

Parracombe Church of England Primary School

Parracombe, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 4QJ

Inspection dates

9–10 November 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

- Leaders and governors are improving the school as a result of their tenacity and concerted drive for improvement.
- Teaching ensures that pupils are achieving well. Assessment information is accurate and used effectively to ensure that pupils are making better progress than in the past.
- Most pupils typically make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points. However, the most able pupils do not yet consistently attain the highest standards of which they are capable.
- The curriculum promotes excitement and stimulates pupils' interest well. It helps to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- Pupils are engaged by the good quality of teaching. They also enjoy taking on additional responsibilities outside of the classroom, for example during playtimes.
- Effective teamwork and collaboration are the hallmarks of typical leadership across the federation. Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Good plans are in place to continue the journey of improvement.
- Leaders have robustly tackled any underperformance. Teachers are held firmly to account for pupils' progress.
- Some middle leaders are new to their roles. They work effectively across the federation but are yet to demonstrate fully the impact of their actions.
- Leadership of the early years is well focused on children's learning and development. Good use is made of information about their starting points to plan activities that are well suited to their needs.
- Although governors are mainly effective, their understanding of what needs to be done to further raise the achievement of pupils' eligible for the additional funding lacks precision.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise expectations so that the most able pupils can reach the highest standards in a wide range of subjects.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - introducing a more focused strategy for raising the achievement of all disadvantaged pupils
 - enabling middle leaders to have a greater impact across their areas of responsibility
 - developing the curriculum so that it enables pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge across a range of subjects
 - ensuring that work undertaken by governors is used to inform the school's development more precisely.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher, well supported by other leaders across the federation, has taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching in the school. Pupils are now making better progress in all areas of their learning.
- Leaders, including governors, promote high expectations of both the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Leaders hold an accurate view of what is working well and make timely interventions to address any identified weaknesses in teaching. Consequently any underperformance has been eradicated.
- The collaborative working and use of shared plans to secure improvement across the federation is a particular strength of leadership. This approach is engaging and developing staff and ensures that there is greater capacity for securing further improvement.
- The recently appointed middle leaders now have an increased role in planning and checking the quality of teaching and learning across the federation of schools. Consequently, leadership overall has been strengthened and a wider team is involved in decision-making, for example to plan and coordinate subject-specific training for teachers. While this approach is showing early success, middle leaders are not yet able to demonstrate their impact across the full range of subjects.
- School leaders have been proactive in redesigning the curriculum so that it draws more keenly on the interests of pupils, and in particular those of boys, some of whom have been more reluctant learners in the past. The curriculum is extended well beyond school as leaders promote a range of extra-curricular activities. Even though many of these are run at another school in the federation, they are well attended. Leaders arrange transport so that pupils can attend. Popular extra-curricular clubs, including 'newspaper' club, tag rugby, art and crafts, and netball, contribute well to pupils' personal and academic development.
- Leaders communicate well with parents and respond to their views and comments. For example, home learning has been revised so that parents are better engaged and supported to help with their children's learning.
- School leaders, including governors, ensure that training for staff is well planned and directed towards priority areas. For example, the training for teachers to improve pupils' grammar and spelling in writing as well as pupils' reasoning in mathematics is making a discernible difference to the quality of the work seen in pupils' workbooks.
- Leaders are effective in promoting fundamental British values through a well-considered programme of themed topics that include democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, respect and tolerance. Pupils are able to explain clearly how school rules relate to the law and, similarly, how the school council reflects democracy. Pupils show their interest in global issues by raising questions, such as, 'Should children have to walk through rivers to have food?' The special educational needs coordinator and her assistant know the pupils under their care well. They track individual performance over time to ensure that pupils make good progress. Resources are allocated well, for example to secure effective teaching assistant support.

- The management of leaders' and teachers' performance focuses well on leaders' identified areas for improvement. Processes for supporting and challenging teachers have been instrumental in improving the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Leaders are relentless in their pursuit of improvement, which is having the desired impact on raising standards.
- School leaders have introduced a range of strategies to improve pupils' attendance. Consequently, the attendance rates for pupils, including girls, those eligible for additional funding and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, have improved to match other pupils. Attendance is now better than that found nationally.
- Leaders and governors promote equalities through policies and procedures that engender a collective responsibility and culture of tolerance. Pupils respect each other in lessons and at other times of the school day, and are encouraged to be considerate.
- The local authority has monitored the progress of the school appropriately since the previous inspection. Advisers have offered timely support and challenge to school leaders so that, by the spring term 2016, school leaders were in a position to work independently.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has developed good processes to find out about the quality of teaching and learning and uses this information well to challenge school leaders to secure the necessary improvements over time.
- Governors hold school leaders to account for the decisions they make. They are prepared to take difficult decisions in the best interests of the pupils, particularly when tackling underperformance.
- While governors have a good overview of the work of the school, at times, their monitoring and evaluation does not precisely target the most important areas that need improvement.
- Raised expectations are instrumental in the recent improvements and in sustaining the ambitions of the school and the federation.
- Governors ensure that policies for safeguarding pupils are compliant, including child protection, and have a designated governor for the safer recruitment of staff.
- Governors allocate the sport premium to initiatives including 'fun fit', 'forest schools' and additional swimming tuition. However, the impact of this grant is not uniformly checked by governors.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is allocated appropriately by the governing body. Pupils eligible for this additional funding are now making stronger progress. A small number of pupils in receipt of the grant still need to catch up with their counterparts nationally. Others could attain even higher standards. As yet, governors do not have a clear strategy for achieving this. Currently there are no pupils eligible for the grant who are identified as high-attaining pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff receive annual training in child protection and are familiar, for example, with 'Keeping children safe in education', September 2016.

