

Iron Acton Church of England Primary School

Wotton Road, Iron Acton, Bristol, B37 9UZ

Inspection dates 16–17 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.

- The headteacher sets high expectations and, supported by senior staff and the governing body, checks carefully the work of the school. As a result the good standard of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- Staff carefully track pupils' progress and provide extra help for pupils who may be falling behind.
- Lessons and activities are mostly well planned according to the different ages and abilities of pupils who are taught in the same class.
- Consequently, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment is above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils say there is little bullying and have confidence in staff to help them with any problems. As a result they feel safe and enjoy their time at school.
- The governing body knows the school well and provides a good balance between supporting senior leaders and questioning them about the work of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding partly because there are occasions when mathematics lessons are not always pitched at the right level for average-ability pupils.
- The progress of some pupils slows in mathematics, especially in Years 3 and 4.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 12 lessons and part lessons and observed four teachers.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other teachers, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and a group of pupils.
- The inspector heard pupils from Key Stage 1 read.
- The inspector examined a range of evidence, including: the school's safeguarding procedures; school data tracking pupils' progress; the quality of work in pupils' books in conjunction with the headteacher; and the school's own judgements about teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The inspector analysed the views of 22 parents and carers who completed the Parent View survey on the Ofsted website and took account of the views of a number of parents and carers who wrote to the inspector.

