

Offwell Church of England Primary School

Offwell, Honiton, Devon, EX14 9SA

Inspection dates

4–5 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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 achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress because teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- Many pupils develop their speaking, listening and mathematical skills extremely well.
- Teachers and teaching assistants share good relationships with pupils and value their work.
- Pupils love books; reading skills are extended well at school and at home.
- Staff encourage pupils to express and share their ideas; consequently they enjoy learning.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have lots of friends and attend well.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good; consequently pupils feel safe.
- Pupils enrich their learning by taking part in regular church and community events.
- Senior staff and governors have worked well to secure good teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, are working more closely together and bringing improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Pupils' handwriting and punctuation skills are not developed consistently well enough.
- The headteacher and governors have not yet secured good relationships with some parents and carers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited nine lessons and was accompanied by the headteacher for most of these observations.
- The inspector observed morning playtime and lunch breaks and also visited a 'Pancake' community event.
- Meetings were held with members of the school council and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and break times.
- The inspector also met with governors and held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders.
- The inspector received 12 staff questionnaires. The inspector also spoke informally with a number of parents and carers as they brought their children to school.
- The inspector took account of 67 parents' and carers' responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and undertaking the inspection.
- The inspector received a letter and an email communication from parents and carers and held two telephone conversations with parents and carers.
- The inspector also examined parents' and carers' responses evident in the school's own questionnaires.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, planning and leaders' checks on the quality of teaching.
- The inspector also examined records relating to behaviour and attendance, and the safeguarding policy, procedures and practice. The inspector also considered the school's sports premium action plan.

Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school at other than the normal times is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action matches the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for children in local authority care, children from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Currently, there are no children in local authority care or children from service families attending the school.
- The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are accommodated in a combined Reception and Year 1 class. Other pupils are also taught in mixed-age classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has experienced significant changes in teaching staff and in the governing body since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement, especially to consistently develop the pupils' handwriting and punctuation skills, by:
 - ensuring that these skills are developed in a step-by-step way as pupils move through the school
 - making sure that pupils act quickly to improve these skills when they are identified in teachers' marking.
- Improve links with parents and carers, particularly to restore the confidence of those who currently have concerns about the school, by leaders:
 - ensuring that communications with parents and carers are underpinned by and presented with a more welcoming and understanding approach
 - promoting mutually respectful and effective working relationships across the whole school community, in the best interest of the pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children's skills on entry to the school are close to expected levels, but they vary from year to year within the small year groups.
- Children settle very quickly and make a good start in the Reception and Year 1 class. They make good progress because they are welcomed and guided by good teaching.
- All pupils, including those arriving from other schools, continue to learn and achieve well through the school because teachers check pupils' learning and adjust teaching to sustain good progress. For example, following a dip in the Year 1 screening check last year, staff strengthened the way they teach phonics (the sounds that letters make.) This has quickened pupils' progress, with school and inspection checks of pupils' reading and phonic understanding now showing improved and above average standards.
- Pupils' love of books is developed well as they move through the school and is enriched further by staff and parents and carers liaising well and instilling good reading habits at home. The above average standards in reading at the end of Years 2 and 6 reflect increasingly good and better progress.
- The school has improved teaching during a period of considerable staff change, including by making better use of teaching assistants to support pupils' differing and sometimes complex needs. As a result, all groups of pupils, included disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those new to the school and, increasingly, the most able pupils, make good progress.
- In this school, the pupil premium funding is used well to support individual pupils. For example, additional adult assistance enables them to achieve as well as their peers.
- Pupils' attainment in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2013 was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Observations of pupils' learning in classes, work in books and the school's checks of pupils' developing skills confirmed that rates of progress are accelerating.
- An increasing number of pupils are now on course to attain high standards and confidently use a wide range of vocabulary when explaining their ideas. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed impressive levels of understanding as they accurately described the difference between implicit and explicit statements.
- Many pupils also excel in developing their speaking, listening and mathematical skills. Although improving, pupils' handwriting and punctuation skills are more variable limiting their achievements to good rather than outstanding.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers and teaching assistants manage pupils' behaviour warmly and effectively. Pupils respond respectfully to the staff's high expectations and follow consistently established class routines and instructions. At times a few pupils need and receive extra attention which keeps them learning well.
- For example, during a writing lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher made timely reference to displayed guidance on 'The Working Wall' to develop pupils' thinking. A discussion about how to use alliteration then successfully extended the pupils' ability to write lively poems.
- Following a careful review, especially of the teaching of phonics, reading is taught well through the school and pupils are making rapid progress.
- During a phonics session in Years 1 and 2, where teaching was highly effective, the teacher used precise terms and asked pupils carefully to develop their understanding. This enabled pupils to recognise and use terms such as 'split digraphs' accurately to read new letter sounds and words.
- All staff extend the pupils' vocabulary and understanding of words to advance learning across the range of subjects. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher

carefully checked pupils' knowledge of decimals. This helped pupils, including the most able, to convert decimals to fractions and to use conversion tables to accurately convert metric and imperial measures.

