

Halberton Primary School

Church Path, Halberton, Tiverton, EX16 7AT

Inspection dates 8–9 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- The school has improved rapidly since its previous inspection. Pupils' achievement is now good and the school is very well placed to improve further.
- Teaching is consistently good. This ensures all pupils make good progress and achieve well. Teachers are particularly effective in devising activities that engage and capture pupils' interests.
- Pupils who are at risk of not doing so well, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well.
- There are rigorous systems in place to check on pupils' progress. Teachers understand well the abilities and needs of all pupils.
- Good links with pre-school ensure that children settle quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enjoy learning and make good progress.
- The school is welcoming and pupils love the work they do. This is reflected in their good behaviour and attitudes towards each other and their learning. Pupils attend regularly, feel safe, are happy and are proud of their school.
- The headteacher provides the school with committed and passionate leadership. All members of staff and governors share her strong ambition for continual improvement.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have successfully challenged leaders and teachers to improve. They have supported the school very well through a period of rapid change. This has resulted in secure improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- At times, progress is hindered when teachers do not move pupils on to harder work quickly enough in lessons.
- Teachers do not check sufficiently on the progress made by pupils when they are working with additional adults in lessons.
- The quality of teachers' written feedback to pupils is not as good in mathematics as it is in English.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited eight lessons and observed three teachers, including some small-group teaching of sounds that letters make (phonics). The headteacher joined the inspector to observe several lessons.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work in their books, and spoke to some about their work and other aspects of school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and members of staff. He discussed pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy and the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The inspector examined a range of school documentation including records of the quality of teaching, the school's information on pupils' progress, the sport funding action plan, the school improvement plan and records of behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor. The inspector spoke with a school improvement adviser who works with the school.
- The inspector took account of the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire. The inspector spoke to several parents at the start of the school day. Two letters from parents were also received during the inspection. However, only five responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were submitted, which is too few to be considered.

Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Halberton is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Reception Year are taught together with pupils in Years 1 in Class 1.
- Pupils in Years 2 and 3 are taught together in Class 2 and Years 4, 5 and 6 are taught together in Class 3.
- The local pre-school is located within the school grounds and is independently managed, so was not inspected as part of this inspection.
- All pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are on school action is above average. The proportion of those on school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is below average. This funding supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or are looked after.
- In 2013, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is a member of the Tiverton Cooperative Learning Partnership, comprising of 10 primary schools, a high school and a college.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding by ensuring that teachers:
 - move pupils, especially the more able, on more quickly to harder work when they show that they understand what they are doing
 - check the progress being made by pupils who are working with additional adults in lessons more regularly
 - improve the quality of their written feedback when they mark pupils' work in mathematics, making sure pupils use this information to help improve their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement has rapidly improved since the previous inspection. This is as a result of substantially improved teaching at the school. In all classes, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently good.
- When children join the Early Years Foundation Stage they arrive with skills and understanding that are typically similar to those expected for their age. However, within the small numbers who start each year, abilities vary widely. Effective close working with the pre-school makes sure that children move into Reception with ease. The shared outside space is used well and provides a stimulating environment where children learn together well, developing good social skills from an early age. Good progress is made in the Reception Year and children move into Key Stage 1 well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Highly effective teaching is proving successful in redressing the underachievement caused by some inadequate teaching at the school prior to the previous inspection. Teaching has been improved quickly since then. Nevertheless, not enough time was available for it to have a positive impact for pupils leaving Year 6 in 2013. Consequently, their attainment was below average. However, standards are continuing to rise. Increasing numbers of pupils, including the most able, currently at the school are attaining above their expected levels in both English and mathematics.
- Pupils' achievement in English has improved more quickly than it has in mathematics and is why achievement is not outstanding. However, the school is addressing this effectively by working with schools in the learning partnership. Together, they have developed a programme to ensure pupils learn basic mathematical skills systematically as they progress through the school. This has already successfully closed the attainment gap between English and mathematics for many pupils.
- The results in the Year 1 check on pupils' understanding of letters and sounds (phonics) are consistently above the national average. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and do so with confidence. Pupils are able to read unfamiliar words, using their phonic skills well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Teaching assistants complement the work done in lessons well with support activities for individuals and small groups.
- The progress made by the very small number of pupils who benefit from the additional funding is good. From their individual starting points, progress in both English and mathematics is at least similar, and often better, when compared to other pupils.
- Increased numbers of pupils are taking part in a wider range of sports. Gymnastics is being taught in all classes and pupils' confidence in the sport is improving. All pupils participated in sports day and they say that are proud to represent the school in sports events.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has rapidly improved since the previous inspection and is consistently good. Evidence in pupils' books shows that good teaching in reading, writing and mathematics has now been in place for some time.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teacher makes sure that children are able to experience a wide range of stimulating activities. Children make good use of activities that reflect their current work. Two boys acting as car mechanics pretended to repair a class bicycle as part of their current work on transport. When the teacher spoke to them about his broken down car, they showed a good understanding of vehicles that demonstrates their good achievement.
- Teachers work hard and plan exciting work to inspire the pupils. For example, pupils in Class 3 were writing their own scene to be included in the end of year production of *The Time Lord*.
- Teachers make sure work given to pupils is set at the correct level. This ensures that they are

able to make good progress and achieve well. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils, especially those who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

Teachers plan lessons effectively to include teaching assistants and additional adults, but do not always check the progress of pupils they are working with. Consequently, some pupils are not always being challenged enough to do better, limiting their achievement.

