

Ifracombe Church of England Junior School

Princess Avenue, Ifracombe, EX34 9LW

Inspection dates 2–3 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement declined after the previous inspection. In mathematics, pupils are not always securing their basic mathematical skills as they progress through the school.
- Too few pupils, especially the most able, have made good progress from their individual starting points at the school. As a result, they are not doing as well as they might in national tests.
- Senior leaders have not checked pupils' progress or the quality of teaching carefully enough to be able to judge the school's effectiveness accurately. They have not always reacted quickly enough to secure rapid improvement.
- Teachers do not check carefully enough how well pupils are learning and do not always react quickly when tasks need to be changed.
- Teachers sometimes set pupils work which is at the wrong level; for some it is either too difficult and for others it is too easy. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning deteriorates and their behaviour sometimes declines.
- Pupils' work is not always marked well enough. Pupils do not always act upon the written comments and thereby improve their work.
- Governors do not hold the school's leaders sufficiently to account. They have not paid enough attention to the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement, especially those who are eligible for additional government funding.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are very positive about their school. They are equally respectful to each other and the adults at the school. They say they feel safe, and parents and carers are happy their children are well cared for.
- The school is showing some positive signs of improvement. Middle leaders are having an increasingly positive impact on raising pupils' achievement.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is promoted well through a wide range of subjects, including residential visits.
- Attendance has improved and is now above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 22 lessons, several of which were undertaken jointly with a member of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also observed small-group teaching sessions that involved pupils developing their literacy and numeracy skills. An inspector listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ work in their books and spoke to others about their work and other aspects of school. They observed pupils at playtime and attended the school’s harvest festival, which was held at the local church.
- They held meetings with the headteacher and members of staff. They discussed pupils’ progress in literacy and numeracy and the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Inspectors 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 four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector spoke with an advisor from the local authority.
- The views of parents were taken into consideration, including the 31 who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The views of several parents, gained at the start of the school day, were also taken into account.
- The opinions of staff were also considered using the 36 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Linda Rafferty

Additional inspector

Paul Hodson

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of those who are supported by school action plus or who have a statement of special educational need is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. This additional government funding supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement, especially in mathematics, by ensuring teachers:
 - use information on pupils' achievement to set work at the right level so as to build on their prior learning
 - have high expectations of what pupils, especially the most able, are able to achieve
 - move pupils' learning on when they know what they are doing, enabling them to make faster progress
 - use a consistent approach when checking pupils' work and ensure pupils make better use of teachers' comments on how to improve their work.
- Raise pupils' achievement in mathematics by ensuring basic mathematical skills are taught well across the school.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders have a clear understanding about the school's effectiveness, identify weaknesses and make improvements swiftly
 - leaders at all levels check the quality of teaching rigorously to improve pupils' achievement
 - leaders, including governors, monitor and evaluate the progress of different groups of pupils, especially those who are eligible for additional government funding
 - that governors have the skills and information they need to challenge the school's performance effectively.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The school's leaders have not ensured that there is enough good teaching over time to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they should.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have not been rigorous enough in their checks of teaching and learning to ensure that all pupils make good progress.
- Teachers check pupils' progress regularly and leaders use this information to put in support where needed. However, the impact of this support on raising pupils' achievement is not always checked accurately enough. This has led to some pupils, especially the most able, not achieving their full potential.
- The headteacher's vision for the future of the school is shared by staff and governors. There are signs of recent initiatives having a positive effect as pupils' achievement shows some improvement. This has been slightly quicker in English than in mathematics. The school has also rapidly improved pupils' attendance, demonstrating the school's strengthening capacity to secure future improvements.
- Teachers are committed to improving the quality of their teaching in order to speed up pupils' progress. Teachers regularly undertake training and are reflective of their own teaching. All teachers have targets to improve and understand how pupils' achievement is linked to their salary progression.
- Middle leaders, many of whom have taken up the role recently, are providing strong leadership to their areas of responsibility. They are increasingly involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning, for example, by scrutinising pupils' work. However, these checks have not been used rigorously enough by senior leaders and governors to make sure that pupils' progress improves rapidly.
- The leadership of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has improved as their personal needs are being fully supported. The recent change to include them in class as much as possible is helping them to achieve as well as they are able.
- The school is well prepared for the changes to the primary national curriculum. It is broad and balanced and taught through topics or themes. The school is preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain through additional activities, such as the recent Diversity Week.
- Activities, such as the Year 5 visit to Bristol and the Year 6 residential to Georgeham, provide pupils with opportunities to work together and improve their confidence. The harvest festival provided pupils with an opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs to inform their perspective on life. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps foster their caring attitudes towards each other and the wider community.
- The government's additional sports fund has been used to increase pupils' participation in sport and to develop teachers' expertise. This has ensured that all pupils leave school being able to swim. Training in surf life-saving skills has taken place for all Year 6 pupils, reflecting the coastal location of the school. The school has extended the use made of their online exercise programmes by providing parents with the opportunity to use this in their own homes. Pupils say they enjoy taking part in sport.
- The staff do not tolerate discrimination of any kind, ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to participate in the full curriculum. Almost all parents believe the school is led and managed well.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.
- The local authority has provided the school with proportionate support and has responded to additional requests for more specific assistance. The school was identified by the local authority as not performing as well as it should and additional support was given to support senior leaders increase the rate of improvement. There are positive signs that the school is improving the quality of its work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors support the school and are keen to see it do well. They are fully involved in the life of the school and visit it regularly. Although they have challenged leaders about the need for all pupils to make good progress, they have not been robust enough in their actions to ensure that this has happened. Governors have a general idea of how well pupils are achieving when compared to pupils nationally. However, they do not routinely check the progress of groups of pupils, especially those who are eligible for additional government funding. There have been some changes of personnel within the governing body and governors have undertaken a restructure of their committees to reflect the changing needs of their work. Governors undertake training as appropriate. They understand the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement and are involved in making decisions about teachers' pay and in ensuring that it is aligned to pupils' progress. They are fully involved in school self-evaluation and setting the school action plan for improvement, but they have an overgenerous view of the school's performance. They have contributed to decisions about the spending of additional funding, for example, the pupil premium. However, they have not monitored and evaluated the use and impact of this funding rigorously enough.

