as those achieved in reading and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- All staff were seen teaching. A total of 10 lessons across a range of subjects were observed. This included two joint lesson observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector observed the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they represent).
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, groups of pupils, teachers with responsibilities for different subjects, and the Chair of the Federation's Governing Body, the vice chair and six other governors.
- A telephone conversation was made to the school improvement partner.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence which included the school's improvement plan, the school's data for tracking the progress and attainment of individual pupils and specific groups, records relating to behaviour and safety, the school's checks on how well it is doing, and curriculum and lesson plans.
- The inspector also scrutinised the work pupils were doing in their books.
- Parents and carers were spoken to at the beginning and end of the school day and the 47 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered. Responses from 14 staff questionnaires were also taken into account.
- During the inspection pupils' behaviour was observed, both inside and outside the classroom, and the school's safeguarding procedures were checked.

Inspection team

Mark Anderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bridestowe is a smaller than average-sized primary school located near to Okehampton.
- The vast majority of pupils at Bridestowe come from White British backgrounds.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-year classes.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, children with a parent or carer in the armed services and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national average. There are currently no children in local authority care or with a parent or carer in the armed services in the school.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported through school action is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or through statements of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Bridestowe is a member school of the Dartmoor Federation, which consists of Okehampton College and three other primary schools. All these schools share the same governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that all lessons inspire and enthuse all pupils and that pupils learn rapidly as a result.
- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to produce longer pieces of written work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school is small, with some year cohorts that are in single figures. Because of this, the school's performance data can reflect considerable variations between years, as a single pupil can constitute a relatively high proportion of the year group. Despite this, some clear trends and outcomes are evident.
- In recent years attainment has been above average. Teacher assessments and national test results show that pupils reached above-average standards in English and mathematics when they left Bridestowe in 2012 and 2013.
- The majority of children have skills and knowledge in line with or slightly above those typical for their age when they join the school. They make good progress in Reception and benefit from a well-balanced curriculum with a wide range of engaging activities, both in the classroom and outdoors.
- The progress made in all areas, with the exception of writing, by almost all pupils in Key Stage 1 is good. Reading is taught well and pupils soon become confident readers with a good level of comprehension. The daily guided reading sessions have significantly improved both the standard of reading and pupils' enjoyment. The school performed well above the national average in the Year 1 phonics screening check last year.
- Pupils reached high standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013. Every pupil achieved the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics.
- Standards achieved in writing at Key Stage 2 were slightly above average but not as high as those attained in reading and mathematics. More than half of the pupils gained Level 5 in mathematics in 2013.
- Pupils, including the most able, make good progress as they move through Key Stage 2. The school's results for 2012 and 2013 and pupils' current levels of progress show that good progress and high standards have been maintained and built upon.
- The pupil premium funding is appropriately allocated and the small number of pupils who benefit from the grant or have special educational needs make good progress, in line with their classmates'. Their attainment by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics is similar to that of other pupils.
- The school's system for tracking each individual pupil's progress and achievement is both reliable and accurate. Staff have a good understanding of how well individual pupils are doing. Meetings are scheduled each term to discuss individual pupils' progress in order to identify those who are not making expected progress and put in place appropriate support.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good with some outstanding practice. A scrutiny of pupils' work over time confirms that they make good progress in their learning.
- Teachers expect a good deal from all their pupils, including the most able, and the majority respond by producing their best work. Lessons are usually well planned and questioning is sharp and focused, ensuring that all pupils are involved, alert and interested.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and present their lessons clearly with realistic and achievable lesson objectives. There are positive relationships between teachers and pupils and this underpins pupils' learning well. Pupils work in a calm and orderly atmosphere.
- Pupils attitudes to learning are positive because teachers regularly incorporate varied and stimulating resources that engage pupils. The older pupils were observed using tablet computers to record and analyse information in a wide range of subjects, displaying a high level of proficiency. Pupils in Reception were seen learning their number sequences by creating races between dolphins. Key Stage 1 pupils were completely engaged in making their own liquid

thermometers during an observed lesson.