- Teachers ensure pupils' vocabulary is extended and developed in order for them to write descriptively. Teachers plan interesting activities such as making Anderson shelters when studying the Second World War. As a result, pupils are increasingly enriching the quality of their imaginative writing.
- Senior staff and teachers are working determinedly to restore the consistently high-quality practice found at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers generally give pupils clear advice about how to improve their work. However, teaching is good rather than outstanding because teachers do not always emphasise and check pupils' basic handwriting and punctuation skills enough, and this slows progress.
- Encouraging relationships and joy in learning typify teaching and learning in the school. Pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, benefit from close additional adult support in the popular 'Log Cabin'. The supportive atmosphere that surrounds the wide range of school activities, in and out of lessons, encourages pupils to contribute well to their learning.
- Adults make every effort to get to know the pupils and use praise well to value their efforts, raise their confidence and help them achieve well. Typically in Reception and Year 1, for example, children sing rhymes, such as 'One, two, three, looking at me', that really lift their spirit and keep them engrossed in learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school, are courteous and thoughtful and attend regularly.
- Pupils move around the school sensibly, play together cooperatively and look after the school's facilities well.
- Lunchtimes and playtimes are harmonious, happy occasions with pupils enjoying each other's company and sharing very friendly relationships with staff.
- Most pupils respond well in class, but behaviour is not outstanding because a few pupils need and receive extra prompting from adults to keep them fully involved in learning.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and that if it did happen, then adults would 'quickly sort it out'. They know about the different forms of bullying, for example name calling and cyber bullying.
- Pupils know how to stay safe, including when using computers, 'by making sure we know who we are talking to' and 'asking a teacher or a parent if we are not sure'.
- Behaviour logs show very few incidents and that the few pupils needing adult guidance were quick to learn.
- A minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour in the online questionnaire. Inspection observations and discussions with staff, pupils and parents and carers were much more positive.
- Pupils enjoy taking positions of responsibility and undertake them seriously. School councillors raise funds for Honiton Food Bank and 'Huff and Puff' monitors merrily help other pupils at break times.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Staff are diligent in caring for the pupils and in treating pupils equally to prevent discrimination. As a result pupils say, 'We feel safe in school because there are friends here for everyone.'

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection, the school has undergone an unsettling period of change in senior staff and in the governing body. Even so, leaders and managers have sustained a drive to bring

improvement and securely meet their statutory obligations. All staff continue to diligently promote equality of opportunity and do not tolerate discrimination.

- Finance is managed efficiently and the school is well resourced for learning. Additional funds to assist disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and the few pupils supported by the pupil premium are used effectively.
- Leaders ensure that new sports funding is used well. Coaches are employed to work alongside school staff. For example, specialist guidance in dance provides training for staff and encourages more pupils to participate in sports and adopt a healthier lifestyle.
- The headteacher, well supported by staff, ensures that teaching and learning are typically good across the school. School leaders check the work of the school effectively and are quick to take the necessary steps to bring improvement.
- Through their various committees the governors and headteacher carefully consider the training programme for staff. Through performance management their progression along pay scales is linked effectively with school priorities and is focused on improving teaching and pupils' achievements.
- The pupils' good achievement, strengthened use of teaching assistants and improved teaching of phonics and reading, reflect the capacity to bring further improvement.
- Pupils have stimulating opportunities to enjoy learning together across a full range of subjects. These include links with the community and regular involvement in church services, such as the Ash Wednesday Service. Topic work and the school's links with a school in Tanzania further enrich the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Particularly over the past year, the school as a community has found change difficult and some parents and carers have removed their children from the school. Staff continue to work well as a team and show a good level of morale.
- The majority of parents and carers continue to hold positive views about the school. However, a sizeable minority of parents and carers express concerns, especially about the way the school and headteacher communicate with them. Some concerns about the effectiveness of the school are not borne out by inspection findings.
- Leaders and managers, now including new staff and governors, have taken steps to address this issue. Closer teamwork between leaders and managers is helping the school to steadily emerge from an unsettling period of change, but has not been in place long enough to gain the confidence of all parents and carers and demonstrate outstanding leadership.
- Leaders and managers acknowledge that lines of communication with parents and carers have not been good enough and are taking steps to rectify this. Focused meetings with parents and carers and actions to make staff more accessible to parents and carers at the start and end of the school day are having a positive effect. Other actions to restore relationships and confidence are still at an early stage.
- Leaders and managers are committed to bringing improvement and make good use of outside agency support. At the school's request, the local authority is providing specialist help to embed team leadership and improve links with parents and carers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has undergone significant change over the past year. Records show that over time governors have fulfilled their statutory responsibilities. These include vetting new staff and keeping pupils safe. Through their various committees governors have also checked the performance of the school and managed finances efficiently. Governors ensure that teachers' performance and salary progression are linked to staff, pupils' and school needs and bring improvement. New governors demonstrate a wide variety of expertise. They are strongly encouraging and supporting steps to rebuild relationships with some disaffected parents and carers. Governors also take advantage of additional training and have enlisted assistance from outside specialists to check and improve the quality of teaching. They are now promoting a more effective team relationship with the headteacher. Governors receive accurate data about pupils' progress from the headteacher, question her incisively, and visit the school regularly. They know how teaching helps pupils to learn and how the achievement of pupils in this school compares well with that in other schools nationally. Governors have taken swift action

this school year to examine concerns about pupils' reading. This has brought improved practice, which is restoring the above average standards typical of the school. Governors also ensure that additional funding, such as the primary school sports funding and the pupil premium, enables pupils receiving support to achieve as well as other pupils.

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	113359
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	440998

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	88
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Pavey
Headteacher	Anne Billington
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2008
Telephone number	01404 831417
Fax number	01404 831417
Email address	admin@offwell-primary.devon.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

