

Ilchester Community Primary School

Somerton Road, Ilchester, Somerset BA22 8JL

Inspection dates	24–25 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher, the senior leadership team and the governors have ensured that standards have improved. As a result, pupils make good progress in all subjects.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is due to good-quality teaching in all departments.
- The progress of different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, or who have special educational needs or disability, is good.
- Subject leaders play a key role in leading developments that have a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- The recently appointed early years leader has begun to strengthen the provision for the youngest children.
- The governing body carefully monitors the work of the school. It provides a good mix of challenge and support to leaders.
- Typically, pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They show good attitudes to their learning and produce work of a good standard.
- School staff have a good understanding of the needs of each pupil. As a result, the provision for pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There are good systems in place for ensuring that pupils are kept safe. This is a strength of the school.
- Attendance has remained high since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some low-level behaviour difficulties of pupils in key stage 1 are not effectively managed. This restricts pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not always follow school policy in letting pupils know how well they are doing, and how to further improve their work.
- The improvements in early years have happened recently. These need to be maintained and built on to ensure that children make the best possible progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that in all lessons pupils understand how well they are doing, and how they can make further improvements to their work
 - building on recent improvements to the leadership of the early years
 - improving the behaviour and raising expectations of pupils in key stage 1.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The good leadership of the headteacher has ensured that all issues identified at the previous inspection have been addressed. He has been very well supported by his leadership team and governing body. School development planning processes has been very effective in helping all groups of pupils to make good progress. The senior leadership team and governors have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The culture and ethos within the school are very positive. Pupils, staff members and the vast majority of parents speak very highly of how well the school is run.
- Leaders and governors are very aware of the particular needs of the high proportion of pupils who are from armed service families. Pupils have to cope with a parent being away from home for long periods of time, or moving schools regularly. The school has used the service children's pupil premium fund to employ an additional teacher, in order to provide a good level of support to these pupils. This money also contributes to small-group sessions focused on improving pupils' understanding of their own emotions, and to employing a part-time parent support adviser. All these initiatives effectively support pupils.
- The additional pupil premium income (to provide support for pupils entitled to free school meals or children who are looked after) is used to fund a variety of interventions which have enabled these pupils to make similar rates of progress to other pupils in the school.
- Leaders keep a close eye on rates of progress for all key groups of pupils. Effective action is taken when pupils are making less than expected progress. A wide range of additional learning opportunities are available to support pupils when this happens. For example, if a pupil has not met the required standard in phonics in Year 1, individual tuition can be arranged.
- Much of the work over the last couple of years has broadened and strengthened pupils' learning across a range of subjects. Subject leaders have played a key role in this. Links have been made with other schools, which have enabled staff to share ideas for teaching and assessment. Teachers have also observed lessons in local outstanding schools. A good range of training opportunities have been provided to staff. These experiences have helped improve the planning of subjects and the quality of teaching.
- A good variety of after-school clubs provide opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend the learning they have completed in class. These include athletics, art and craft, country dancing and singing clubs.
- The progress made in mathematics over the last two years has been good. At the end of key stage 2, pupils are now attaining in line with national expectations. The school predicts that this improvement will continue for the current year.
- The recent appointment of an early years leader is already having a positive impact. She is providing good leadership, which has resulted in staff having higher expectations of what children can achieve. She has provided training for teaching assistants, so that they are better able to plan next steps of learning to help each child reach their potential. However, the improvements have happened very recently. These need to be consolidated and built on further.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is well led. Parents speak very highly of the way in which the school has supported their children. One parent said, 'I really believe that my children's needs could not have been better met anywhere in the world.'
- The school provides a wide range of experiences to enable pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning to develop well. This is reinforced by the school's vision, which outlines the breadth of what the school aims to offer each pupil, and how pupils, staff, governors and parents are expected to contribute.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils are encouraged to develop the qualities required to live in a multicultural, democratic society: for example, by being expected to share in the decision-making about the school behaviour policy, or taking part in an open election for house captains.
- The local authority has introduced a new structure for supporting schools that require improvement. A Somerset education partner has completed three short visits since last November. These have provided a helpful level of support to the headteacher.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons in key stage 1 are lower than in other parts of the school. This results in pupils not making as much progress as they could.