- Staff demonstrate that they know how to respond to serious issues, including disclosures from pupils.
- Policies and procedures are clear and reflect the current requirements to keep children safe. These include whistleblowing, the 'Prevent' duty, missing children and safer recruitment. The school's single central record meets statutory requirements.
- Health and safety risk assessments also comply with requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve have improved strongly since the previous inspection. This has resulted in better outcomes for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers now expect more from the pupils. They provide specific guidance and advice relating to grammar and punctuation, which helps pupils to understand what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers make effective use of their strong subject knowledge to check what the pupils understand, know and can do. Work is modified if necessary so that pupils can make more rapid progress.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Teachers and other adults ask probing questions to challenge pupils to explain their thinking and reasoning, especially in mathematics. For example, lower-attaining pupils' reasoning skills are developed effectively when asked to 'prove' how they know which pairs of numbers add up to 10. However, at times, pupils are less confident in applying their mathematical skills across a wider range of contexts and subjects.
- Teachers generally use assessment information about the pupils well to plan for their next steps in learning. In particular, this is helping pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who need to catch up to make more rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' planning for the most able pupils can at times lack challenge, with pupils spending too long on particular tasks or repeating work unnecessarily. On such occasions progress stalls for these pupils.
- Pupils enjoy reading and are highly motivated because teachers promote a positive culture of reading in the school and across the federation. Pupils in key stage 1 are proud to achieve the status of a 'free reader'. They keenly explain how teachers encourage reading through listening and talking about different books and authors.
- Teachers skilfully use other subjects to provide a platform to practise writing. For example, older pupils report writing skills are developed well when studying about the Stone Age and Skara Brae in history. However, school leaders have rightly identified that spelling is still an aspect for further improvement across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- In lessons, pupils are keen, eager and motivated to learn. Even in the youngest

classes, the children understand how to cooperate with each other and communicate well to achieve their tasks.

- Pupils are well prepared for lessons and are strongly encouraged to make individual choices, such as when and how to apply resources in mathematics, or selecting ways to present historical writing, for example. These choices build pupils' confidence and complement their readiness for the next stage in their learning.
- Pupils are well supported by adults to be resilient and determined. This is a strong feature of the school's work and is promoted across the school day and through a wide assortment of activities and opportunities, including violin lessons, where pupils are praised for 'persevering and keeping going'.
- Staff effectively exercise their duty of care towards pupils. Parents value the openness of the school and feel that they can approach staff when they have concerns. Parents have confidence that staff will respond well to their concerns and complaints, including when they have brought any issues to the attention of the executive headteacher.
- Teachers ensure a supportive atmosphere in the classroom and supervision at playtimes, and lunch is well managed. Any incidents are dealt with well by staff and a record of behaviour used to inform the school's monitoring.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They are taught well about how to keep safe online and know how to protect personal information and data. They also show a strong awareness of safety in other situations, for example relating to fire evacuation.
- Staff understand procedures for referring any concerns to the relevant senior leaders. This leads to prompt and appropriate action taken with external agencies when required.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and know that this is not tolerated, as it harms others. Pupils told the inspector that this has 'improved a lot' and that teachers give suitable time to discussing issues through timetabled activities together. On the rare occasions when parents and pupils need to raise concerns about bullying these are managed well by school staff.
- Pupils are well supervised before and after school, including arrangements for transporting pupils to other school sites in the federation for extra-curricular clubs. Parents and pupils highly value this service, for example being able to sing in the choir at Lynton Church of England Primary School.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are now making better progress in their learning because they are also taking greater responsibility for what they can achieve. All pupils are included and everyone is valued. For example, in key stage 2, pupils work effectively during the morning in the Year 3–4 and Year 5–6 groupings, but also get on well when coming together in the afternoons. This arrangement is well established, so pupils interact and learn well.
- Pupils are courteous and conduct themselves well around the school because of the expectations and systems of staff. Pupils report that they 'play well together' and 'don't often fall out'. Pupils also like having the responsibility of being a monitor, for example as shed, fruit or book monitors, which they take very seriously. The pupils recognise how these roles contribute to making the day better for each other.

