

Spaxton Church of England Primary School

High Street, Spaxton, Somerset, TA5 1BS

Inspection dates 17–18 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils of all abilities make excellent progress through the school in English, mathematics and many other subjects. Standards are consistently above average by the end of Year 6
- Pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those eligible for additional funding and the most able, are equally successful. Many make outstanding progress because of the highly effective support and challenge provided.
- Teaching captivates pupils' interests and motivates them to achieve exceptionally well.
- Teachers use the information they have about pupils' attainment and progress to make learning challenging through many creative and stimulating learning experiences.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make rapid progress in acquiring good early literacy and numeracy skills and a high proportion reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception year.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They take pride in their work. Their personal development and physical well-being is promoted extremely well through many high quality and challenging creative and sporting experiences.
- Pupils are unreservedly polite. They feel very safe and speak enthusiastically about their learning and the enjoyment they derive from learning new things.
- Although most pupils enjoy coming to school regularly there are a few families who do not fully understand the importance of regular attendance.
- The headteacher's outstanding leadership ensures rigorous school self-evaluation and identifies the correct priorities for improvement.
- Leaders make sure that teaching and achievement are outstanding and rigorously checked against the challenging targets set for pupils' progress.
- Strong governance, which understands the school and its community extremely well, contributes to the school's success.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons. All of these observations were completed jointly with the headteacher. The inspector also observed pupils at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, governors and the headteacher and a telephone discussion was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 32 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and of conversations with parents. She also took account of the 15 responses to staff questionnaires.
- A wide range of documents were examined, including: samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' progress, the school's development plan and view of its own performance, records of any poor behaviour, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, and observed the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).
- 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

Carol Warrant, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are of White British origin.
- Very few pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. This is additional funding for pupils in care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is a Local Leader of Education and as such, she provides support to other local schools through the local authority.
- Before- and after-school provision is managed by the governing body and formed part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reinforce the importance of regular attendance for some pupils and parents.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. School self-evaluation correctly identifies priorities and actions to improve the school and raise achievement.
- The headteacher, in her role as a Local Leader of Education, gives valuable support in the form of school improvement and advice to other schools.
- There is strong teamwork in the school and a shared sense of direction among all members of staff. In this small school, senior and middle management roles are clearly delegated and staff work together to secure a positive direction for the school.
- Pupil-progress meetings are held each term. They enable staff to reflect on each pupil's progress in the light of the challenging targets set at the start of the year. Where pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding, or require stretching to meet their potential, extra help is applied. For example, a high proportion of Year 6 pupils were helped to attain Level 6 in the national tests in 2014.
- The curriculum is vibrant and creative; it is very well planned to meet the needs and interests of pupils. It offers rich and varied opportunities for pupils to broaden their horizons. Pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school activities, as diverse as sport, craft, cookery, gardening and bridge, with pupils proudly accepting an invitation to play bridge at the House of Lords.
- Pupils have many learning opportunities. Staff work carefully together to plan learning to prevent repetition and to share exciting approaches to topics. The wide range of trips and residential visits helps pupils to gain many skills and experiences. These contribute to their growing maturity, appreciation of the world, their place in modern British culture and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A wide range of educational visits and visitors add interest and meaning to classroom work. For example, a visit from a professional theatre group resulted in extremely high quality writing based on Greek mythology.
- The primary school sports funding is directed to improve staff expertise and employ a specialist sports coach. Rigorous checks make certain that the funding is making a difference to pupils' achievement and well-being. It ensures that pupils are well prepared to participate in a good number of after-school clubs and inter-schools sports events.
- The well-run before- and after-school provision is enjoyed by pupils who attend, and contributes to the health and well-being of these pupils.
- Parents are supportive of the school. There are good links with parents. The school's website, regular newsletters, and parents being welcomed into classrooms at the start of the school day build on the partnerships established in the Foundation Stage.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well. The school meets all statutory equality requirements. All groups of pupils make, at least, good progress and are free from any kind of discrimination or bullying.
- The local authority is available for the school when support is requested. It has provided high quality training for governors.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body makes a strong contribution to the quality of education the school provides. Governors have a wide range of experience and skills and support and challenge the school appropriately. Governors know how the school performs against national standards and pay close attention to the school's assessment information. They hold the headteacher to account for the school's performance and the management of its finances, which are sound. Governors know about the quality of teaching and make sure that the system for managing the performance of staff is robust and linked closely to pay for teachers and senior leaders. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements, that there are equal opportunities for all and that discrimination in any form is not tolerated. Additional funding is managed effectively. Governors can account for all spending and its impact on achievement. The school's finances are managed prudently.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school and say they feel safe. They are proud of their school and take good care of their surroundings. No litter is dropped and the corridors are quiet and purposeful places as pupils move around the school. The school's records suggest that the excellent behaviour seen during the inspection is typical of that found every day.

