

Membury Primary School

Membury, Axminster, Devon, EX13 7AF

Inspection dates 23–24 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
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.

- The recent partnership with a local school has greatly improved the quality of the school's leadership and management. This has helped to maintain the confidence of parents who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work.
- The headteacher's excellent leadership inspires staff and pupils to do their best. Her commitment to ensuring everybody succeeds is a significant factor in the improved teaching and achievement since the previous inspection.
- Leaders check teaching rigorously. They follow their checks up promptly with effective support and training. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching to good levels.
- The newly established governing body is very influential and strongly focused on improving the school's work. Governors check regularly on what is happening in school for themselves. They challenge leaders to raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement still further.
- Achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Over the past year, pupils have made faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, attainment has risen across the school.
- Teaching is consistently good because teachers know their pupils well and plan work carefully to meet their differing needs.
- A new and motivating curriculum is in place. The content of lessons interests and engages pupils extremely well in their learning.
- The provision in the early years is good so that children make a positive start to school. They settle quickly and happily into school routines.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are eager to learn and very attentive in lessons. Pupils feel very safe in school and look after one another with great kindness and consideration.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching in the early years does not ensure that children's writing skills are developed systematically enough.
- On occasions, teaching does not stretch all pupils to the full in mathematics or in their writing in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning across the school, most in conjunction with the executive headteacher. In addition, she made visits to classrooms, the dining hall and the playground.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and school leaders. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as written correspondence and consulting informally with parents at the end of the school day. She also took account of the six responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans. She examined information on current pupils' progress, minutes of the governing body meetings, safeguarding procedures and the plans for the use of additional sports funding.
- The inspector heard pupils read, talked to them in classrooms and evaluated samples of their work.

Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised in two classes; one for the early years and Key Stage 1 pupils, and the other for Key Stage 2 pupils.
- The school formed a partnership with St Andrew's Church of England School in February 2014. The schools share an executive headteacher and a head of school. A senior teacher has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school. All teaching staff have joined the school since the partnership was formed.
- The schools have separate governing bodies. A new governing body was established at the start of the partnership at the initiation of the local authority.
- The majority of pupils have a White British background.
- All children in the early years (Reception Year) attend full time.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is the additional government funding to give extra support to those pupils who are eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after by the local authority. Currently, there are very few children on roll who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The pre-school, run by the governors for three-year-olds on the school site, did not form part of this inspection.
- There were fewer than 11 pupils in the Year 6 group which left last summer, so their attainment in relation to national floor standards is not reported.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of children in the early years by ensuring that the early skills of writing are developed systematically.
- Strengthen the quality of teaching to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that teachers introduce challenging problems in mathematics that encourage all pupils to deepen their thinking
 - making sure that pupils produce good quality writing in other subjects to extend their skills further.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The establishment of a partnership with a local school has made a significant difference to the quality of the leadership and the management of the school. The inspirational headteacher promotes a strong sense of ambition that every pupil and member of staff can be successful. She has created a culture where good behaviour can flourish and effective teaching is the expectation. Staff and pupils have risen to the challenges she sets, and are proud to be part of the school.
- The pace of improvement has increased significantly over the past year. Recent changes to the staff have strengthened teaching and, as a consequence, pupils' achievement is now good. Leaders make full use of the expertise from both schools to ensure that improvements are secure and sustainable.
- Self-evaluation is robust and gives leaders a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use this information as a basis for focused improvement planning. Leaders, together with governors, check precisely on progress, making adjustments to what the school provides to increase the impact on pupils' achievement. However, leadership and management are not yet outstanding overall as there has been insufficient time for leaders' actions to ensure that teaching and pupils' achievement are outstanding.
- Staff with specific responsibilities check carefully the quality of teaching and the school's provision for special educational needs. They follow these checks up with timely actions and support. In this way, they have been successful in improving teaching and learning.
- Leaders give teachers precise and regular feedback on the strengths of their teaching and where they need to improve. There are clear links between pupils' success and salary progression to ensure that only good practice is rewarded.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well and there have been no incidents of harassment in recent years. The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well targeted to ensure that their needs are met. The funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively and they make good progress due to carefully tailored individual and small-group teaching.
- Pupils' learning across a range of subjects in the new curriculum is interesting, varied and motivating pupils to succeed. The promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong and they have particularly enjoyed learning about other cultures and customs. This helps to prepare them well for life in modern Britain as respectful and responsible citizens.
- Leaders have used the primary school physical education and school sport funding to good effect. More pupils are taking part in a new range of sports, such as street-surfing, and in competitions with other schools. Staff benefit from working alongside specialist teachers to help sustain these developments.
- Leaders have maintained the trust of parents, who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, through clear lines of communication.
- The local authority has provided some useful support, helping to broker the partnership with another school. They have been instrumental in the establishment of a new and effective governing body for the school.
- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. Systems are securely in place and staff training is up-to-date in areas such as child protection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Following a review of governance, a new governing body has been established with the skills needed to maintain a tight overview of the school's work. Governors work closely with the headteacher and staff to check and challenge the impact of their actions. They are confident in analysing and evaluating information about pupils' achievement. They ask probing and searching questions about how teaching and pupils' achievement can be improved further. Using information from their visits to school, they have a strong influence over the shaping of improvement plans. They know how the performance of teachers is managed, how any underperformance has been tackled and the way that good teaching is rewarded.
 - Governors make sure that their policies and guidance for safeguarding are followed stringently. They ensure that their own training and that of staff meet current requirements.
 - Governors manage the school budget efficiently and the school is secure financially. They know how the additional funds are being spent to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and to develop school sport.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Attitudes to learning have been transformed as the learning has become more fun and pupils are clear about what they have to do to be successful. 'This is the best school in the world' was the opinion of one young pupil and others endorsed this view.
- Pupils cooperate extremely well together and settle quickly to work without any fuss. Pupils are enjoying the increased levels of challenge in their work and are eager to learn. They concentrate for sustained periods on their learning and discuss their work together in a very mature way.
- Pupils are very supportive of each other, particularly of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, demonstrating the school's effectiveness in fostering good relationships and tackling discrimination.
- Behaviour around the school, in the playground and the dining room is exemplary. There have been remarkable improvements in the behaviour of some individuals whose behaviour gave rise to concerns. Due to well-targeted support, the school has eliminated the need for exclusion.
- Pupils make a strong contribution to the decisions made in school about their learning and their well-being. They say that good account is taken of their views. For example, in assembly every pupil was able to contribute his or her ideas to the discussion due to carefully thought out strategies to involve them.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain through a strong focus on the development of the skills and understanding pupils need to become good citizens. Older pupils demonstrate impressive maturity in the way they look after the younger pupils and encourage their social development.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel safe because the adults provide a calm and orderly environment in which to work and play, and they are kind to each other.
- Parents agree strongly that their children are well looked after at school, and that they feel safe and happy.
- Pupils are very clear that bullying and derogatory or aggressive language are very rare. Pupils are very knowledgeable about the different forms that bullying can take, such as cyber-bullying or sexism. They are confident that, should it occur, it would be dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Pupils know how to stay safe as they are well prepared to maintain their personal safety through training in areas such as road safety and 'stranger danger', particularly should this threat occur online.
- Attendance is improving due to the robust steps taken by school leaders to encourage regular attendance and reduce any unnecessary absences.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good. Overall, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and develop very effective working relationships. For most pupils, the work is increasingly challenging and engaging, which is leading to higher achievement.
- Teachers make clear what is expected in learning. Pupils learn to evaluate the quality of their work to see if it meets the objectives set and then make further improvements. This is leading to faster progress, particularly in writing. This was apparent, for example, in the way that Key Stage 1 pupils were totally engrossed in writing their stories about *Monkey say, monkey does*. They checked and made improvements to their work, using dictionaries to improve spellings, and then redrafted their writing to make it as good as possible.
- Teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly and accurately. They use this information with increasing precision to set work that is at the right level for most pupils. They question pupils effectively to elicit understanding and then reshape their explanations or adjust the tasks slightly for better impact.
- The marking of pupils' work is of consistently good quality and follows the school's marking policy well. Pupils say they like the helpful feedback which they act on promptly to correct or improve their work. 'The teachers are brilliant at helping you get better', was one such typical comment and others agreed.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively to enable pupils to overcome any difficulties. They provide well-tailored support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and disadvantaged pupils to ensure that their progress is good.
- The reorganisation of the way reading is taught is having a good impact on the development of early reading skills. More precise teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is ensuring that the Reception

children and those in Key Stage 1 become accomplished readers quickly.

