

St Cuthbert's Church of England Infant School

Keward Walk, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1TZ

Inspection dates

8–9 July 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 make good progress. By the time they leave at the end of Key Stage 1 they are achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils say that the best thing about school is the learning.
- Teaching provides stimulating and interesting activities across the range of subjects that motivate pupils well.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils know how to get on with each other and they encourage each other well in lessons.
- Leadership and management have secured good teaching and an accurate system for checking pupils' progress. Teachers are made responsible for the progress that pupils make.
- Parents say that their children are doing well at the school and appreciate the quality of the teachers and teaching assistants in educating and caring for their children.
- Governors have been a stabilising factor in the school at a time of significant change.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching does not always make sure that all groups of pupils know exactly what to do to succeed in all learning activities.
- Teachers with subject responsibilities do not have enough time to check improvements in teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons. Two of these were jointly observed with the headteacher. In addition, short visits were made to classrooms and the inspector listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, subject leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, two other governors, the governor with responsibility for safeguarding, the school's external adviser and a group of pupils. The inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 17 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and two letters from parents. The responses to the staff questionnaires were also analysed.
- The inspector looked at school documents, including school information relating to checks on pupils' progress, planning for school improvement, the monitoring of teaching and learning, records relating to behaviour and attendance, minutes of the governing body and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Janet Dinsmore, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school became an academy in November 2012. When its predecessor school, St Cuthbert's Church of England Infants School, was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2009 it was judged to be good.
- There have been two headteachers since conversion to an academy. The current headteacher is leaving and governors have just made a new appointment of a substantive headteacher for September 2014.
- This school has five classes, three of which cater for a mix of age groups.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium (additional government funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after) is average.
- Almost all the pupils are of White British origin.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average. There is a lower than average proportion supported at school action.
- There is a pre-school and children's centre on site, both of which are subject to separate inspections.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that a greater proportion is outstanding, by making sure that all groups of pupils know exactly what to do to succeed in all learning activities.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that teachers who have responsibilities for subjects across the school have opportunities to check the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with a broad range of skills. For over half of them, skills are below that which would be expected for their age, especially in communication and literacy. Children make good progress in the Reception year. They communicate well, the more able being able to explain what they are writing and how to check their work by reading it through.
- There is a wide range of ability in each cohort and all pupils make good progress in reading. They learn the links between letters and sounds (phonics) well and can use these skills successfully. In Year 1, pupils can work out unfamiliar words. By the time they leave at the end of Year 2 they are competent readers, following written instructions from the teacher well.
- Pupils make good progress in writing, particularly those in Year 1 who did not reach the expected level at the end of the Reception year. More-able pupils in Year 2 can write accurately, independently and confidently, beginning to use paragraphs and punctuation to structure their writing.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. For example, in Year 1 they can apply their knowledge of direction and turning to programming mini robots, whilst in Year 2 they are confident in using coordinates to find positions on a map.
- Pupils can recall basic number facts and use these in calculations. Achievement in mathematics has improved in the last year and there is now an above average proportion achieving at the higher level.
- There is no gap in achievement between those eligible for additional funding and their peers at this school. The small gap that was evident at the end of the academic year in 2013 has narrowed to be negligible.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. There are examples of greater progress in reading because these pupils are given the help they need to catch up.
- More-able pupils are given work that challenges and deepens their understanding and they learn to apply their knowledge in different subjects. For example, in exploring the habitats at the Avalon Marshes, on their recent trip, the pupils observed many aspects of the wildlife that they then wrote about.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers plan activities at the right level for each group of pupils. Pupils say that work is 'a bit hard' and they are motivated to try hard and succeed. Teachers know exactly when to question and redirect learning when they observe that there may be some misunderstanding.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about how to teach reading, writing and mathematics to this age group. They make sure that, if there is any slowing of progress, pupils can be given the right kind of extra help to catch up.
- Teachers check pupils' progress frequently and accurately so that they can plan the next steps in learning for each group of pupils. They give good feedback to pupils about their work and pupils say that this helps them to improve 'next time they do it'.
- Teachers plan interesting activities that enable pupils to use a range of skills across subjects and make good links, so promoting their spiritual and cultural development. For example, pupils appreciate wildlife and the local environment, as well as having understanding of the Christian Creation story.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage develop good skills of working on their own because they learn well from activities that excite their interest.
- Teaching assistants contribute well to learning in most classes, working well with small groups of pupils. Occasionally some pupils make less progress than they should, within the lesson, because

they do not understand what they should be doing and have to wait their turn to ask for help.