Inspection team

James Henry, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Iron Acton is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes, with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage taught in the same class as pupils in Year 1.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well below the national average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding by making sure that:
 - mathematics lessons are always pitched at the right level for all groups of pupils, especially those of average ability
 - pupils' learning is checked often enough to ensure all pupils make consistently good or better progress
 - marking in mathematics consistently tells pupils how to improve their work and teachers follow this up to make sure that pupils have acted upon their advice.
- Increase the progress of pupils in mathematics, especially in Years 3 and 4, by ensuring:
 - pupils understand different ways of solving mathematical problems and have sufficient opportunities to apply these methods in practical situations
 - pupils have the chance to investigate and discuss their work in mathematics in order to improve their mathematical language and explain their thinking.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Different groups of pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. This is mainly because more-able pupils are suitably challenged in lessons and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with typical skills and abilities for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with a good level of development ready to access the national curriculum.
- Because pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, attainment is above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- More-able pupils often achieve the higher levels in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 because they are given work to do that really stretches them.
- However, school assessments show that progress in reading and writing is generally better than in mathematics, especially across Years 3 and 4, where the progress of some pupils of average ability in mathematics slows down.
- Progress in mathematics is not as quick as in reading and writing, partly because pupils do not consistently have the opportunity to develop their thinking when solving mathematical problems in practical situations.
- Also, pupils do not have enough chance to practise their investigative skills and acquire the mathematical language to explain their thinking.
- When compared with other groups in the school, assessments show that the achievement gap is closing in English and mathematics for pupils supported by the pupil premium. They make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, in line with other groups in the school. There are too few eligible pupils to comment on their attainment without identifying them.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers know pupils well, carefully track their progress and provide extra help for any who may be falling behind.
- Lessons are planned to meet the different abilities and ages of pupils taught in mixed-aged classes. Tasks are devised to challenge the more able successfully. Teachers use teaching assistants to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to fully involve this group of pupils in lessons. This is an example of how the school works to ensure all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn and none are discriminated against.
- While teachers generally plan lessons well, there are occasions in mathematics where lessons are not always pitched at the right level. Sometimes tasks given to pupils, particularly to those of average ability, are either too hard or too easy. Teachers do not check often enough how well pupils are doing in some lessons to pick this up and do something about it.
- For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were asked to find one quarter of 44 using a number square that contained numbers up to 100. Some pupils were able to do this task quite easily but were not challenged to investigate further. Others really struggled because they did not have the previous knowledge necessary to help them understand what was meant by 'one quarter'. This slowed the pace of their learning until they received extra help from staff.
- Question-and-answer sessions are planned well by some staff to help pupils understand what they are learning and to gauge pupils' knowledge and correct any misconceptions.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. However, marking is better in writing than in mathematics. This is because marking in mathematics does not consistently provide pupils with feedback about what they have to do further to improve their understanding. Teachers do not often follow up their points to see that pupils have acted upon them.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good and well managed by staff. Almost all the parents who responded to the Parent View survey thought that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved and that any instances of bullying are dealt with effectively.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. For example, the school arranges visitors such as fire officers, the local police and road safety officers to talk to pupils about how to stay safe at home and on the streets. Assemblies are held about staying safe when using the internet and pupils visit the local 'Life Skills' centre to learn about how to stay safe in different situations.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school as there is very little bullying of any kind and they have the confidence in staff to deal with any problems that may arise.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and enjoy their lessons. They show good manners to staff and visitors, with pupils of different ages cooperating in lessons and playing well together in the playground.
- Pupils respect their school environment and happily help to tidy up after lessons.
- Behaviour in the dinner hall, at play time and generally around the school is good. One pupil said, 'It can get a bit noisy in the dinner hall because we all try to talk at once.'
- The school's policy for improving attendance and ensuring pupils arrive on time for school is having a positive impact. Attendance has risen over time and is now broadly in line with the national average.
- Behaviour and safety are not outstanding because pupils' behaviour is not always impeccable in lessons and around the school and pupils are not given enough opportunities to manage their own behaviour, particularly in lessons.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, supported by staff, knows the school well and sets high expectations for staff and pupils.
- Plans to improve the school focus effectively on maintaining and improving the quality of teaching and pupil achievement. As a result, above-average standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher checks the quality of teaching well, with staff being held to account through individual targets for improving their performance.
- Leadership roles are distributed well among experienced teachers who are responsible for different subjects. This enables staff to share ideas and good practice that helps improve their lessons.
- The school works closely with other local schools to undertake professional training for both staff and the governing body.
- Good relationships are fostered in the local and wider community. For example, pupils take part in the local Mayday celebrations and write regular articles for the village newsletter. The local vicar and parishioners lead weekly assemblies and pupils support national charities such as the Poppy Appeal and Shoeboxes for the Samaritans. These activities help the school to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well.
- The curriculum is adapted for mixed-age pupils being taught in the same class. For example, in the same class, children aged four and five follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum while older Year 1 pupils follow the National Curriculum.
- Activities such as trips to London to visit different historical and cultural sites and residential visits support the curriculum in promoting pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- The school uses the additional sports funding it receives to employ a specialist physical education teacher who is coaching pupils in different sporting activities and providing professional training in physical education for staff.

- This has led to a greater number of pupils taking part in team games and entering local sporting events against other schools, and a rise in pupils' physical skill levels. As the headteacher said, 'We used to win the 'fair play' award but now we are starting to win matches.'
- The school has not yet considered the difference the increased activity is making to pupils' lifestyles and physical well-being.
- Pupil-premium funding is used well, with extra staff being employed to support small groups of eligible pupils. This is successfully helping this group of pupils make good progress across the school.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for the school, with senior leaders requesting and paying for extra professional support when needed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body checks the work of the school well through regular visits and provides a good level of challenge as well as support for senior leaders. Governors have a good understanding of the difference the use of the pupil-premium funding is making to eligible pupils through regular checking of their progress. There are effective systems to manage the performance of staff, including the headteacher, to ensure any salary increases are justified. Governors undertake regular training to help them fulfil their roles and ensure financial resources are managed well. This includes an understanding about the achievement of different groups of pupils. Through working with the headteacher, the governing body ensures all safeguarding requirements are met, especially in child protection training and the checking of staff before they work in the school.

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	109162
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	431479

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	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kim Harmsworth
Headteacher	Jill Bendeaux
Date of previous school inspection	26 February 2009
Telephone number	01454 228322
Fax number	01454 228340
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