

Croscombe Church of England Primary School

Long Street, Croscombe, Wells, Somerset, BA5 3QL

Inspection dates

27–28 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- All pupils achieve well at this school. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- At the end of Year 2, pupils attain above average standards in all subjects.
- Reading is a particular strength of the school.
- Pupils who move to the school settle rapidly and make good progress alongside their peers.
- The early years provision within Class 1 enables children to make a good start to their education.
- Teaching is good. Teachers typically set tasks that enable all pupils to learn well.
- Behaviour is good and pupils work well together and enjoy school.
- Pupils know that they are safe at school.
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- Governors have been proactive in securing the future of the school through the federation and the resulting shared headship.
- The headteacher and the governing body have made sure that teaching is good so that all groups of pupils make good progress.
- The headteacher and teachers have cooperated well to improve on previous good performance and work well with partner schools to achieve this.
- Parents say that the school 'is like a big family'. They value highly the knowledge that teachers have of their children as individuals and their interest in children's achievement.
- There are strong relationships at every level within the school and this makes it a harmonious learning community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, tasks are not sufficiently motivating to sustain pupils' enthusiasm and learning slows.
- Sometimes, teachers do not adjust the tasks set for pupils quickly enough to speed up their progress.
- The targets set for the progress of pupils between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 are not challenging enough, especially in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons; four of these were jointly observed with the headteacher. In addition, short visits were made to classrooms and the inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Year 1 read. The inspector reviewed samples of pupils' work in books to check their progress.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and four other members, and a group of pupils. There were informal discussions with parents. The inspector held a telephone conversation with a member of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 20 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and two letters from parents. She analysed the results of the staff questionnaire, to which there were nine responses.
- The inspector looked at school documents, including information relating to checks on pupils' progress, plans for school improvement, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, the minutes of the governing body and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Janet Dinsmore, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Croscombe Church of England Primary School formed a hard federation with Stoke St Michael Primary School in January 2014. There is a single governing body and headteacher. The headteacher was appointed to the federation from September 2014 after the retirement of the previous headteachers of both schools.
- It is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has three mixed year group classes. Year groups vary in size considerably from five to 13.
- Almost all the pupils are of White British origin.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority, is much smaller than average. There are no eligible pupils in the current Year 6.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average.
- The early years provision is full time, in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class.
- Because of small size of the school, there are very few pupils in some groups, such as those eligible for the pupil premium.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by making sure that:
 - all activities are consistently motivating in order to sustain pupils' enthusiasm in all lessons
 - teachers adjust tasks quickly, where necessary, in order to speed up pupils' progress.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by setting and achieving more challenging targets, especially in mathematics, for the progress of pupils between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and has written a development plan that is designed to continue the improvement of the school. The plan shows that there is a clear direction and ambition for the school.
- The federation is beginning to bring benefit to the school. For example, it enables pupils to work together and staff to share training and expertise. The school also has good partnerships with all its local schools and uses these partnerships, for instance, to check the accuracy of assessments of pupils' progress.
- The school has revised its curriculum to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum. Pupils study a range of subjects using their good skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The school exemplifies a good understanding of British values through all its practices.
- There is equality of opportunity for all and no discrimination. The school fosters good relations with parents and with pupils. The staff use democratic processes of consultation, for example involving parents and also voting in the school council. These have been particularly successful in decision making about topics to include in the curriculum.
- This church school has strong links with the local community and these contribute well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils support the education of a child in Ethiopia and take the initiative to raise funds to do this, contributing to their developing understanding of global citizenship.
- The headteacher checks the assessments of pupils' progress regularly and visits lessons. He has an accurate knowledge of the quality of teaching and of pupils' progress. However, the targets set are not sufficiently ambitious to accelerate further the progress of pupils in mathematics.
- Subject leaders have made sure that pupils' achievement in writing continues to improve. They ensure that teachers provide opportunities for pupils to write at length. The previous inspection identified this as an improvement point. Mathematics teaching has improved recently, as shown by the improvements in the progress of pupils currently in the school.
- Parents 'cannot praise the school highly enough'. Many spoke of how well their children are doing, because they value the small classes and are confident in the teachers' ability to teach each individual child.
- Parents of children with additional needs and those who have moved to the school say how quickly their children settle and how welcoming and friendly the school is. Many have made a proactive choice as they live outside the catchment area.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements. The school works well with outside agencies to make sure that it gives any vulnerable pupils the help they need.
- The school uses its additional physical education and sport funding effectively to provide new opportunities for different sporting activities that are increasing pupils' experience and participation, including archery for example. This is another benefit of the federation.
- The school spends the additional funding through the pupil premium on support for the needs of eligible pupils. There is no gap between their achievement and that of their peers at the school.
- The local authority provides minimal support as it has every confidence in the headteacher to continue to improve the school within the federation.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well trained and have a good range of skills from their backgrounds in business and education to hold the school to good account. They successfully appointed the new headteacher. Governors manage the performance of the headteacher well. They know that the quality of teaching is good and that teachers' pay relates to their performance in the classroom and to their subject leadership roles. The school rewards good teaching and there is no underperformance. Governors' understanding of pupils' achievement on national comparisons enables governors to challenge the school to improve pupils' performance further. Governors check the work of the school for themselves, as well as receiving accurate reports from the headteacher. Governors know that the school spends its sport funding effectively and uses the pupil premium funding appropriately for the pupils to whom it applies.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils cooperate well and follow instructions quickly. Behaviour is not outstanding because occasionally some pupils do not focus as fully as they should on their work, although they do not disrupt the learning of others.
- Pupils' moral and social development is good. Pupils relate well to one another and are polite and courteous. They understand the importance of respect for other people's views, whatever their background, so that they are tolerant of differences and of different beliefs.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and say it is rare at school, and confined to minor name calling. They say that adults deal with such name calling swiftly and well when it does occur. There have been no serious incidents of poor behaviour.
- Pupils play well together. Older pupils help younger ones, both in the playground and in lessons.
- Attendance is above average because pupils really enjoy coming to school. They are proud of their achievements, which the school celebrates, for example, through the writer and mathematician of the week awards.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils know that they are safe at school and they say there is always someone to talk to if they are worried about anything.
- Pupils are fully aware of how to stay safe on the internet. They understand what cyber bullying is and what they should do if they have any concerns.
- Pupils play safely in the playground because there is good supervision. The school has carefully checked the risks for all its activities and for the use of the playground. Pupils know how to play safely on the climbing equipment, for example.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The good quality of teaching, including the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics, has a beneficial impact on pupils' learning.
- Teachers assess pupils' work accurately, and make good use of these assessments to check pupils' progress. They plan work that is challenging so that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers know individual pupils very well and how to make sure each achieves to their potential.
- Pupils say that work is hard enough and they enjoy the teaching and the range of subjects. They have frequent opportunities to apply their English and mathematical skills across the range of subjects. In particular, teachers provide good opportunities for writing in history and geography lessons.
- Teachers plan activities that provide a good stimulus for writing. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 described the rainforest accurately because they had good knowledge of what it was like through the teacher's good use of drama, special effects and sound. As another example, pupils in Year 1 sequenced a set of pictures to tell a story and wrote effective captions for the pictures.
- The teaching of mathematics in the mixed-age classes is well organised so that all groups of pupils make good progress. Teachers check pupils' work carefully each day, and quickly attend to any misconceptions. Tasks that they set are adequately challenging so that pupils make good, although not better, progress.
- Teachers deploy teaching assistants effectively to support learning in lessons. Assistants work well with individual pupils or small groups especially when the teacher has identified the need to improve their progress.
- All adults make good use of questioning to check pupils' understanding and to encourage pupils to explain what they have learnt. Pupils also work well in pairs as 'buddies'. This is very effective as pupils have good opportunities to demonstrate what they know through explanations to others.
- Teachers clearly set out what pupils need to achieve in each lesson, and review this when they mark and check pupils' progress with their set tasks. As a result, pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils are becoming increasingly skilled at checking their own and their peers' work. This demonstrates their clear understanding and their developing skills.
- Teachers make sure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive the specific support they need to make good progress, especially with their reading and mathematics.
- Occasionally in lessons, tasks or activities are not sufficiently motivating to sustain pupils' enthusiasm. Sometimes, too, teachers do not adjust tasks sufficiently quickly to speed up pupils' progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- All groups of pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- All groups of pupils make good progress in reading throughout the school. They can explain the reasons why they like particular books. Older pupils are knowledgeable about a wide range of authors. The proportion of pupils who attain the higher levels at the end of Years 2 and 6 is well above average. Over the last three years, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard of attainment in reading at the end of Year 6 has been similar to, or has exceeded, the national average.
- Pupils read widely, and often, and look forward to the 'reading challenge' rewards at the end of each week. They use their skills well to research information and to interpret it.
- Almost all pupils achieved the expected standard in the phonics (the sounds that letters make) screening check in Year 1. Pupils continue to develop their English skills as they move up the school, so that they are competent in spelling and grammar by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about how to improve their writing and make insightful comments about others' work that demonstrate their good understanding. Current pupils in the school are making good progress in writing and they are reaching the standards that they are capable of
- Almost all pupils achieve well in mathematics. However, sometimes the targets set for pupils' progress between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 are insufficiently challenging in mathematics. Because of this, a few pupils have not made the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are competently using a good variety of written and mental methods of calculation. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrated that they had a good understanding of how to divide numbers, and used a range of ways of recording to show this. Pupils really enjoy the mental mathematics weekly challenges and are highly motivated to succeed and get to the 'next level'.
- All groups of pupils including the very few who are eligible for additional funding make good progress at the school. There is no difference in the achievement between these disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress across the school in line with their peers. The school effectively meets the wide range of their needs.
- The most able pupils across the school are making good progress, especially in reading and mathematics. Over the last three years, there is a high proportion who have made accelerated progress in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.

