

Wedmore First School Academy

Blackford Road, Wedmore, Somerset, BS28 4BS

Inspection dates 3–4 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	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.

- All groups of pupils are achieving well. Attainment is above average in both key stages.
- Most pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils benefit from teaching that is consistently good. Teachers are particularly effective in devising activities that capture pupils' interests.
- Reading is taught well so that pupils quickly become fluent readers and develop a love of books.
- Teaching is effective in the Early Years Foundation Stage and children make good progress.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy all the school has to offer. They have positive attitudes to their learning and try hard in lessons.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school because the school provides a caring and safe environment in which to learn.
- The dedicated headteacher, senior leaders and governors are an effective team. They have been successful in making improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils have many memorable experiences, including those provided by the wide variety of enrichment activities. These contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is not yet outstanding because, in a few lessons, some pupils could learn at a faster rate.
- Checks on the impact of teaching by middle leaders do not focus sharply enough on how well different groups of pupils learn.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of teaching across the school in a variety of subjects, including eight joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to classrooms, the dining hall, the breakfast club and the playground. They also observed two assemblies.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors and the school’s leaders. Also, the lead inspector spoke with an external consultant who has been supporting the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 54 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and written correspondence, as well as consulting informally with parents before the start of the school day. They took account of the 26 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents including the school’s improvement plans. They examined information on pupils’ current progress, planning and monitoring files, minutes of the governing body meetings, the plans for use of the school sport fund and records relating to special educational needs, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspectors heard pupils read, talked to them in lessons and evaluated samples of their work.

Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

George Long

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Wedmore First School Academy converted to become an academy in July 2011. When its predecessor, Wedmore First School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- This school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised in eight classes, some with mixed ages.
- The school provides continuous care for pupils with before- and after-school clubs.
- The large majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding levels by developing teachers' ability to provide the right level of challenge for different groups of pupils throughout lessons.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that middle leaders evaluate the teaching in terms of its impact on the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils of different abilities.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children join the school with the skills that are typical for their age. They make good progress, especially in their reading. They start Year 1 as confident learners, with the very large majority having the skills and understanding expected for their age, with some exceeding these.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time pupils leave the school in Year 4, attainment is above average, especially in reading. Faster progress in mathematics this year has eliminated the dip in attainment in 2013 in Key Stage 1. As a result, more pupils are attaining above expected levels.
- Pupils are keen to succeed and find the learning activities interesting. They are usually clear about the purpose of their learning and are making good progress over time in all subjects. They like the way teachers help them to know what they have to do next to improve their work.
- The most able pupils attain relatively well, especially in reading. However, achievement is not yet outstanding because the levels of progress of the most able are not consistent throughout the school; some pupils could achieve more.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress due to the effective support and well-planned help they receive.
- Pupils supported by additional funding make as good, and sometimes better, progress to their classmates from similar starting points. The numbers of pupils are too few to compare their attainment with others at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4. However, gaps in their attainment are narrowing because of the effective extra support they are given.
- Year 1 pupils performed above the national average in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds that letters make) check in 2013. This reflects the greater emphasis the school has placed on the teaching of these skills, so that pupils quickly become fluent readers. Older pupils speak enthusiastically about different authors and read widely across a range of literature, with good understanding.
- Greater numbers of pupils are taking part in a wider range of sports and competitions supported by the new school sport funding. They have improved their performances in sports such as gymnastics and athletics.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good. It is not yet outstanding as, in a few instances, teachers do not provide the right level of challenge. As a result, not all pupils are achieving as well as they could.
- Overall, pupils learn effectively because teachers plan purposeful learning activities that capture their interests and motivate them to succeed. The outdoor environment is used to good effect to enhance pupils' experiences, for example when studying mini-beasts or growing their own food.
- Teachers check on pupils' progress consistently in lessons, often adapting activities to speed up the learning and extend pupils' thinking. This was evident in a mathematics lesson in Year 2 when, having solved a range of problems, pupils were required to explain their methods for finding fractions of numbers.
- Pupils are given clear guidance about how to improve their work. Teachers allow pupils appropriate time to make these improvements to their work. This is particularly effective in writing where progress is getting faster.
- Teachers and additional adults are skilled at providing the right amount of support needed for pupils to overcome any difficulties. The work for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is set at the correct level and this is helping them to make good progress.
- Pupils supported by additional funding are benefiting from extra guidance and small-group work so they are making good and sometimes faster progress than their classmates.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children enjoy a bright and lively environment that encourages them to explore and develop their own learning activities. The systematic teaching of the sounds that letters make is ensuring that children develop their reading skills well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Typically, pupils are polite, friendly and respectful of each other. They are cooperative, settle to work quickly and appreciate all the school has to offer.
- Relationships throughout the school are effective and secure. The school is effective in fostering good relations and tackling discrimination. The playground is a harmonious place because the pupils have plenty to do, with a wide range of play and sports equipment.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because of occasional lapses in concentration in lessons by a few pupils when they fidget and waste some time.
- Pupils, their parents and the staff are positive about standards of behaviour. The school's records show that instances of poor behaviour are very few. Pupils are motivated by the rewards system and particularly like the 'gotcha' token that acknowledges their efforts.
- Pupils enjoy a variety of roles and responsibilities in school, for example as playground leaders and assembly monitors.
- Pupils are clear that bullying is rare, although they are knowledgeable about the forms this can take, such as cyber bullying and verbal bullying. They know how to manage minor problems for themselves. They have complete confidence in the adults to sort things out when necessary.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. All the parents who completed the online questionnaire, or who wrote or spoke to inspectors, agree.
- Pupils have good strategies for keeping themselves safe from potential hazards. They are well prepared for maintaining their personal well-being through appropriate training, for example in water safety and e-safety.
- School leaders have worked hard to encourage regular attendance and reduce any unnecessary absence. As a consequence, attendance rates and punctuality show improvement this year and are just above the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- The dedicated headteacher, senior leaders and governors communicate a high ambition for the school. This ambition is supported by all staff and morale is good. Leaders judge the performance of the school accurately and use this information wisely when planning priorities for improvement.
- The headteacher and her leadership team work well together to drive through the necessary improvements. They check the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress regularly throughout the year. This helps them to set challenging targets to promote faster progress rates for different groups of pupils.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because leaders have not secured a high enough proportion of outstanding teaching across the school. This has not enabled all pupils, particularly the most able, to achieve as well as they should.
- Middle leaders have taken steps to help staff improve their work, by providing a range of training activities. However, they do not check on the quality of the teaching precisely enough. This means they are not clear about the impact on the achievement of different groups of pupils of differing abilities.
- Teachers have challenging targets for improving their performance which focus precisely on the achievement of different groups of pupils. They know what constitutes good practice and how their pay progresses only when their targets have been met.
- The school has commissioned some valuable support from external consultants to help leaders when judging the school's effectiveness and improve what the school provides for pupils.
- Pupils' learning experiences across a range of subjects are varied and memorable, particularly in the use of the outdoor environment. The school provides a wide variety of enrichment activities

that contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Checks on the plans for the use of the school sport funding show that more pupils are participating in a wider range of sporting activities, such as multi-skills for younger pupils, than previously. Staff are able to develop their skills alongside sports specialists to help sustain these activities.
- Parents are very positive about the work of the school. They are appreciative of the openness of staff and the opportunities to become more involved in their children's learning.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted at all times and there are no recorded incidents of harassment in recent years. The school tailors the support well for those pupils supported by additional funding in order to raise their achievement.
- All statutory requirements for safeguarding are met and systems are managed efficiently. Staff training in areas such as child protection is up to date.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are committed to providing the best possible education for all pupils and receive good quality information about how well pupils are doing from the headteacher. They have a clear understanding of how the school's performance data compare with similar and all schools nationally. Consequently, they are able to ask leaders challenging questions about pupils' achievement. Increasingly, they are involved in checking on improvement plans and the school's work for themselves. They know about the quality of the teaching through their visits to school. They develop their knowledge and skills through good quality training provided by the local authority. They know how the performance of staff is being managed. They know how teachers' pay is aligned to good performance and how any underperformance is being tackled.
 - Governors manage their budget effectively, including the additional funds to support eligible pupils and sports development. They know how the funds are allocated and the impact they are having on pupils' achievement and physical health.

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	136841
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	439622

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Reeson
Headteacher	Jackie Hipwell
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01934 712643
Fax number	01934 713586
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