- In the classrooms and on the playground, pupils behave extremely well. Older pupils show a strong sense of responsibility by caring for younger ones. They act as good role models and help those in need to find friends or sort out minor problems.
- Teachers and pupils get on very well, there are excellent routines established for working together, and pupils follow instructions quickly and without fuss. Pupils are well equipped for their lessons and settle very quickly to their work. Their books are generally neat and tidy and show a clear progression in the quality of their presentation.
- Pupils want to do well and please their teachers, they do not give up when work is more difficult; instead they try even harder. Their positive attitude contributes greatly to their outstanding achievement.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is also outstanding. Pupils are safe at all times and pupils and parents report no concerns.
- Inappropriate behaviour is very rare indeed and any incidents are swiftly and fairly resolved. Pupils know about name-calling and physical bullying and say that these rarely happen and they know who to talk to if they do. They know how to keep themselves safe and talk sensibly about the dangers of inappropriate use of the internet and road and bike safety.
- Pupils are keen to come to school and most pupils are punctual and well prepared for the day's learning. Attendance has improved and is now above average, although there are some families who do not fully embrace the importance of regular attendance. The school works very closely with parents to follow up on absence, encourage the best levels of attendance and ensure pupils are punctual and prepared for learning.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The highly effective staff team is dedicated to making sure all pupils achieve the very best. Teachers have high expectations of pupils including the most able.
- Teachers and teaching assistants understand the different ways that pupils learn. They use this knowledge effectively and give pupils just the right amount of support and correct strategies to enable them to succeed. This includes making sure that the most able achieve as well as they can by capturing their enthusiasm, encouraging their curiosity and maintaining their motivation to find out even more about the focus of the lesson.
- Excellent teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 securely promotes an enjoyment of reading and skills. These enable children to progress rapidly to become confident readers. In 2014 pupils in Year 1 achieved excellent results in the national screening check for phonics.
- The teaching of writing, in particular spelling, has improved significantly after being identified as an area to improve. Good writing in a wide range of contexts is evident in lessons, in pupils' workbooks and in displays around the school.
- In mathematics, a good emphasis is given to the development of basic numeracy skills and calculation. Pupils regularly use and apply these skills to solve problems and to understand the relevance of mathematics to everyday life.
- Pupils successfully get to grips with the basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics because they use these skills regularly in other subjects. Often, lessons are based on pupils' own experiences. This makes learning meaningful and provides pupils with a reason to read or write or solve mathematical problems.
- Work is planned effectively to maximise achievement. Pupils' understanding is checked and their thinking challenged as they use high levels of speaking and listening skills to answer questions about their learning.
- The good range of vocabulary that is used and encouraged helps pupils to acquire quickly technical language. For instance, in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, pupils quickly acquired knowledge and understanding of mathematical terms linked to shape and space and applied this when categorising complex shapes.
- Teachers establish good relationships with pupils. They treat pupils with respect and set good examples through their actions and speech. Teachers and pupils work together very well. A calm, positive atmosphere filled with focused energy and purpose is evident throughout the school.
- Marking is regular and tells pupils how well they are doing. It shows pupils what the next steps in learning are and pupils respond positively to this advice. Teachers often discuss with pupils how they can improve their work and this contributes highly to the outstanding achievement of pupils.
- Parents are encouraged to be involved with their children's learning at home. Pupils regularly take reading books home and are expected to learn spellings, complete written exercises, learn times tables and carry out research in subjects such as science, history and geography. Homework is systematically planned so

