

# Ilfracombe Church of England Junior School

Princess Avenue, Ilfracombe, Devon EX34 9LW

## Inspection dates

23–24 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils are not making consistently strong progress in a range of subjects. Teaching does not take enough account of gaps in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- The most able pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make uneven progress across year groups, particularly in writing.
- Although pupils learn well in English and mathematics, they are less able to apply these skills to their learning in other subjects. This is because teaching and the curriculum in other subjects are not challenging enough.
- Teachers do not check that work is at the right level of challenge for all pupils. This means that some pupils do not make the progress they could, particularly the most able.
- Over time, leaders and managers have not had an accurate understanding of the needs of the most able pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This has slowed improvements to teaching and to these pupils' progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is developing the skills of other senior and middle leaders successfully. She provides a clear direction for improvement.
- The leadership team is improving the quality of teaching. Consequently, pupils' progress in writing, reading and mathematics is improving, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils enjoy a variety of rich experiences in school, especially in music and sport. The school provides a wide range of after-school clubs, which pupils enjoy.
- The school is a calm and orderly place. Pupils feel safe and well looked after by adults and by each other.
- Governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school has improved since the last inspection. They are now better able to challenge and support the school in its improvement.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils make consistently good progress in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics, by:
  - making sure that leaders and teachers accurately identify and quickly tackle any gaps in pupils' knowledge, understanding or skills
  - improving the quality of pupils' reading, writing and mathematics in other subjects.
- Improve rates of progress for the most able pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities by:
  - ensuring that leaders check how well teachers understand and are planning for pupils' learning needs
  - making sure that teaching provides the right amount of challenge to help pupils to improve.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is resolute in her focus and determination to bring about improvements. She has introduced a more robust approach to checking the impact of leaders' actions on pupils' achievement. As a result, outcomes for pupils are improving across the school. The vision, 'Lighting up Learning', permeates the school and describes well the headteacher's absolute focus on the quality of learning.
- The headteacher is developing an effective leadership team. Leaders' actions are improving the quality of teaching and learning. However, teaching is not yet consistently good.
- The leadership team invests wisely in the professional development of staff. Teachers value the support they receive and say that they are proud to teach at the school.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This underpins an effective approach to planning improvements. For example, initiatives are given time to be fully understood and implemented by all staff. As a result of this careful approach, there are clear improvements since the previous inspection in the teaching of writing and mathematics.
- Leaders recognise that the assessment of pupils' needs has not always been accurate in the past. They are beginning to take action to address this and assessment information is now more reliable.
- Extra funding, including the pupil premium, is used well to boost achievement. Disadvantaged pupils receive carefully targeted support through one-to-one discussions and catch-up programmes. As a result, rates of progress for disadvantaged pupils are improving rapidly. A recent university visit was effective in helping to raise pupils' aspirations.
- The additional sports funding is used well to ensure that more pupils take part in sport, including swimming. In particular, more disadvantaged pupils now access sporting opportunities. Tennis is particularly strong in the school and pupils are rightly proud of their success in local tournaments. The wide range of after-school clubs, including some for more unusual sports such as dodgeball and curling, are well attended by pupils.
- Pupils enjoy their learning through the varied and interesting curriculum the school provides. Homework is consistently set across the school and pupils know that they are expected to read regularly at home.
- Pupils have valuable opportunities to learn across a broad range of activities in school and through trips and visits in the local area. Music is a particular strength and pupils enjoy a range of instruments and the effective guidance they receive. This includes support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to participate in music. Pupils also have the opportunity to take part in plays and other performances. These activities make an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Leaders have worked hard to improve communication with parents and most parents who spoke to inspectors were pleased with what the school provides. Parents say that they appreciate access to information about their child's achievements through the new online facility. Events such as healthy eating workshops, and the new before-school café, help to make parents feel involved and supported by the school. A small number of parents felt that leaders do not always listen and respond to their concerns. Leaders are aware of this and acknowledge that more could be done to build stronger relationships with all parents.
- The local authority has provided support for mathematics teaching and leadership. Support for governance, including a review and training, has helped to strengthen governors' roles. Local authority advisers have also carried out termly reviews of progress against the school's improvement priorities. This external support and challenge have contributed to the improvements seen since the last inspection, particularly in leadership and management and the teaching of mathematics. Nonetheless, the school is not yet good.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors have developed their skills and knowledge and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They make sure that they have the information they need to provide challenge as well as support to leaders, especially about pupils' achievement.
- Governors know the school well. They keep in close touch with leaders, make visits to the school and take part in community events.
- Governors fully support the headteacher's drive to provide high-quality training for staff. They check that actions in the improvement plan have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding procedures are well organised. All staff have received training, including in preventing radicalisation. Staff are kept well informed of any changes in safeguarding requirements.
- There is a strong culture of keeping children safe and caring for them. Staff are vigilant and pupils know whom they can talk to if they have any concerns. Pupils know that they can also go to 'The Bridge' for extra support and care.
- Programmes such as the 'forest school' to support pupils' emotional well-being are given high priority. These are targeted to ensure that those pupils who need them most receive them.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Requires improvement**

