

# Almondsbury Church of England Primary School

Sundays Hill, Almondsbury, BS32 4DS

## Inspection dates

4–5 February 2014

<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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils are achieving very well. Standards have been significantly above average for several years in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are making good progress in all year groups.
- Children have a very good start to their schooling in well-organised Reception classes and make rapid progress.
- Teaching observed during the inspection was almost always at least good with a good number of examples of outstanding practice.
- Pupils say that teachers make learning fun and interesting and this ensures that they are focused and attentive.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good. They are polite and well-mannered and are keen to do well in lessons.
- Pupils are extremely confident that they are safe in school and their parents and carers are almost unanimous in supporting this view.
- There is an almost tangible sense of teamwork in the school, very purposefully led by the headteacher. Governors support leadership very well and provide very good levels of challenge and expertise. The drive for improvement has been successful and a close eye is kept on the quality of teaching to ensure improvements are sustained.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently outstanding in all classes. There are occasions when the most able pupils are not given work that allows them to do as well as they can.
- The new marking policy is not yet being used consistently and does not routinely show pupils what they need to do to improve.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 23 lessons and three of these visits were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors held meetings with leaders and managers, staff, pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors met informally with parents and carers at the beginning and end of the school day and analysed the results of the 88 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its self-evaluation, development planning and policies and procedures, including those relevant to keeping pupils safe.
- The inspectors evaluated the school's information on the progress that pupils are making.

## Inspection team

John Eadie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mary Usher-Clark

Additional Inspector

Susan Ivermee

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Almondsbury Church of England Primary School is a little larger than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are grouped into 11 classes: two for Reception, three for Years 1 and 2, three for Years 3 and 4 and three for Years 5 and 6.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is lower than average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic groups and just a few of these speak English as an additional language. All are able to cope with the school's curriculum in English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The headteacher supports other local schools and is on the authority's primary headteachers' executive.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching so that a larger proportion is outstanding by ensuring that:
  - the most able pupils are routinely provided with work that stretches them and allows them to do as well as they can
  - marking consistently shows pupils clearly what they have to do to improve.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's attainment on entry to the school is generally in line with expectations for children of their age. They make rapid progress in their Reception Year and join Year 1 with levels of skills and knowledge above those generally expected.
- Good progress continues through Key Stage 1 and standards in reading are above average by the end of Year 2. This is due to the good development of pupils' understanding of phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make). In the national phonics screening check in 2013 an above average proportion of pupils in Year 1 reached at least the expected standard. In 2012 some pupils missed the standard but almost all of these attained it when they retook the check in 2013. Effective strategies have been put in place to support those few pupils who missed the standard for the second time and they are now catching up rapidly.
- Pupils make good progress over time in all year groups. An above average proportion make better than expected progress, though not consistently in all year groups. Data show that this is an improving picture and many pupils are now making very rapid progress.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been significantly above average almost consistently for at least the last five years in the assessments at both the end of Year 6 and the end of Year 2. Standards in reading are particularly high by the time pupils leave. Pupils are keen readers and older ones read widely, some having sophisticated reading tastes.
- In the past, some of the most able pupils have not done as well as expected. This has been addressed and in many classes the most able pupils are provided with high levels of challenge. However, this is not consistent through the school and a small proportion of pupils are not doing as well as they could.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress that is at least as good as that of their classmates due to the careful planning for their progress and the well-targeted support they receive.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to support individual pupils. There were too few of these pupils in 2013 to compare their attainment in the assessments in Year 6 with that of their classmates. However, these pupils in all year groups are achieving at least as well as their peers and, in many cases, they are making more rapid progress, so that the gap between their attainment and that of their classmates is closing rapidly.
- The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups make the same good progress as their classmates.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall with a good proportion that is outstanding, particularly in Reception, Year 3 and Years 5 and 6. This overall good quality enables pupils to learn successfully and to progress well in English and mathematics. For instance, teachers are very good at using questions to find out and build on what pupils already know. This is a key factor in pupils' good achievement from Reception onwards.
- Pupils often learn with enthusiasm and zeal. For example, in a mathematics lesson for the most able in Years 5 and 6, the teacher had planned work that really challenged the pupils, particularly the most able. Pupils enjoyed this challenge and rose to it very well, being keen to complete the tasks successfully and move on to even more challenging work.
- Skilled teaching assistants play a very valuable role in aiding pupils' learning. This is particularly effective when they are given responsibility for a specific group, so that the teacher is able to focus their attention elsewhere. For example, this approach enables disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to work effectively on personal targets and allows everyone to enjoy learning at their own levels.
- An excellent system of marking pupils' work has recently been developed and, in many classes,

this is helping them to improve their work significantly. Pupils enjoy being given time to read the teachers' comments and react to them, by doing a more challenging example for instance, and also say that they enjoy the dialogue that ensues. However, the system is quite new and is not being used consistently.