- Teachers have benefited from sharing good practice with colleagues from the partner school. They work well together to share effective practice and introduce new ideas from training events.
- On occasions, the work set in mathematics does not extend all pupils' thinking to the full. Teachers do not set enough problems that require pupils to use their number skills and make connections to other areas of mathematics, such as geometry. Also, teachers do not ensure that pupils apply the skills they have learnt in English to produce equally good quality writing in other subjects. This limits the extent of their skills.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Over the last year, pupils' progress has speeded up considerably in all subjects due to the improvements in teaching. From their various starting points, pupils are making good progress.
- Most pupils reach the national averages at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 respectively. From the school's own unvalidated information, attainment is rising with increasing numbers of pupils exceeding the expected levels.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress due to the carefully planned help they receive. They are making particularly strong progress in mathematics. Their classmates are very considerate in supporting their friends.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is now faster than that of others in school. The numbers of pupils are too few to compare their attainment in English and mathematics with others at the end of Year 6. Nonetheless, there are no gaps between these pupils' attainment and that of current groups in school.
- In 2014, Year 1 pupils reached above the national standards in the Year 1 phonics check. This reflects the stronger emphasis on the teaching of phonics and pupils become fluent readers very quickly. Pupils enjoy their reading across a wide range of literature. The small group reading sessions are effective in developing pupils' comprehension skills.
- Standards of pupils' writing in their English books are impressive. They relish the challenge of using new and adventurous vocabulary, for example when creating suspense in their *Harris Burdick*' mystery stories with words such as 'compelling' and 'chilling'. However, they do not always produce such good writing in other subjects which limits the extent of their skills.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is good. Pupils are able to handle numbers and complete calculations confidently and accurately. However, there are few challenging investigation tasks that encourage all pupils to apply their number skills and make connections with other areas such as geometry and statistics, in order to deepen their thinking.
- The numbers of most-able pupils are too few to compare their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, in current groups the most-able pupils attain well above average standards because they are set challenging work that demands more of their thinking. In mathematics, they often have more complex problems to solve, such as the Year 5 pupils who challenged each other to calculate distances as decimal fractions, to good effect.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit both academically and socially from spending an afternoon each week in the partner school. They have enjoyed expert teaching in subjects such as German and computing.

The early years provision is good

- The early years is well led and managed. Leaders ensure that staff receive helpful training to enable children to achieve well.
- Children settle happily to school because clear routines and effective relationships are soon established. The way the older pupils in the class welcome them and include them in their activities helps to grow their confidence.
- As a result of this positive start, children make good progress from their various starting points and develop into self-assured young learners. Children are generally well prepared for Year 1.
- Children's development in mathematics is strong. For example, children were able to handle numbers up to 20 confidently when making 'hedgehogs' by throwing dice to decide the number of 'prickles'. They were able to work out one more or one less than the number on their hedgehog's back accurately and quickly.
- Overall, teaching in the early years is of good quality. Children's progress is assessed and recorded regularly. Staff ensure that the provision is adjusted appropriately to meet the specific needs of any

children who require extra support or those who are more able.

- However, teaching does not develop children's skills in writing as effectively as in reading and mathematics. While the teaching of phonics is good, the links to writing are not made systematically enough to enable children to write words and simple sentences by themselves.
- Children behave very well, feel safe, and enjoy their learning both inside and in the outdoor area. They are extremely sensible when negotiating the steps to the outdoor space which, although relatively small, is well managed with some interesting resources.
- Parents are positive about the progress their children are making and are kept well informed about their children's progress.

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	113101
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	462496

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	19
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judy Chisholm
Headteacher	Andrea Rice, executive headteacher
Date of previous school inspection	April 2013
Telephone number	01404 881491
Email address	admin@membury-primary.devon.sch.uk

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