

# Otterton Church of England Primary School

Church Hill, Otterton, Budleigh Salterton, Devon EX9 7HU

## Inspection dates

7–8 March 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher has remained determined and resilient throughout a time of significant staff and governance changes since the previous inspection. She has developed a strong leadership team and together they are rapidly improving the quality of teaching.
- Current governors are skilled and experienced. They provide strong strategic leadership and are highly ambitious for the school.
- Teaching meets the needs of pupils well. Learning activities are carefully planned to ensure that pupils develop their understanding and skills. The learning environment is calm and purposeful. Teachers are ambitious for their pupils and pupils respond positively to this.
- Due to the care and support that the school provides, pupils' personal development, welfare and behaviour are good. Pupils enjoy school, appreciate one another's strengths and show respect for each other and adults in the school.
- Children get off to a strong start in the Reception class. They make good progress from their different starting points.
- Since the previous inspection, a number of changes to staffing led to an unsettled period of teaching and learning for some pupils. The headteacher, supported by governors, has now secured a strong staff team that works cohesively to provide good-quality teaching and learning. However, this unsettled period has caused some parents to lose confidence in the school.
- Due to the variation in the quality of teaching in the past, some pupils have not achieved as well as they should. However, these pupils are given the help they need to catch up. By the end of their time at the school, pupils are well prepared for their next steps and have made good progress.

## **Full report**

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

- Rapidly improve relations and communication with parents and the local community so that full confidence in the school and its ability to provide a good standard of education for pupils returns.
- Embed improvements so that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve across the school and any remaining differences in pupils' achievement rapidly diminish.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher, together with senior leaders and governors, is passionate about the school and optimistic about the future. The headteacher is resolute in her belief that the school will continue to stride forwards, working in partnership within the federation. Morale is high and there is a sense that everyone is pulling together to secure the best possible outcomes for pupils across the school.
- The headteacher holds teachers to account robustly and tackles any issues that arise rigorously. She and her recently formed leadership team focus on continuing to improve the quality of teaching and learning and this has already shown an impact on the progress pupils make. Teachers receive extra support and guidance from subject leaders and are encouraged to share their learning with one another. This creates a positive sense of learning together and, as a result, the quality of teaching and learning is improving.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding provided to the school is used effectively. Funding provides additional resources and teaching for those pupils who need it, such as those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. These pupils receive additional well-matched work that helps them gain confidence and make the progress they should.
- The curriculum is organised thoughtfully to ensure that there are good opportunities to share learning experiences within the federation. For example, pupils join with their peers in the partner school to attend learning visits that support the theme they are currently studying. Pupils enjoy these opportunities to work together. Special themed events, such as an arts week, further enhance opportunities for pupils to learn in collaboration with others. Pupils benefit from these experiences and make good progress across a wide range of subjects. Opportunities to work with wider groups of pupils help pupils prepare for the next steps in their education effectively.
- Core values such as thankfulness, friendship and compassion are referred to throughout the school day, and learning about how to behave well towards each other is woven through the curriculum. Pupils learn about a range of religions and cultures. Support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils are prepared well for their future lives in modern Britain.
- The additional funding for sport is used well to support pupils' engagement with sporting activities, both during the school day and after it. Pupils enjoy a range of activities and many proudly contribute to school sports teams such as tag rugby, netball and gymnastics.
- The school has support from a local authority adviser who has been working with leaders as they make improvements to the quality of teaching and learning during a time of staffing instability. Leaders value this support.
- Leaders and governors are aware that there are significant concerns among parents and the community following the changes that have taken place during the period since the previous inspection. They have started to improve communication and trust within the school community. Leaders hold meetings with parents and organise

opportunities for parents to learn about what happens in school by working alongside their children during parts of the school day. This is having a positive impact.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance is effective. Governors have a wide range of skills and experiences, which equips them well to ensure that the school continues to improve. They have guided and supported leaders well through a time of significant staff changes. Governors are committed to improving communication with parents and the local community. Many parents reported how much they appreciate the recent parent forum meetings where their views were listened to and governors shared information.
- Governors are highly ambitious for the school. They ensure that the information they receive from leaders about the progress pupils make allows them to ask relevant questions. As a result, leaders remain focused on securing the best possible outcomes for pupils. Finances are carefully managed so that resources are used effectively to support teaching and learning across the school according to the specific needs of pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The designated lead for safeguarding ensures that staff training is comprehensive and that staff receive any new information regarding updates to safeguarding procedures. Staff know pupils very well and pupils are secure in knowing which adult they can talk to should they have any concerns or problems.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure at the school. The curriculum includes the regular revisiting of safety themes such as guidance to pupils on how to keep safe using social media. Typical comments from pupils were 'everyone knows everyone very well. Everyone gets noticed here' and 'the best thing about this school is that you've always got a friend.'