- Teachers check on pupils' progress regularly and adapt the work when necessary to speed up the learning. However, teaching is not yet outstanding. This is because sometimes teachers do not move pupils, especially the most able, on to harder work quickly enough when they have understood what they are doing.
- Teachers have high expectations and place a great emphasis on improving the standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This has resulted in improved progress being made across the school. The work that pupils have completed in their books is very well presented, demonstrating their good attitudes towards their learning. Parents, spoken to by the inspector, and pupils agree that teaching is good; pupils say that they enjoy school.
- Pupils' work is regularly and accurately marked. Teachers provide written comments to help pupils improve their work that are welcomed and used well by the pupils. However, the quality of the written comments, to show where improvement is necessary, is much better in English than in mathematics. This sometimes limits pupils' progress in mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are very considerate towards each other, their teachers and other adults.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. They are proud of their school and are keen to represent it and take part in activities in the wider community. Pupils value highly how well they are treated at school. The comment from one pupil who said that their 'class is like my second family' reflects how well pupils get on with each other. All ages mix together well, both around the school and in the playground.
- The atmosphere around the school is happy and welcoming. Pupils are polite and friendly. They arrive at lessons promptly, ready to learn, organise the equipment they need swiftly and quietly, engage with their work and settle quickly.
- Pupils understand the school's high expectations for acceptable behaviour and recognise how the red and yellow card system works. They understand that poor behaviour does not go unchecked. However, behaviour is not yet outstanding because of occasional lapses in concentration in lessons by a few pupils who fidget and waste some time.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school, a view shared by all parents spoken to by the inspector. Systems and procedures to safeguard children are robustly managed and regularly checked by governors.
- Pupils fully understand the different forms of bullying, such as cyber bullying and racist name calling. School records indicate that only a very small number of incidents of poor behaviour have had to be recorded. However, teachers successfully resolved these quickly.
- All parents spoken to by the inspector and pupils confirm that bullying is not an issue at the school. Pupils report that they have confidence in the adults to help them if it were necessary.
- Pupils are keen to contribute to the school. Pupils are using a budget to make items to raise funds at the upcoming summer fair. Year 5 pupils' views were used to help review the school's behaviour policy.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, supported her small team of middle leaders and governors, provides the school with strong, effective leadership and clear direction. There is a shared understanding that in order to improve standards further they need to strive to continually improve the quality of

teaching across the school. This has led to the rapid improvements seen in teaching and pupils' achievement. However, the school recognises that the quality of teaching is not yet outstanding to ensure that pupils' achievement is consistently strong over time.

- Leaders check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress regularly during the year through pupil progress meetings. This information is used to set challenging targets to promote faster rates of progress for different groups of pupils. Consequently, any gaps remaining in attainment between different groups of pupils are small and rapidly closing.
- Middle leaders, including those in charge of subject areas, undertake regular checks on performance across the school. Regular lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work take place. Leaders use information from these to check on teachers' targets and performance. This has resulted in a substantial, and rapid, improvement in the quality of teaching, which is now consistently good. Teachers have benefited from some effective additional training linked to whole-school improvement goals.
- Teachers have appropriately challenging targets for improving their performance, which focus on pupils' achievement and their responsibilities. Teachers know what constitutes good practice and how their pay progresses only when their targets are met.
- Pupils' learning experiences across a range of subjects are varied and memorable. For example, the visit from 'Zoolab' provided pupils with a hands-on experience and understanding of exotic animals. The school provides a wide array of enrichment activities, such as the recent involvement in the Devon Mix music festival. This contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted at all times and discrimination is not tolerated. The school tailors any additional support effectively for those pupils supported by additional funding in order to raise their achievement. Parents are highly supportive and appreciative of the school.
- The school is making good use of the additional sport funding. More pupils are participating in a wider range of sporting activities. Regular swimming lessons are provided for Year 6 pupils who are unable to swim.
- The local authority provided some additional support to help the school improve following the previous inspection. This has now reduced and only light touch support is required as it recognises the rapid improvement that has been secured.
- The school has recently had the systems and procedures in place to safeguard children checked by the local authority. All areas that were identified to need improvement have been addressed fully. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and robust.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has rapidly improved its capacity to hold leaders to account since the previous inspection. This has been achieved through some high quality training and the appointment of some additional governors. Governors have been instrumental in supporting the headteacher in her drive to improve the quality of teaching and secure the rapid improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. The governing body has successfully challenged poor teaching and is committed to providing the best possible education for all pupils. The governors have a clear understanding of how the school compares with similar schools and all schools nationally. Consequently, they are able to knowledgeably question the headteacher, and other leaders, well about the achievement of different groups of pupils. They are fully involved in the process of checking how well the school is doing and the school development plans, understanding strengths and areas for improvement well. They know how the performance of staff is managed and have been instrumental in rewarding good performance. They make close checks on how additional funding for sport and other additional funding is used and the impact on improving pupils' outcomes. They make sure that statutory responsibilities, such as safeguarding requirements, are fully in place and effective.

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	113338
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	431667

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Steele
Headteacher	Helen Eversett
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 September 2012
Telephone number	01884 820585
Fax number	N/A
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