

# Oakhill Church of England Primary School

Oakhill, Radstock, Somerset, BA3 5AQ

**Inspection dates** 10–11 September 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress. Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are above average and this reflects good achievement from their differing starting points.
- Teaching is good. It is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6, where pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and respond enthusiastically to high levels of challenge.
- Pupils are provided with a stimulating range of activities, both in and out of the classroom. This enthuses pupils and strongly promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The early years provision is good. Children settle quickly into school life and make good progress in the Reception Year.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school's close links with parents and the pupils' excellent relationships with staff and with each other engender their love of school and very good attendance.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe and show positive attitudes to learning that help them to achieve well.
- The skilled headteacher is assisted well by effective staff and a strong governing body. There is strong capacity for further improvement. This is seen in the way the staff team is carefully trained and developed to sustain effective teaching and rich learning experiences that underpin pupils' good achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The speaking, reading and writing skills of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are not always developed consistently.
- At times, when checking pupils' writing, teachers in Year 1 do not give pupils clear enough guidance on how to improve.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited ten lessons. He was accompanied by the headteacher for most of these sessions.
- The inspector observed morning and lunch breaks and also observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with a representative group of pupils and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes.
- The inspector met with governors and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of 58 parents' responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and undertaking the inspection. He spoke informally with a number of parents as they brought and collected their children to and from school. The inspector also considered two letters from parents.
- Meetings were held with school staff, including senior leaders, and 14 staff questionnaires were received and considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own information and checks on pupils' progress and the planning and quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspector also examined records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding policy, procedures and practice. He also considered the school's sports premium action plan.
- During this inspection, the inspector asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement for children looked after, on free school meals and the most able pupils. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of support services.

## Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is broadly average overall.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. 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 number of eligible Year 6 pupils in 2014 was so small that it is not possible to compare performance with other groups.
- There is an increasing proportion of pupils joining the school at other than the usual times.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

- Raise the attainment and quicken the progress of pupils in speaking, reading and writing as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 by:
  - developing pupils' ability to talk about their work and to express their ideas and views about their learning
  - providing more stimulating and readily available opportunities for pupils to develop their reading and writing skills across the range of learning activities
  - ensuring that teachers always give pupils clear guidance about how to develop their particular skills and improve in a variety of ways, especially when marking their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides committed and effective leadership for the school and is ably supported by a closely knit and skilled team of leaders and staff. They work well with the capable, experienced governors to sustain a welcoming community atmosphere where pupils can thrive personally, socially and academically.
- Most parents welcome this approach, as seen by the large majority who recommended the school to other parents and carers in their responses to the questionnaire.
- All leaders and the governing body check school performance effectively. They all contribute to the well-considered school development plan and make sure that actions are carried out to drive improvement. This is evident in the extended facilities and children's achievements in the Early Years Foundation Stage in recent years, which also reflect a secure capacity to improve into the future.
- The headteacher ensures that considerations of teachers' performance, training opportunities and pay are clearly linked to how well pupils achieve. The skills of leaders in charge of subjects have been developed well since the previous inspection.
- Improved leadership has led to earlier and more rigorous checks on pupils' progress to tackle gaps in previous learning and to prevent pupils from falling behind. This is seen, for example, in the pupils' improved skills in linking letters and the sounds they make and the better progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Every opportunity is being taken to promote equality of opportunity and tackle any potential discrimination.
- The range of learning activities offers pupils a good mix of challenge and fun in learning. It is broad and balanced and has been carefully updated and planned to promote effective learning. Teachers frequently enrich pupils' learning through topics, which link subjects together. Studies such as 'Planet Earth' and 'Rules', which are also developed during collective worship, strongly promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, these include discussions about differing cultures and religious beliefs, which also help to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- The school uses additional government funding effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to their classmates.
- The school is using the new sports funding well to enrich its already effective provision. Specialist coaches are now employed to develop staff and pupils' skills across a wider range of sports. This activity is carefully checked by the coordinator of physical education and reported fully to governors.
- School records show that the teaching of physical education has improved, as have pupils' participation rates and performance, for example in netball, rugby and cross-country running. Pupils' skills in hockey too have been significantly improved, especially by enabling pupils to visit and use better facilities at another school.
- The local authority provides data to show how pupils' performance at the end of Years 2 and 6 at the school compares with that of other schools, both nationally and across the authority. This information includes data about the performance of looked after children, those entitled to free school meals and the most able children. The local authority provides good training opportunities for governors and clerks to governing bodies, enabling them to fulfil their duties, including checking pupils' performance. Inspection evidence shows that the local authority does not know the school well enough and has does not provide enough challenge to help drive further improvement. Therefore the impact of the local authority in helping the school over time to improve the performance of pupils requires improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are ambitious for the school and are committed to its improvement. They are well organised and well led. Governors are diligent in providing effective support and are rigorous in checking that staff leaders are doing their job well. Governors ensure that their training is up to date, including in using information about how well pupils are doing. As a result, for example, governors know that data on pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 continue to compare well with attainment of pupils in similar schools nationally. Governors visit the school regularly to observe the work of the school and to discuss learning with staff and with pupils. They know that teaching is effective and have been careful to ensure that newly appointed staff have the skills that best meet the school's and pupils' needs. Governors ensure that staff performance is carefully considered so that good teaching is rewarded and any underperformance, should it occur, is tackled swiftly and effectively. Even though there are very few pupils receiving additional government funding, governors are particularly challenging to school leaders in making sure that these pupils achieve as well as their peers. Governors also work closely with the headteacher in fully meeting statutory requirements, including all aspects of safeguarding pupils.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils relate extremely well toward each other and adults. These warm relationships promote their enjoyment of school and consistently well above average attendance.
- Pupils show pride in their school and use its facilities respectfully. For example, they are proud of their inviting library facilities and use the stairs carefully and considerately.
- Pupils show good attitudes to learning in lessons, and particularly enjoy working in pairs to share ideas. The pupils' excellent contributions to lessons in Years 5 and 6 often lead to outstanding learning and progress.
- All pupils behave well and develop self-confidence in learning as they move through the school. These outcomes stem from the way staff promote excellent relationships with the pupils by valuing their efforts and promoting their enjoyment of learning. As a result, lessons are not disrupted and good learning is sustained.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including racist and cyber-bullying. They are well aware of how to keep themselves and each other safe.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare because 'Everyone cares about each other and gets on well together.' There have been no exclusions due to poor behaviour for many years.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe at school and parents who spoke to the inspector appreciate the way their children are kept safe at school.
- All staff follow consistent and effective procedures to keep pupils safe from risk, including during trips out of school and outdoor play. For example, pupils told the inspector that if some 'get too excited' during ball games at break times, either a caring adult or older pupil, such as a school councillor, swiftly 'calms things down'.