- Pupils' attendance is good and has improved since the recent inspection. In particular, the attendance of pupils supported by the pupil premium has improved to match that of their peers. Pupils arrive punctually for school and transport arrangements for the school work well.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress across the school has improved strongly since the previous inspection so that the majority of pupils reach the new national standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. However, the proportions of pupils who are reaching the higher standards of which they are capable in each subject are not yet high enough.
- At the end of key stages 1 and 2, the numbers of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium are too small for national comparisons to be made, including for 2016, when there were no disadvantaged pupils in these cohorts. However, information held by the school and work in pupils' books shows that overall, disadvantaged pupils in other years are now making stronger progress to catch up with all other pupils nationally.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are making secure progress to meet the expected standards in the new national curriculum. School information for current year groups shows that pupils are on track to meet the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the most able pupils need more support and challenge if they are to attain the higher standards in each subject.
- Internal information and hearing pupils read shows that pupils gain the knowledge and understanding of phonics expected for their age in readiness for Key Stage 2. In 2016, all pupils who needed to be retested met the standard by the end of Year 2.
- Other year groups in the school similarly show improvement since the previous inspection in reading, writing and mathematics and there are no gender differences in terms of outcomes achieved.
- Work in pupils' books illustrates their good progress across a range of subjects and year groups. Pupils' understanding of chronology develops well through studying the detailed topic on Dinosaurs. Activities planned increase in complexity and subject matter, challenging pupils to develop their ability to build on their prior knowledge.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities consistently make good progress, as do those who are in receipt of the pupil premium funding or those who join the school from other settings.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership and development of teaching has been instrumental in sustaining the good outcomes for children so that they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders and managers act quickly to take the necessary action to improve outcomes for the children. For example, the revised transition arrangements and how this information is shared and used ensure that children can get off to a good start in school.

- Teaching is effective because staff are attuned to the needs of each child and focus keenly on what each must learn to make good progress across the curriculum. Staff use the information they gather about the children's learning and development to carefully direct learning activities and provision to meet the children's needs.
- As a result of teachers' imaginative and carefully planned approach, children are developing a strong foundation for both reading and writing. The phonics teaching captures children's interest and promotes effective learning. Staff ensure that children have many opportunities to recognise the sounds and apply what they have learned, for example when practising to write the associated letter.
- The early years leader has been well supported by other staff to establish a vibrant and stimulating environment for the children. The carefully chosen and arranged activities support children to be creative and confident in their choices and decision-making.
- The outdoor space is also used creatively, including to deepen the children's appreciation of the environment and for participation in 'fun fit'.
- Children attain a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year. However, their rates of progress are not yet as accelerated as they should be for some individuals, especially in exceeding the expectations for the early years foundation stage.
- Staff care well for the children, keeping them safe and teaching them well to consider the needs of others and show respect.
- School leaders consider the needs of parents and involve them in key activities to support their children, for example through transition activities and in the new online assessment system.

School details

Unique reference number	113382
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10017403

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jan Stokes
Headteacher	Jayne Peacock
Telephone number	01598 763338
Website	www.westexmoorfederation.org.uk
Email address	admin@westexmoorfederation.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 September 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is part of the West Exmoor Federation, comprising Lynton Church of England Primary School, Parracombe Church of England Primary School and Kentisbury Primary School. One executive headteacher leads and a single governing body serves all schools.
- There are more girls than boys in the school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is much lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much lower than the national average.
- Children in the early years foundation stage are taught in a combined reception and

key stage 1 class at Kentisbury Primary School, which includes pupils from Parracombe Church of England Primary School. Similarly, the key stage 2 class at Parracombe Church of England Primary School includes pupils from Kentisbury Primary School.

- Due to the small cohorts, the school is not compared to the government's floor standards which set out the minimum expectations at the end of key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector prepared for the inspection by reviewing school information on the website, previous inspection reports and monitoring inspection visits, and by analysing published school performance data.
- Two of the three schools in the federation were inspected at the same time: Kentisbury Primary School and Parracombe Church of England Primary School. The inspectors met jointly with school leaders and with the federation's governing body.
- The lead inspector conducted lesson observations in all key stages and analysed pupils' work books jointly with the executive headteacher.
- The lead inspector heard pupils read.
- The inspector scrutinised documents relating to safeguarding and asked staff about procedures.
- The lead inspector scrutinised key documentation including governors' minutes.
- As well as meeting some parents, the lead inspector took into account the views expressed on Parent View. There were nine written responses.

Inspection team

Stewart Gale, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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