Governors ensure statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are fully in place.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Although pupils are respectful, friendly and polite, their attitudes towards learning are not always positive enough. This is especially so when teaching does not fully challenge and engage them.
- Where teaching requires improvement, pupils sometimes become distracted. This happens when the work set is not engaging enough. As a result, pupils carry on chatting when the teacher is expecting their attention. When pupils are given challenging work to do, they respond positively. They quickly become engrossed and excited and their attitudes towards learning are much more positive.
- Pupils are very committed to the school community and to one another. They enjoy coming to school and their attendance has improved to above average. This follows some effective work with parents to explain the advantages of good attendance.
- During break and lunchtimes pupils play well together. They typically get on well together regardless of background. They show care and sensitivity towards those pupils who have additional difficulties.
- Behaviour records show that there are few incidences of poor behaviour. When asked about their views of behaviour, pupils knew that they had a responsibility to behave considerately at all times.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and all agreed that they feel safe at school. Pupils know their boundaries and move around the school with care. They look after each other and understand the need to act responsibly. When lining up for their morning snack at the school, pupils take care not to cause any accidents.
- Pupils agree with school records that incidences of bullying are rare. They are confident that if pupils fall out or call each other names, an adult will help them to sort it out. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and how to keep safe when using the computers to access the internet.
- Pupils are beginning to understand the democratic process and they readily accept majority voting decisions. For example, they support the successful candidates in each class for the Pupil Voice group and in the elections for councillors and the school mayor.
- All parents who responded to Parent View or spoke to an inspector said that their children feel safe at school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching, over time, has not been good enough to ensure all groups of pupils, particularly the most able do as well as they might.
- Teachers do not always take sufficient account of the information on pupils' progress when planning learning activities. Work provided for pupils is sometimes too easy or too hard. It does not always ensure that pupils build effectively on their prior learning. This is especially the case for the most able pupils. They are often expected to complete work that is too easy for them before moving on to work at a more appropriate level. At times, other pupils find it difficult to get started. When the work does not provide pupils with the appropriate level of challenge they can become restless and talkative. This slows their learning and prevents some from making the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils have a reasonable understanding of what they have to do in class because the teachers provide them with clear instructions. Work in pupils' books shows that teachers do not always expect enough from them. Pupils of different abilities in the same class are sometimes completing the same quantity and quality of work. Consequently, they do not make as much progress as they might.
- In some activities, teachers are not regularly checking pupils' learning. As a result, pupils are not quickly moved on in order to make faster progress.
- Teachers plan activities well to make good use of the skills of teaching assistants to support pupils, especially those who are disabled or have special educational needs. Pupils value the support and say that the teaching assistants help them to make good progress.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is not always of a high enough standard. Teachers do not routinely provide pupils with written feedback that includes clear next-step comments on how to improve their work. Better practice was evident in pupils' English books. Pupils say that they appreciate the teachers'

comments, but that they are not always given sufficient time to review and improve their work. This limits their ability to make faster progress.

- Most parents felt that their children's learning was effective and that they were making good progress.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' basic mathematical skills are weaker than those expected nationally as they have not been learned securely in previous years. Consequently, skills that should be secure have to be revisited so as to strengthen pupils' mathematical understanding. This restricts pupils' ability to make better progress in mathematics.
- Checks on pupils' progress information indicate that, by the end of Year 6, not all pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress made by pupils across Key Stage 2 is still not fast enough. As a result, standards attained by many pupils in the national tests at the end of Year 6 are slightly below those they are capable of achieving.
- The most able pupils do not always fulfil their potential because of weaknesses in teaching. Often this group of pupils are asked to repeat tasks before moving on to harder work. This means they lose time when they could be making accelerated progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported to learn well by some skilled teaching assistants. The focus on supporting these pupils in class rather than in small groups is helping them to be fully included. Overall, they are making similar progress to that of their peers.
- Progress in reading is improving. This is because pupils are developing their reading skills well with regular guided reading sessions. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home and they enjoy reading in school.
- A scrutiny of current pupils' work indicates that the achievement of different groups of pupils is now similar. Work in pupils' books shows progress is improving more quickly in English than in mathematics. This is partly due to a whole-school focus to develop pupils' skills and understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Pupils eligible for additional government funding receive targeted attention, which helps them to grow in confidence. The school's records show that most of these pupils make similar progress to their peers. In English, in 2013, this group attained similarly to their peers in the school and nationally, closing the gap completely from being six months behind in 2012. However, in mathematics the gap was slightly wider, with pupils being on average six months behind, the same as in 2012. School records indicate that in 2014 the gaps in attainment were similar. However, this is not yet consistent in all year groups or subjects.

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	113381
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	449159

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	468
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Imerson
Headteacher	Catherine Cox
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 November 2010
Telephone number	01271 863463
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