- The most able pupils are often given high levels of challenge and most of these pupils are working at levels well above those expected for their age. However, this is not a consistent feature in all lessons and some of these pupils are not doing quite as well as they are capable.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good and this view was confirmed by parents and carers, staff and governors. Most pupils are very punctual and attend well. Their positive attitudes to learning contribute much to their good progress. Pupils are well mannered and considerate and they relate very well to each other and to adults. Pupils are particularly well behaved in class, though there are occasions when the teaching is not so engaging and pupils lose interest and motivation. Behaviour at playtimes is good. Although a few pupils are sometimes a little lively, their play never becomes unsafe.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety are rigorous and they say that they feel exceptionally safe in school. Although a small minority of parents and carers expressed some concern in the online questionnaire about the way that bullying is dealt with, parents, carers and pupils spoken to during the inspection said that bullying is rare and dealt with extremely well.
- Pupils have very good knowledge of different forms of bullying, particularly cyber bullying. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils were genuinely horrified when an inspector suggested that there might be racial bullying.

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

- The headteacher leads by example and sets high expectations. There is an extremely strong team spirit and the drive for improvement is shared by all staff and governors. Teamwork is central to the progress being made. As a member of staff said, 'I admire the dedication and hard work of all my colleagues. Each member of staff brings their individual strengths to the school.'
- Senior and middle leaders are strong elements in the forward movement, creating good plans for improvement and carrying them out very effectively.
- Staff benefit from ample opportunities to hone their teaching skills, and further training helps to sustain and improve pupils' achievement. The school takes a strong lead in an active group of local schools that combines staff development resources and shares best practice. Such activities contribute significantly to the very good and improving quality of teaching.
- There are strong partnerships with parents and carers who are generally extremely supportive. Parents and carers expressed positive views of the school when responding to the online questionnaire and expressed no significant concerns. Those spoken to at the start of the school days were unanimously exceptionally positive about the school.
- Equality of opportunity is central to the school's ethos and this is demonstrated in the way that the curriculum is planned to provide a very broad range of experiences so that pupils are prepared very well for the future. In particular, the variety of extra-curricular activities, especially in music and sport, provides many opportunities for pupils to excel.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. They are provided with excellent opportunities to reflect on moral and social issues and their spiritual development is enhanced significantly through visits and visitors. The school recognises the need to raise pupils' awareness of a wider range of cultures and is working towards this.
- Funds are managed very carefully. Effective management is also demonstrated in the way that the funds provided for pupils eligible for the pupil premium are used. It is focused very tightly on

the needs of these pupils and is effective in accelerating their progress and access to the curriculum.

- The new funding for physical education has been planned for well. In particular, a teacher with expertise works alongside class teachers to enhance their skills so that the benefits are sustainable. These initiatives have benefited pupils' health and well-being and pupils say that they particularly enjoy the wider range of sporting activities available, for example, girls' cricket.
- Safeguarding procedures are very thorough and pupils are kept safe.
- The local authority regards the school as being a 'light touch' school and therefore not in need of significant support; indeed, the school is very proactive in local initiatives.

**The governance of the school:**

- The governing body performs its role very effectively. Governors are acutely aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have offered very strong support to leaders in the drive to improve. Much of this is because the Chair of the Governing Body is on the senior leadership team and attends their meetings, so ensuring that he is fully aware of day-to-day issues and developments, and can communicate these to governors. Governors know how good teaching is and how the management of teachers' performance has been used effectively to improve the quality of teaching. They have a very good understanding of how pupils' progress is tracked and how they are doing compared to those nationally, including those eligible for the pupil premium.

## 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>	109157
<b>Local authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	431481

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	299
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Simon Church
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29–30 April 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01454 612517
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