

# Alexander Hosea Primary School

Honeybourne Way, Wickwar, South Gloucestershire, GL12 8PF

**Inspection dates** 4–5 March 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 well. Their progress is good and improving.
- Children have a good start to their schooling and make rapid progress in well-organised Reception and Year 1 classes.
- How letters are linked to the sounds they make is taught thoroughly and so pupils develop into confident and competent readers.
- The quality of teaching is good and teachers set high standards. Pupils respond very well to the challenges set and many are therefore working at levels well above those expected for their age.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and play a valuable role in aiding pupils' progress, particularly, but not exclusively, for those with special educational needs.
- Pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners, very ready to take advantage of the varied opportunities for learning that are provided.
- Pupils behave well. They are polite and welcoming and treat each other and adults with respect.
- The school's systems for keeping pupils safe are extremely rigorous and pupils say that they feel very safe.
- The headteacher has created a strong team and her drive and ambition are shared by all staff and governors. Governors provide good levels of expertise and challenge and support leadership well. 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:

- Insufficient teaching is outstanding. One reason is that the new marking system is not being used consistently by all teachers so pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve.
- In some lessons, pupils' levels of concentration and interest decline as the pace of the lesson is not sufficiently brisk.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 16 lessons and three of these were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors held meetings with leaders and managers, staff, pupils and the Vice-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 82 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

Jeanne Simpson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Alexander Hosea Primary School is an average-sized primary school. Pupils are grouped into eight classes: one for Reception; one for pupils of Reception age and Year 1; one for Year 2; one for Year 3; mixed age classes for Years 3 and 4; one for Years 4 and 5; one for Years 5 and 6; and a class containing Year 6 pupils.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which is 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 is a small minority of pupils from minority ethnic groups and just a few of these speak English as an additional language though none of these are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is a little below average.
- A greater number of pupils than is usually found join or leave the school at times other than the normal joining or leaving stages.
- 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 quality of teaching so that more of it is outstanding by:
  - increasing the consistency of guidance given when teachers mark pupils' work so that pupils know clearly what they need to learn next
  - ensuring that all lessons move at a stimulating pace so that pupils are consistently engaged.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's skills and knowledge when they enter the school are generally lower than the levels expected for children of their age. They make particularly rapid progress in the two classes that contain children of reception age and, by the time they join Year 1, their skills and knowledge are better than expected for their age.
- Very good progress continues through Years 1 and 2 and school data at the end of Year 2 show significantly higher than average standards have been maintained in reading, writing and mathematics for at least the last five years.
- Pupils' progress in these early years is particularly good in reading as phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make) is taught very systematically. 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 all of these attained it when they retook the check in 2013.
- Pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 is now good and improving. Some pupils at the top of the school have had to work hard to redress some weaker progress in Years 3 and 4 in the past, but this has been addressed well.
- Although attainment dipped last year for a variety of reasons, in general, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is significantly above average in the national assessments at the end of Year 6. Standards in reading and writing are particularly high by the time pupils leave. Pupils are keen readers and older ones read widely, some having sophisticated reading tastes. Pupils' standards in writing are especially high. For instance, a boy in Year 6 has already published a book and a girl reached the last 50 in the 2013 BBC national short story competition.
- Very careful records are kept of pupils' progress and these show that all groups of pupils are making similar progress. In particular disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress as they are supported well and have good plans made to help them progress.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to support individual pupils. There were too few of these pupils in 2013 to compare their performance in the assessments in Year 6 with their classmates'. However, through the school they are making the same progress as their classmates and many of them have already closed the gap so that they are working at levels the same as or even higher than others'.
- The most-able pupils are provided with work that challenges them in all year groups and this is enabling them to make rapid progress and reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils who join the school at times other than the usual starting point settle quickly and are making the same good progress as their classmates.
- The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, make the same good progress as their classmates.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching over time is good and is the key reason for pupils' good progress. Pupils learn successfully and make good progress in English and mathematics. There are examples of outstanding practice which enable even better progress.
- The school has worked hard to introduce a system of giving pupils an understanding of how they learn. This is successful and used consistently by teachers so that pupils are very aware of how they learn best and they can apply these methods to help their learning.
- 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 level.