**The quality of teaching** is good

- Teachers are keen to share each other's expertise and knowledge about pupils' previous learning. They have worked well together to update the way they teach subjects, including through topics, so that pupils learn well and make good progress.
- Adults check pupils' progress regularly. As a result, all pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those supported by additional funding, learn well. For example, teaching and pupils' progress in reading has improved as adults re-emphasise letter sounds and combinations to bridge gaps in pupils' learning.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and make good reference to main aspects being studied to develop pupils' learning. Occasionally in Year 1, not enough guidance is given to help pupils improve their specific basic writing skills, including through marking, and this slows their progress.
- At times, strong teaching leads to pupils' excellent learning. For example, pupil members of the school council readily commented that they are challenged more in the Years 5 and 6 class than in previous years. They appreciate, though, how more mature and ready they are now for 'harder work'.
- Across the school, teachers and teaching assistants encourage pupils to do their best. Staff work well together to ensure that pupils are effectively supported and challenged to think. For example, during an English lesson in Years 2 and 3, pupils offered well-considered and imaginative ideas when challenged to think about 'What might be in the box?'
- The most able pupils also respond well to this approach, especially in mathematics when expected and challenged to learn for themselves across a variety of problem solving activities.
- Generally, adults question pupils well about their learning to develop their understanding. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 extended their vocabulary well when questioned and encouraged by the teacher to describe story characters.
- At times, the speaking, reading and writing skills of some pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 are not developed rapidly enough. For example, when pupils choose their own learning activities, opportunities for pupils to talk about and read books and to write are not always readily available and this limits learning. Children and pupils are not always given the chance to develop confidence by talking about their ideas and views on learning.

**The achievement of pupils** is good

- The pupils' differing skills on entry to the school across the small year groups contribute to fluctuation in results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Even so, the school sustains mostly above-average attainment by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good achievement for all groups of pupils from their differing starting points.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because their needs are carefully identified and plans are put in place so that staff know how to help them develop their skills and understanding.
- In this school, additional government funding is used well to support individual pupils. For example, extra adult help enables these pupils to catch up any lost ground and achieve as well as their peers.
- The most able pupils also make good progress as they move through the school. Their progress quickens at times through Key Stage 2 where pupils become more skilled in checking their own work and understand how to reach their targets. Often the most able pupils do even better in Years 5 and 6 and increase their efforts in response to learning activities, which they say are 'challenging and fun!' This is also evident in the increasing proportion of pupils reaching the highest levels in national tests.
- Most children begin school with skills that match those normally expected for their age, but often early language and literacy skills are lower. Children make good progress in Reception, where they are enthused by a wide variety of interesting, practical activities and become keen learners.
- By the end of Year 6, most pupils read fluently. They thoughtfully explain their ideas and write imaginatively constructed sentences. Pupils also achieve well in mathematics and, for example, accurately identify 11-figure numbers.
- Pupils' progress in speaking, reading and writing in Key Stage 1 is slower than in Key Stage 2. Pupils are not given enough chances to practise their reading and writing skills based on stimulating and interesting learning activities.
- In response to strengthened teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make), pupils' scores in the Years 1 and 2 phonics screening checks have improved in recent years. The pupils' increased understanding of phonics is lifting their progress. However, the reading and writing skills of some pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 are not yet good enough.

### The early years provision

is good

- Staff promote warm relationships and secure children's safety and well-being well to ensure that children behave well, enjoy school and learn well together.
- The teacher provides effective leadership and promotes supportive links with parents that ensure the children's smooth and happy start to school life.
- Most children, including disabled children, those with special educational needs and the most able, achieve well in relation to their starting points and are ready to enter Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good and learning activities generally meet the needs of all groups of children. At times, when children choose their own activities, opportunities are missed to further extend their speaking, reading and early writing skills and this slows their progress.
- The teacher has developed good systems for checking children's progress and is developing staff skills in making careful observations of the children's learning and progress across various activities. As a result, detailed evaluations of the children's developing skills are collected in 'Learning Journals' and are used effectively to identify next steps in their learning.
- There is a rich variety of learning activities, including those led and supported by adults and those chosen by the children themselves. All of these make good use of the improved and stimulating outdoor learning facilities to promote effective learning and progress.
- Staff ensure that activities include all areas of learning and contribute well to the children's physical and emotional health and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, children happily extend their social skills by sharing large wheeled toys. They talk about and appreciate each other's ideas as they hunt for dinosaurs hidden in sand.

## 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>	123771
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	448545

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	137
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dee Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bethan Foister
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26–27 January 2010
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