- The school's policy on marking and feedback is not consistently applied. Pupils do not always know how well they are doing, or what improvements they need to make to their work. They are not always given time to address recommended improvements.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors use the school development plan to carefully monitor progress and to challenge leaders when required. They have ensured that school policies accurately reflect practice. When they do not, they have amended the policies accordingly. They provide a good level of support to staff.
 - Governors have a detailed understanding of pupils' progress and attainment. They know how well different groups of pupils are progressing. They are aware of how additional funds for disadvantaged pupils, service children and physical education and sport development are impacting on progress. Their oversight of finances is good.
 - Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching. Through visits to lessons, they have first-hand experience of this. Working closely with the headteacher, they maintain a good understanding of teachers' performance management arrangements. Using this information, they ensure that salary progression is linked to teachers' performance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There are strong systems in place to record and track all aspects of the school's work in this area. These systems demonstrate that training requirements are up to date, safer recruitment procedures are being followed, and that any concerns about individual pupils are properly investigated and acted on when required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection. Leaders have focused on strengthening teachers' subject knowledge, and giving teachers opportunities to learn about good teaching practice in other schools. Assessment procedures have been improved. Teachers now check pupils' learning more frequently. Standardised tests and teachers' assessments are both used regularly in order to get a more reliable picture.
- In most lessons, there is a positive climate for learning. Pupils are keen to learn and do their best work. Teachers ask questions to find out exactly what different pupils have learned. They use this information to reframe their teaching to aid better learning. Pupils work well together, showing a good ability to work collaboratively.
- Reading is taught well across the school. Least-able pupils show a good range of strategies to work out how to read unfamiliar words. Teachers show good subject knowledge when teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they make). As a result, pupils make good progress.
- The quality of teaching of writing has been improved through working with a local group of schools. This has helped teachers identify the key areas from the new national curriculum to focus on. The school identifies that most-able pupils could be stretched further.
- In mathematics pupils learn well. They show a good level of understanding for their age. By the time they get to year 6, they show good subject knowledge and ability to use their knowledge to reason out problems. For example, pupils were able to use their knowledge of number calculations to create a series of sums, using only certain numbers to get to a set answer. Discussions with the most able pupils indicated that overall the work they are set provides the correct level of challenge.
- Pupils are taught well across a wide range of subjects. In a computing lesson, the teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge. By engaging in a range of mini-challenges, pupils were able to explore all the tasks the teacher had planned for them. In PE, Years 1 and 2 pupils learned the key skills of accuracy of passing and intercepting during a netball lesson. In science, pupils were keen to share their understanding of the life cycle of a butterfly.
- The most able pupils are challenged well in their work across all subjects. Their work books show a good standard of work produced, pitched at the correct level for their abilities. The most able pupils in all year groups show a mature level of ability in writing.
- Most parents like the current homework system. They stated that it is set regularly and is helpful to their child's learning.

- In some key stage 1 lessons, expectations for behaviour are low. This can lead to some disruption, distracting pupils from their learning. When this occurred in a mathematics lesson, the teacher was not able to effectively address this, resulting in slow progress for the majority of pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school places a high value on looking after the emotional and social needs of all pupils. Pupils described their good relationships with their teachers. They spoke confidently about being able to go to them if they had any difficulties or concerns.
- The school provides opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for different aspects of the running of the school. This includes looking after the main phone line during lunchtimes, being house captains and working in the library.
- Throughout their time at the school, pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe. Regular time is given to teach pupils how to keep themselves safe on the internet, and to learn about relationships and sex education.
- Parents stated that all staff know their children and families very well. This proves particularly helpful to pupils when they are having to deal with issues such as their father being deployed away from home, or having a bereavement in the family.
- The school employs a part-time parent support adviser. She provides support to both pupils and their families. Her work includes helping families who are having to deal with a wide range of difficulties. The success of her approach enables the pupils to be more settled at home and at school, and to be able to make better progress in their learning.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying behaviour. However, pupils the inspector talked to have no direct experience of being bullied. Teachers confirmed that examples of bullying are very rare.
- Governors are particularly pleased with the way in which the school runs community-based events. This is successful in both involving members of the local community with the school and supporting pupils' learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the rewards and sanctions that are in place to help promote good behaviour. They are keen to find ways to make the school a better place. They recently came up with an idea for monitoring behaviour in the cloakrooms, to make these rooms calmer and quieter places.
- The school has introduced an initiative called 'knights of success'. This encourages pupils to associate certain positive qualities with different knights, whom they can then emulate. This approach has encouraged pupils to improve their attitudes to learning. Parents reported that their children talk about this at home, saying, 'I'm being Sir Stick-a-lot or Sir Imagine-a-lot today.'
- Pupils' work is consistently produced to a good standard. Pupils show a good level of pride in their achievements.
- During break times pupils happily play together. There is a good range of activities for them to join in with. During lunch pupils sit in friendship groups. They sit quietly, chatting to their friends. When problems occur between pupils, they are usually able to resolve these themselves.
- In some lessons in key stage 1, there are low-level behaviour difficulties. This can have a negative effect on learning.
- Attendance levels are above the national average.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Children now make good progress in the early years. School information, along with inspection evidence, indicates that a good proportion of children will make a good level of development by the end of this school year.