that it extends learning.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- From their individual starting points, pupils' progress is outstanding. Pupils grow into mature and confident young people who are very well prepared to take advantage of secondary education.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, in 2013, standards were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Occasionally, the headline figures for attainment dip. This is because just a few pupils in the small year groups influence assessment data. This was the case in 2014 when overall results were average but, given the pupils' starting points, progress was rapid for all pupils with an above average proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are consistently well above average. In 2013, Year 6 pupils made good progress and attained above national standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, school information and inspection findings show that progress was at least good and often excellent. Consequently, Year 6 pupils' 2014 results are well ahead of 2013 national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- More able pupils made excellent progress with a well above average proportion gaining the higher Level 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' current work and school assessments show at least good progress across the school and that most pupils are reaching standards at or above those expected for their age.
- The school is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and staff keep a close eye on the achievement of every pupil in the small classes. Consequently, the most able make the same rapid progress as other groups of pupils and reach the high standards of which they are capable.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are accurately identified and their progress is carefully checked. This is through the use of good quality support programmes involving close working between teachers and teaching assistants. Teaching assistants are skilled at helping pupils to make rapid progress through work in small groups and one to one.
- The number of pupils supported through the pupil premium is too small to make a secure judgment about their relative attainment in English and mathematics when compared to other pupils nationally or in the school. The school identifies each pupil who is known to be eligible for free school meals and ensures the funding is used wisely so that there are no gaps between their learning and that of their class mates and that they make the same, rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's skills and knowledge vary year by year but are, for the large part, just below those typical for their age. Due to outstanding teaching, children make rapid progress in all areas of learning. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage most children reach a good level of development and are well prepared for entry into Year 1.
- Children come into school in the morning excited and ready to enjoy learning. Praise is used intelligently to develop children's self-confidence. This results in high levels of well-being. Children are excited and willing to try new experiences.
- Children who need extra help are identified quickly and given the support they need while playing and learning alongside their friends. Disabled children and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress from their starting points as a result of this.
- Staff observe children closely and make careful notes of what they are interested in and what they can do. These notes are then expertly used to plan a range of activities designed to interest children and help them learn more.
- Children's learning journals reflect the progress they have made. These show clearly and in a lively way both the skills children have mastered and the fun they have had.
- Staff and children share the joy of learning together and celebrate children's successes with enthusiasm. This enjoyment of learning lays the foundations for children to become enthusiastic learners as they move through the school.
- Excellent teaching of phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage securely promotes an enjoyment of reading and skills which enable children to progress rapidly to become confident readers.
- The behaviour of children is outstanding. When children first come to school they are gently helped

to learn what is expected of them and to behave as part of a community. Children learn quickly and as a result, are polite and very caring. Adults quickly offer exactly the right level of support if there are any signs of conflict or disagreement.

- As in the rest of the school, work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. Parents are confident that their children are safe.
- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding. The curriculum is carefully thought through to be exciting and stimulating. The balance of activities and experiences available is excellent. Sometimes, children work directly with adults and at other times they choose themselves from the extremely interesting options available. Indoor and outdoor learning are equally valued.
- Partnership with parents is quickly established, with home visits prior to the children starting school. There is a carefully planned period of induction to school. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the children's learning journals and are welcomed into the classroom each morning with their children.

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	123790
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	448554

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cath Macadam
Headteacher	Sally Evans
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 July 2010
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