The early years provision is good

- Children start in the Reception class with a wide range of skills. Each year, the children starting school vary in number and ability. They make good progress, and by the time they enter Year 1 most have the skills they need to succeed.
- They make good progress in their personal and social development. They work together well and take turns when playing games.
- The teaching of phonics is good, and children make good progress in their learning of phonics. Parents are particularly pleased with how quickly their children learn to read. Children make good use of their phonic knowledge as they develop their writing skills.
- Adults question children well to check their understanding and to extend their vocabulary and use of language.
- Children are making good progress in acquiring mathematical skills. They use their knowledge to put numbers in the right order and are beginning to be able to add two numbers and to count on and back.
- They know how to play safely in their designated area of the playground and enjoy playing with older children at playtimes, practising balancing to develop their physical skills, for example. Their behaviour is good and they feel safe.
- Leaders make effective checks on children's progress. The teacher and teaching assistants make accurate observations of how well the children are learning. This ensures that they make good progress, especially in their reading skills. Adults make sure that those who need extra help get it quickly so that they develop the full range of skills they need before they start Year 1.
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- The early years provision is good, but not outstanding because occasionally planned activities limit children's learning and do not enable them to demonstrate their full capabilities.

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	123829
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	449550

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	73
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Summerhayes
Headteacher	Stephen Heath
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 July 2010
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