- Although leaders have improved many aspects of teaching, particularly in mathematics, pupils' progress is not yet good across the school. Pupils' misconceptions are not consistently picked up and tackled quickly. Pupils find it difficult at times to understand what they are learning, and some find the work too easy. This means that they do not make the progress they could.
- Teaching does not meet the needs of the most able pupils well enough. Some activities lack the challenge needed to deepen pupils' understanding and extend their thinking, particularly in writing in younger year groups. Leaders are improving the teaching of writing in Years 5 and 6 to better challenge the most able pupils. This has yet to be introduced to all year groups.
- Too many pupils have gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding. Although most teaching is effective in tackling these gaps, these improvements are too recent to make up fully for lost learning. To address this, leaders have introduced teaching sessions called 'pick ups' to help pupils to catch up. This is beginning to help these pupils to make better progress.
- Pupils do not always apply their learning in reading, writing and mathematics well enough in other subjects in the curriculum. This means that progress is not as rapid as it could be for all pupils.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have reviewed the approach to providing feedback to pupils about their work. Although this is working well in writing and mathematics, it is not yet consistently applied in all subjects. Sometimes pupils are not clear about how to improve the quality of their work.
- Specialist teaching, including in music, makes an effective contribution to pupils' learning, development and progress. Pupils enjoy their work on different projects, such as a link with The Royal Ballet. Through this link, pupils in Year 5 made a short film about what they had learned in history.
- Teachers and teaching assistants share a strong commitment to developing their practice. They are reflective and self-critical and welcome the support they receive from leaders.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Positive relationships between pupils and staff promote pupils' confidence. Pupils take great pride in the presentation of their work and in their neat and tidy handwriting.
- Pupils are eager to learn and they take part well in their lessons. They listen carefully and respect each other's ideas and views.
- Pupils understand how to keep healthy. They enjoy the nutritious school dinners and participate in a wide range of sports. Parents appreciate the personal, social and emotional support their children receive from staff in 'The Bridge' provision.

- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and parents agree. Regular visits to the school from the police help pupils to stay safe online and to understand different forms of bullying. They say, and the school's records confirm, that the few incidents of bullying are tackled well by staff.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day, including at lunchtimes. They support each other in lessons and play together well in the playground. The school is an orderly environment.
- Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently and pupils respond well to instructions. Consequently, lessons flow smoothly and there is little disruption to learning.
- The school's records show good improvements for pupils with particular behavioural needs. Records also show that staff are quick to tackle the rare instances of discriminatory behaviour towards others.
- Overall, attendance is broadly average. However, there are too many pupils who are persistently absent from school. The headteacher is working with parents and families to help improve pupils' attendance.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- The school's progress information and the work in pupils' books indicate that most pupils are now making better progress in reading, writing and mathematics than at the time of the last inspection. However, pupils are not yet making good progress because they are not always challenged enough to produce their best work. This applies particularly to the most able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The identification of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not always accurate. This makes it difficult for teachers to plan activities that are appropriate to the needs of these pupils.
- Leaders have focused on raising achievement in English and mathematics. However, pupils are not yet making consistently strong progress in all their subjects. For example, they make rapid progress in music, but not in art or religious education. Leaders have rightly identified that the standard of pupils' writing is not as high in other subjects as it is in English.
- Pupils are making better progress in their use of vocabulary and in structuring sentences and paragraphs. This is due to a more consistent approach to the teaching of writing. Pupils attained less well in grammar, punctuation and spelling in the 2016 national curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 than they did in other subjects. Although leaders have introduced a systematic approach to teaching spelling, not all teachers are adapting it well enough to meet pupils' needs.
- Pupils read widely and regularly, including for homework. Most can draw on a range of strategies to read fluently, and with good understanding. They can talk about favourite authors and books. Some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not skilled in their use of phonics and this limits their understanding of a range of

texts.

- Since the previous inspection, pupils are making better progress in mathematics. This is because leaders ensure that basic mathematical skills are taught systematically and resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning. Pupils are challenged to apply their skills in solving problems and to explain their methods.
- Disadvantaged pupils are also beginning to make faster progress. This is because staff keep a close eye on how well disadvantaged pupils are doing at school and provide prompt support if needed. Consequently, these pupils are beginning to catch up with other pupils nationally. Pupils are proud of keeping special pieces of work in their 'Magic Moments' book.

## School details

Unique reference number	113381
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10019954

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	479
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Porter
Headteacher	Catherine Cox
Telephone number	01271 863463
Website	<a href="http://www.ilfracombe-jun.devon.sch.uk">www.ilfracombe-jun.devon.sch.uk</a>
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Date of previous inspection	2–3 October 2014

## Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and are supported by the school is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is average.
- The school provides additional resources to support pupils' well-being in the form of provision called 'The Bridge'.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for pupils' attainment and



progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching across all year groups and subjects, often jointly with a member of the senior leadership team. An inspector listened to some pupils reading.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in their books along with senior leaders. They observed pupils at playtime and lunchtime and spoke to them about their work and other aspects of school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of staff. They discussed pupils' progress, including the progress of disadvantaged pupils, the most able and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including records of the checks on teaching, the school's information on pupils' progress, the sport funding action plan, the plan to support disadvantaged pupils, the school improvement plan and self-evaluation, records of behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, and recent local authority reports.
- A meeting was held with five governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector spoke with an adviser from the local authority and met with the school's education welfare officer.
- The views of parents were taken into consideration, including 71 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The views of several parents who spoke with inspectors at the start of the school day were also taken into account.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff, which they expressed in a meeting for newly qualified teachers and in the 48 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Tonwen Empson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Patricia Dodds

Ofsted Inspector

Sue Frater

Her Majesty's Inspector

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