- The school has introduced a very good system of marking pupils' work and this gives pupils clear guidance on how they can improve. Pupils say that this helps them to progress and that they particularly like the help and the opportunity to react to the advice. Pupils also enjoy the opportunities to assess their own success or that of their classmates. However the marking system is not used consistently throughout the school.
- Pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners. However, their concentration and interest levels occasionally dip as the pace of some lessons is not consistently brisk.
- Teachers set work that is not too easy or too difficult for pupils and this enables all, but particularly the most able, to learn well at their level. The practice of offering a range of starting points for a piece of work and letting the pupils choose their own is successful as pupils will often choose a higher level than the teacher expects and rise to the challenge of working at that level. A pupil put it well when they said, 'Our work is challenging in a good way but never too difficult.'

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good and this view was confirmed by pupils, staff and governors and by the vast majority of parents and carers. Most pupils are very punctual and attendance is well above average. Pupils are well mannered and considerate and they relate very well to each other and to adults. Behaviour at playtimes is good.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning contribute much to their good progress. This is due to a significant extent to the attitudes of adults because, as a pupil put it, 'Teachers make us feel valued as individuals. They respect our abilities.' Pupils are particularly well behaved in class, though there are a few occasions when the teaching is not so engaging and pupils lose interest and motivation.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety are rigorous and pupils 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, pupils and parents and carers spoken to during the inspection said that bullying is rare, minor and dealt with extremely well.
- Pupils have very good knowledge of different forms of bullying, particularly the dangers that may be found when using the internet. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils were genuinely puzzled when an inspector suggested that there might be racial bullying.

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

- The headteacher leads by example and her high expectations are shared by all staff and governors. There is an extremely strong team spirit and drive for improvement. Teamwork is central to the progress being made. As a member of staff said, 'Staff work extremely hard to make sure that individuals achieve their very best. They value parents as partners in learning.'
- Middle leaders are strong elements in the forward movement, creating good plans for improvement and carrying them out effectively.
- Staff benefit from good opportunities to improve their teaching skills, and further training helps to sustain and improve pupils' achievement. Levels of support for new members of staff are good and they quickly feel part of the drive for improvement and the aim to provide the best for the pupils.
- There are strong partnerships with parents and carers who are generally extremely supportive. A very large majority of 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 values 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 sport, provides many opportunities for pupils to excel. Ensuring that all pupils are included in all activities is the key value for this term.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. A strong sense of community is encouraged and relationships at all levels are very positive. There is a clear moral code and pupils know right from wrong and usually make the right choices. They manage their own behaviour well and are given plenty of freedom to do this. Pupils are aware of their own culture and are provided with many opportunities in the curriculum to extend their cultural awareness. Spiritual awareness is developed well through assemblies and through Tom's Garden, in memory of a pupil who died, which provides a place for quiet reflection.
- 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, expert practitioners have been brought in to work alongside staff 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' football.
- Safeguarding procedures are very thorough and pupils are kept safe.
- The local authority regards the school as being a school that does not need significant support and so only provides advice as requested.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The members of the governing body are committed to the continued improvement of the school. They know what the school does well and how it can improve. Governors use their understanding of information about how well pupils are doing to compare achievement with what is found nationally and they provide appropriate challenge to leaders when it falls behind. Governors have carried out a review of how effective they are and they regularly attend training to improve their skills. They are fully involved in making sure that good progress is made in improving the quality of teaching and in raising standards. However, this is mainly through reports from the headteacher rather than from visits to the school. Governors carefully track how pupil premium funding is being used and whether it is making enough difference. The setting of targets for teachers is very well established and effective. Governors make sure that any underperformance is tackled and that only the best teachers are rewarded by progression through the pay scales.

## 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>	109023
<b>Local authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	431482

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	235
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Newman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Val Quest
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 May 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01454 294239
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