- Achievement in phonics is good. Pupils achieve above average in the Year 1 national phonics check. This is as a result of the good teaching they receive.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards for their age in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with national expectations. Pupils made good progress in these subjects. School information shows that pupils will make similar rates of progress this year.
- The quality of work in books from a wide range of subjects confirms the improvements that have been made in the school. Work from all key stages shows that pupils are making good progress. In Year 6 books, work is produced to a high standard. Pupils demonstrate their ability to write accurately in different tenses, spell and use punctuation at the correct level for their age, and write well using both prose and poetry.
- In mathematics, they can calculate angles in a wide variety of shapes, convert fractions to percentages, and complete a range of number operations using decimals and fractions. There is no significant difference between the progress of boys and girls.
- Most-able pupils achieve to a good standard and make good progress. Year 1 work books show pupils making best progress in phonics. Current school information for pupils in Year 2 indicates that they are making good progress in both reading and mathematics. There is a group of very able mathematicians in Year 6 who are making particularly good progress.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is good. There is better than expected progress between early years and the end of key stage 1 for this group. Achievement by the end of year 6 in reading is in line with national expectations. Once pupils have been in the school for at least three terms, their progress in writing starts to catch up with national expectations.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress from their different starting points. This has been achieved by ensuring that there is a good match between each pupil's needs and the input that is provided. The school has developed a number of approaches that can be used to give small-group or individual support to each pupil.

Early years provision

is good

- The early years provision is now good. The recently appointed leader has made a very good start and has already made improvements. However, these have happened very recently. These improvements need to be maintained to help all children make the best possible progress.
- Teaching is good. In a literacy lesson, the teacher modelled writing for the 'Fish who could wish' story. When children retold the story, the vast majority confidently applied their phonics knowledge to say the words accurately. An investment in good-quality literacy and number play resources has led to an improvement in children's language, communication and literacy skills.
- An early years adviser has carried out some observations of practice, which has effectively supported the early years leader. Assessment procedures have been strengthened with the addition of a vulnerability tracker. This helps to identify children who are developing at a rate slower than expected. Actions are then agreed to address this.
- Inspection evidence confirms that baseline assessments are accurate. Children make good progress towards age-related expectations. Disadvantaged children make similar rates of progress to their peers.
- The behaviour of children is good. In a writing lesson, children were able to concentrate for a good amount of time, and were very engaged in their learning throughout the lesson.

School details

Unique reference number	123735
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10017407

This inspection 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	249
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Collins
Headteacher	Nick Heath
Telephone number	01935 840568
Website	www.ilchestercommunityprimary.com
Email address	office@ilchester.somerset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 September 2014

Information about this school

- Ilchester Community Primary School is an average-sized school.
- Over half the pupils are from armed services families.
- More pupils than normal join and leave the school throughout the year.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (to give extra support to pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets the requirements for publishing information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in a range of lessons or parts of lessons, and looked at pupils' work. They listened to pupils read, and talked with pupils about their learning and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, subject leaders, members of the governing body, a local authority adviser, the parent support adviser and teachers.
- Inspectors scrutinised documentation related to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and took into account 53 responses to the questionnaire, and a number of comments from the text facility on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors took into account staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Andy Lole, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Hester Millsop	Ofsted Inspector
Faye Bertham	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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