

# Lapford Community Primary School

Eastington Road, Lapford, Crediton, EX17 6QE

**Inspection dates** 12–13 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- There is a welcoming community atmosphere and the school retains a valued position alongside its partner schools within the Chulmleigh Academy Trust.
- Pupils learn well in all classes, including in the academy Year 6 transitional phase class. This is because teaching is at least good and occasionally even better.
- As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 6.
- The school’s work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding because strong safeguarding procedures are implemented extremely well.
- Diligent staff provide high levels of care and guidance for the pupils.
- Pupils behave well. Pupils’ good attendance reflects their full enjoyment of school.
- The executive headteacher provides strong leadership and is well supported by skilled senior staff.
- Leaders and managers, including a dedicated board of directors, work effectively as a team. They have improved teaching and pupils’ achievement since the previous inspection.
- The wealth of specialist staff expertise and breadth of resources across the academy provide stimulating learning activities for the pupils.
- Recent improvements demonstrate the school has a secure capacity to improve into the future.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure pupils make excellent progress in extending numeracy, spelling and punctuation skills.
- The school has yet to gain the support of some parents in its efforts to lift pupils’ achievement.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited eight lessons and was accompanied by the assistant headteacher for most of these observations.
- The inspector also visited the academy trust's Year 6 transitional unit to observe Year 6 pupils from this school being taught with other Year 6 pupils from the partner primary schools within the academy.
- The inspector observed morning playtime and lunch breaks and also visited an assembly.
- Meetings were held with members of the school council and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes.
- The inspector also met with academy directors.
- The inspector held meetings with school and academy staff, including senior leaders.
- The inspector received eight staff questionnaires. The inspector also spoke informally with a number of parents as they brought and collected their children from school.
- The inspector took account of 25 parents' responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and undertaking the inspection.
- The inspector received two letters from parents.
- 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 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 much 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 is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well above average.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for children in care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- As a member of the Chulmleigh Academy Trust, the school makes use of alternative provision. This takes the form of Year 6 pupils from this school attending a purpose-built transitional unit to be educated with Year 6 pupils from other schools in the academy. The school has two mixed-year classes on site. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are accommodated in a combined Reception and Years 1 and 2 class. Other pupils are taught in a combined Years 3, 4 and 5 class.
- Since 1 January 2012, the school has been a member of the Chulmleigh Academy Trust, consisting of three other primary schools and one community college.
- One group of academy directors fulfils the governance of all the schools in the trust.
- The academy is led by an executive headteacher supported by two assistant executive headteachers and three deputy executive headteachers.
- An assistant headteacher oversees the day-to-day running of the school.

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

- Make more teaching outstanding so pupils typically make rapid and sustained progress in developing their numeracy, spelling and punctuation skills by:
  - ensuring that these skills are emphasised and systematically developed as pupils move through the school
  - making sure that pupils learn basic number facts securely.
- Improve school links with parents, particularly to restore the partnership with those parents who currently have concerns about the steps taken to educate Year 6 pupils off site.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards have risen rapidly since the previous inspection. From below average starting points, pupils reached broadly average levels of attainment in the Key Stage 2 tests in 2013. Standards continue to rise with an increasing number of pupils, including the most able, exceeding the levels of attainment expected for their age, especially in Years 2 and 5.
- There are too few pupils currently in Year 6 to make valid comparisons about their attainment in English and mathematics with other pupils nationally.
- Children join the Reception class with skills below those typical for their age, particularly in communication and self-confidence. They settle in quickly and make good progress.
- Evidence from pupils' books, responses in class and the school's own information on progress show that pupils continue to make at least good and increasingly better progress in literacy and mathematics. This is the case in all year groups, including Year 6 pupils in the transition unit and for pupils joining later than the usual time from other schools.
- Across the school, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are also making good progress because their needs are checked carefully and met effectively.
- In this school and in the academy Year 6 transition unit, the pupil premium funding is used well to support individual pupils and the gap with others is narrowing. For example, additional assistance enables them to achieve as well as other pupils. Numbers are too small to comment on the attainment of these pupils in national tests.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills and, increasingly, their ability to write expressively are developed very effectively. For example, pupils in Year 6 showed a good level of understanding when discussing solutions in science.
- Pupils' achievement is not outstanding because the levels of pupils' numeracy, spelling and punctuation skills vary too much. Pupils achieve well in reading. A successful step-by-step approach to the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) begins in Reception and continues through the school. Results in the national phonics screening checks at the end of Year 1 have been above average since the previous inspection.
- Reading is an integral part of learning for all year groups of pupils and across all subjects. Pupils' reading skills also receive an additional boost from strong parental support at home.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in English and mathematics is typically at least good and sometimes better; it has improved since the previous inspection
- For example, all teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively, value pupils' efforts and sustain very supportive relationships to underpin good learning. In Reception, for example, the teacher's promotion of warm, encouraging relationships rapidly lifts the children's confidence and progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants encourage pupils to think carefully and to be bold in expressing their ideas. As a result, boosted by interested adults and their peers, pupils confidently share and improve their ideas and learn successfully. For example, during English in the Years 3, 4 and 5 class, the pupils' answers to the teacher's questions clearly showed them improving their ability to use brackets and sub-titles in their factual descriptions.
- By these means, all pupils, including the most able pupils, are taught how to think for themselves and to build on what they already know. Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those receiving pupil premium support benefit from extra adult assistance and have their ideas equally valued.
- All staff, often aided by volunteers, teach phonics and develop pupils' reading skills effectively. These enrich the pupils' ability to read for enjoyment and to support learning in all classes.

Teachers further extend the pupils' reading and, in particular, their imaginative and descriptive writing skills strongly across the range of subjects.