- Occasionally, the pace of some lessons slows and this has a negative effect on pupils' interest and learning. Also, opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills are sometimes missed.
- The teachers make sure that individual pupils understand what they have achieved and what the next steps in their learning are. The assessment of individual pupils' attainment and progress is systematic and accurate across the whole school. Teachers have a clear idea of how well individual pupils are doing so that support can be tailored accordingly.
- There is a clear focus on building confidence and self-esteem and pupils are not afraid to make mistakes and take 'chances' in their learning.
- The teaching of phonics is delivered well and the younger pupils look forward to their daily sessions. The understanding of letters and the sounds they make is successfully reinforced in all subjects.
- Pupils are helped to achieve their learning targets through good marking and verbal feedback. This is consistently good, particularly across Key Stage 2. Books are marked regularly and pupils receive clear guidance as to the quality of their work and how to make it better.
- The staff operate well as a team and share their expertise and knowledge to good effect. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils, particularly those who have additional needs, helping them individually and in small groups. This helps pupils who struggle with their work to make similar progress to that of others.
- Pupils develop a high level of proficiency in information and communication technology, starting at an early age.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good and they conduct themselves well in lessons and throughout the school day. They have positive attitudes to learning and told the inspector that they enjoy coming to Bridestowe and like all of their teachers. They are energetic and enthusiastic, which was neatly summed up by a parent or carer's comment: 'All our children have batteries!'
- Pupils are proud of their school and even the youngest pupils in Reception look smart in their uniform. Relationships are good and there is a positive learning culture within the school.
- Pupils collaborate well and are encouraged to work together from an early age. Older pupils look out for younger ones. This was seen during the inspection at lunchtimes when Year 6 pupils were encouraging Key Stage 1 pupils to eat their vegetables!
- Parents and carers have a positive view of behaviour. The great majority of parents and carers who spoke to the inspector or responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) considered that the pupils behave well and that the school is both caring and approachable.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes and are enthusiastic in the classroom, whether they are learning about place value in mathematics or how to play the tenor horn! However, a small minority can lose concentration and focus in some sessions when they are not fully engaged.
- Pupils at Bridestowe are polite and respectful to each other and to visitors. They mix together naturally across all age groups, both in lessons and on the playground. Friendships are sound and much valued. The relaxed atmosphere means all pupils feel at ease. Incidents of serious misbehaviour are very rare and there has only been one pupil exclusion in recent years.
- The older pupils enjoy and benefit from taking different responsibilities. These include being members of the very active school council.
- Over time attendance has been good and continues to be above the national average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good and they are well cared for and feel safe throughout the school day. They think that all of the teachers are approachable and deal with any issues or problems fairly and promptly. The pupils have a good grasp of what bullying is, including physical, emotional and cyber bullying. Pupils receive clear guidance as to how to ensure their 'e-safety'.
- Effective behaviour policies are in place with an appropriate system of rewards and sanctions.

The system is understood by pupils and adhered to. The headteacher and teachers provide appropriate role models for the pupils, which helps establish genuine respect and trust throughout the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's commitment and vision and the contribution of the staff, including middle leaders, have meant that good standards of academic achievement have been maintained over a sustained period. Since Bridestowe formed the Dartmoor Federation in 2011 the headteacher has been well supported and challenged by the federation's governing body, which shares his drive and ambition for Bridestowe.
- The headteacher's and governors' assessment of the school's performance is both reflective and accurate. The federation's improvement plan incorporates ambitious targets and clearly identifies the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement.
- The school has effective and rigorous procedures for managing staff performance and linking good teaching to movement up the pay scale, and this has had a successful impact on improving the overall quality of teaching. Staff are regularly observed teaching and the quality of their practice and the progress made by their pupils are judged accurately.
- Academic expectations are high and this focus has taken the school nearer to providing every pupil with the opportunity to achieve his or her full potential.
- Some inconsistencies in teaching remain and the achievement in writing is not as good as it is in reading and mathematics. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to produce longer pieces of written work successfully.
- The school's reputation, both locally and further afield, has grown in recent years and this is reflected in the increasing number of pupils on roll.
- Parents and carers agree that the headteacher and governors provide well-directed leadership and management across all areas of the school.
- Each member of staff has assigned subject and curriculum responsibilities, so that leadership is effectively distributed. Staff display a good level of commitment and feel supported by the leadership.
- The school is strongly inclusive and the good achievement of all pupils from their individual starting points is evidence of the school's highly successful promotion of the equality of opportunity.
- The school keeps pupils safe and makes sure that all adults who work with them have been properly checked.
- The school has been given 'light touch' support from the local authority.
- Bridestowe has excellent links with the local community. Parents, carers and local residents visit the school to help with individual readers.
- The pupils enjoy regular sporting and cultural outings. The breadth of the pupils' educational experience and opportunity is extensive and ranges from a surfing, canoeing and climbing residential week in North Cornwall to trips to the Eden Project and a whole-school Remembrance Day visit.
- The new primary sports funding has been utilised effectively to increase participation in sports activities, in order to enable pupils to develop healthy lifestyles and improve their well-being.
- Year 6 pupils leave Bridestowe as confident 'team players' with a positive outlook on life. The curriculum provides good opportunities for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and understanding. A member of the local clergy holds regular spiritual and moral sessions with each class.. The school also has close links with a junior school in Surrey and a school for disadvantaged children in Cambodia.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The federation governing body has a good understanding of the school. Governors undertake training for their roles and regularly undertake an evaluation of their own effectiveness to

ensure they maximise their impact on improving pupils' outcomes. Governors understand how well pupils achieve when compared with other schools nationally. They challenge school leaders to expect high-quality teaching from all teachers. Appropriate monitoring procedures are in place to ensure that governors have a clear understanding of how teachers' performance and experience are linked to pay progression. Governors understand the areas for development and work with the school to see the improvement plans through. Governors understand how the pupil premium funding is allocated and its impact upon improving pupils' attainment. The governing body ensures the school meets its statutory safeguarding requirements.

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	113248
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	432434
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Courtney
Headteacher	Michael Brady
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 March 2011
Telephone number	01837 861361
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