- Teaching is not outstanding because groups of pupils do not always know exactly what they have to do to succeed in all activities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils respond quickly to instructions and are enthusiastic in lessons. Behaviour is not outstanding because, occasionally, when the pace of learning slows, pupils are not sure exactly what to do and some become distracted.
- Attendance is average and has improved since the school became an academy. It is checked frequently and the school has good procedures for working with parents to make sure their children attend regularly.
- Relationships are strong throughout the school and pupils are well cared for. Adults know pupils really well and there have been marked improvements in behaviour for some individuals. Their families have also been well supported by the parent and family support adviser.
- Pupils say that when disagreements occur they are sorted out by adults and bullying is almost non-existent. They understand the Christian values and beliefs of the school, particularly in valuing each other. Mutual respect successfully promotes equality of opportunity in the school. There is no discrimination.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school has reviewed staffing and procedures, particularly at lunchtime, as a result of an incident that occurred. Pupils know that they are safe and that adults are able to help them and will listen to them if they have any concerns.
- Pupils know how to play safely on the good variety of equipment provided in the playground. They know that rules, of the Forest School for example, are to make sure that they are safe.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders have made sure that the quality of teaching is good and there is no underperformance. There have been recent improvements in the teaching of mathematics, particularly for the more-able pupils.
- Improvement plans are focused on what needs to be done to raise pupils' achievement further and as a result of effective analysis of the progress that pupils are making.
- Teachers' performance is well managed. Teachers are appropriately made responsible for, and rewarded for, the progress of pupils and their contribution to the school in subject leadership roles. Subject leaders do not have enough opportunity to check the quality of teaching in the subjects for which they are responsible.
- Additional funding is used well for additional support for reading and mathematics. This has resulted in eliminating the gap in achievement for the pupils to whom it applies and their peers.
- The range of subjects is good and provides well for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils have regular opportunities to participate in Forest School activities in the school grounds and learn about stories through drama and music.
- The additional primary school sport funding is used to provide good physical education teaching for all pupils in the school and makes sure that they understand how to be fit and healthy.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements within the school.
- A few parents have well-founded concerns about the instability in headship and governance since the school became an academy, especially in the last year, but are also aware that this has not had a negative effect on their children's progress.
- There are good links with the parish church. They contribute to providing collective worship on a regular basis, as well as helping members of the governing body to maintain the Christian character of the school.

- The governors and senior leaders of this stand-alone academy converter make effective use of their partnership with a local secondary school to ensure that it meets financial reporting requirements. Governors engaged appropriate support for the current headteacher in making accurate checks on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.
- There are links with local schools for subject leaders so that good practice can be shared and this has supported the improvements in mathematics and phonics teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The change to academy status has brought about changes to the personnel on the governing body. A few are new to governance in an academy trust and have attended appropriate training for their new roles. All governors bring a range of expertise which they use to benefit the pupils. At a time of significant change for the school they have offered good support and challenge. They have ensured that the good levels of achievement and teaching found prior to the school becoming an academy have been sustained, and in some areas improved.
 - Governors receive good information from school leaders and are aware of what the school does well. They know that pupils' achievements, especially in mathematics, have risen. Governors are aware that additional funding has been spent to make sure that eligible pupils receive extra support when they need it in reading and mathematics so that there is no gap between their achievement and that of their classmates. They know about the quality of teaching and the performance of teachers through their regular visits, and also ensure that systems to improve the quality of teaching are implemented. Governors know how well the school is performing and how it compares with others nationally.

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	138942
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	440172

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bob Cross
Headteacher	David Mumford
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01749 672591
Fax number	01749 670769
Email address	sch.395@educ.somerset.gov.uk

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