- Teachers use displays creatively to celebrate pupils' work, especially their imaginative writing, for example, about mythical creatures in Years 3, 4 and 5. Pupils appreciate and are guided by the displays, which adorn the walls in classrooms and corridors, and these help them to become motivated to achieve even more.
- Investigations in science are used successfully to enthuse pupils to find things out for themselves. For example, during floating and sinking tests in Reception and Years 1, 2 and 3, the teacher successfully challenged pupils to think about why some containers held more weight than others.
- Teachers have improved the way they develop pupils' basic numeracy and literacy skills. For example, teachers give pupils clear oral advice and written guidance in the form of targets, which show what they have to do next to improve.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because the teaching of number facts, punctuation and spellings is not consistent enough and this slows the development of pupils' skills.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils, parents and staff are positive about the standards of behaviour, including of Year 6 pupils at the transition unit. The school has been effective in promoting positive relationships, and behaviour has improved well since the previous inspection.
- Pupils show positive attitudes in lessons and are keen to learn. All pupils respond particularly well when questioned or prompted directly by adults.
- Pupils love explaining their ideas and share them happily with each other to enrich their learning. For example, the youngest pupils were enthralled in making Mother's Day cards and handbags, exploring materials and extending their creativity.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because, very occasionally, a few pupils tend to lose concentration when not supported closely by an adult. They begin to chatter about issues not related to their learning and this constrains their progress.
- Typically, pupils behave extremely well when moving around the school, during assemblies, and at breaks and lunchtimes. Pupils trained as 'sports leaders' are particularly caring in supporting younger pupils in a range of fun activities.
- All pupils play and relate warmly towards each other, joyfully spinning hoops, riding on skateboards or happily observing bees collecting nectar from the raised flower beds. Pupils are polite to and very caring of each other.
- 'We have lots of friends and learning is fun here', was one typical comment that received much agreement from other members of the school council and mirrored the views of Year 6 pupils. Such positive attitudes have contributed to the better progress now being made.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. This applies equally to all parts of the school and at the Year 6 transition unit.
- All staff follow carefully considered procedures and are consistent in providing high quality care for all pupils. As a result, pupils say that they feel very safe and parents agree that their children are well looked after.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection reported that there is no bullying at school. One remarked that, 'A few pupils can be a bit silly at times'. Pupils are clear about the forms bullying can take such as name-calling and cyber bullying. They know how to stay safe when using computers and understand not to talk to people they do not know and to ask a parent or teacher when not sure.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above average, showing their increased enjoyment of school. The pupils' positive attitudes to school also reflect the good partnership between teachers and parents in supporting homework to enrich pupils' learning.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The executive headteacher leads a strong drive for improvement. He is well supported by an experienced group of senior staff across the academy and by a determinedly focused board of directors. Working as a team they have brought good improvements in teaching and in pupils' achievement and behaviour since the previous inspection.
- The future development of the school is carefully considered within academy action plans, which are committed to raising standards by improving teaching and learning facilities and activities for the pupils. Although improving, pupils' achievements are not yet high enough to demonstrate outstanding leadership.
- Leaders at all levels, including middle leaders, demonstrate a clear understanding of roles and work effectively. They willingly share expertise and check school performance rigorously to sustain a strong capacity to improve. Parents, pupils and staff consulted during the inspection recognise the good quality of teaching and pupils' progress typically seen in all parts of the school.
- Leaders and managers acknowledge that the decision to raise standards by educating Year 6 pupils off site has weakened relationships with some parents. Focused meetings and regular newsletters are keeping parents informed about learning activities and their children's progress. However, efforts to re-engage with all parents in sharing the vision for the future development of the school still continue.
- Senior leaders undertake rigorous checks of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, hold staff to account for their performance and develop their skills well by providing regular training. There are close links between staff salary progression and school and pupils' development needs. Senior managers also focus strongly on developing staff skills through sharing good practice.
- Leaders and managers make good use of the wealth of specialist expertise and resources across the academy to secure financial stability and to ensure that statutory requirements are fully met. Thorough safeguarding checks, such as vetting of staff and child protection procedures, and dedicated, caring staff keep pupils very safe.
- Consistency in practice across the academy also secures equal opportunity and eliminates discrimination. Support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and for pupils aided by the pupil premium is used effectively to enable them to achieve as well as others.
- Staff develop close links with partner schools, for example to see a visiting author, and events such as 'World Book Day' promote the school as a caring community. Teachers provide stimulating topic studies and assembly themes to further promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The additional funding for sport and physical education is used well. The academy's own coaches are joined by outside specialists, for example in golf, volleyball and dance, to develop staff skills and widen the sports available to the pupils. The school's spacious hall accommodates some of these activities, further increasing the pupils' interest in sports and healthy living.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The academy board of directors is united in its determination to help pupils to thrive and achieve the highest levels of achievement. Directors engage fully in training and build on their expertise so that they are able to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. The board of directors is highly effective in ensuring that the school fully meets its statutory safeguarding requirements. Directors visit the school regularly to see the work of the school at first hand. They question the executive headteacher and senior leaders closely and carefully consider detailed reports from them. By these means directors understand how well pupils achieve when compared with schools across the academy trust and other schools nationally. They challenge school leaders to expect high quality teaching from all teachers. This includes checking to ensure that good teaching is rewarded through salary progression. Directors also ensure that considerations of teachers' performance are linked to areas for development and school improvement. They work effectively with senior staff leaders to make sure that support is provided swiftly to tackle pupils' previous underperformance and to quicken pupils' progress.

Directors consider how additional funds such as the pupil premium are allocated and question senior staff to ensure that they are used effectively to improve pupils' achievement.

## 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>	137780
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	426779

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>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	52
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Barber
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Michael Johnson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17–18 January 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01363 83292
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