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and they know the learning needs of their pupils. The learning atmosphere is notably calm and no time is wasted. Pupils understand and are interested in the tasks in hand. Teachers adapt their questions to match the needs of pupils very well. For example, in Years 2 and 3, pupils responded positively to questions and prompts from the teacher that matched their learning needs and this helped pupils to improve their sentences and make good progress.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly and provide feedback which challenges pupils to think more deeply and to improve their work even further. Pupils are encouraged to consider and identify their own next steps in their learning. As a result, pupils have an ownership of their learning and are motivated to achieve even more. In Year 6, for example, pupils carefully edited and improved their stories to good effect while receiving helpful guidance from their teacher and teaching assistant.

- Improvements to the teaching of grammar, spelling, handwriting and mathematics are having an impact on standards in pupils' books. For example, in mathematics, teachers plan challenges that help pupils to apply their learning to solve complex problems that relate to everyday situations. Subject leaders frequently check that these improvements are in place and part of everyday teaching and learning practice across the school.
- Parents are encouraged to find out more about the teaching and learning that take place across the school and this contributes to the positive attitudes pupils have towards learning. Parents are regularly welcomed in to work alongside their children during lessons. Parents who attend these 'open sessions' are very positive about them. A typical comment from a parent was, 'I am surprised at how much learning happens in each lesson and how much fun our children have!'

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils look out for each other and willingly help one another. They show strong empathy, respect and understanding towards differences and demonstrate a clear understanding of what is right and wrong.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and they are very confident that, should any incidents occur, staff will quickly tackle them.
- Pupils are very proud of their work and show a determination to do their best. They show a confidence in themselves as learners and an awareness of their individual strengths.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are very polite and behave well around the school, both in and outside of lessons. They show a mature and responsible attitude; for example, many help to prepare a classroom for the daily whole-school assembly and they do so without fuss.
- There is very little disruption in lessons, although pupils say that this can happen on occasion, albeit far less now than in the past. Relationships between pupils and adults are strong and respectful. Leaders and teachers, along with teaching assistants, show skill and patience in ensuring that pupils have successful outcomes in learning how to manage their behaviour and emotions. There is a sense of calm and quiet during lessons, with pupils purposefully focused on the learning activities in hand.
- Attendance is good. Pupils want to attend as they enjoy their time at school.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Due to the high expectations and well-matched work across the school, current pupils' books show that they are making rapid progress in their writing and mathematics.

Books also show that pupils are using these skills well in other subjects, such as science and history. Teachers know their pupils' learning needs very well and use this knowledge to plan work that is carefully matched to pupils' next steps. This includes the most able pupils, who receive work that stretches their thinking and challenges them to achieve good standards.

- Pupils enjoy their reading and talk about authors they know and books they have read. Teachers use every opportunity to motivate pupils to read more. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 enthusiastically performed poetry using various sound effects and techniques to bring the poem to life.
- Teachers make successful adaptations to learning activities and to the level of support provided to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and to disadvantaged pupils. These pupils therefore receive the extra help they need in order to achieve well.
- Due to the very small cohorts, comparisons of pupils' outcomes with national figures are not helpful or meaningful. Leaders, including subject leaders, carefully track the progress of pupils to check that they are making the progress they should. The school's current data shows that, where there have been weaknesses in progress for some pupils in the past, these pupils are now catching up and making faster progress.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Some children arrive at school with skills that are typical for their age and some have skills that are lower than typical, particularly in the areas of reading and writing. From their different starting points, children make good progress through their first year, thereby ensuring that they are well prepared for Year 1. Children such as those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged receive extra guidance through well-organised additional teaching. This helps these children to make the progress they should.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in the early years are good. The headteacher has ensured that staff benefit from the positive partnership with early years staff in the federated school. Teachers share ideas and learn from each other and they assess and plan together. Learning activities are carefully tracked and each child's progress noted. Teachers use these observations well to plan future learning activities. As a result, children have access to interesting and relevant learning that enables them to make good progress. The role-play areas encourage children to play together and to develop their social and language skills. They manage their behaviour very well and understand the rules, routines and expectations.
- Children are kept safe and every opportunity is taken to ensure that they learn about how to look after one another. For example, children write 'thank you' cards to each other and award medals to classmates for being good friends.
- Staff in the early years ensure that there is solid and positive communication with parents. A typical comment from parents was, 'Staff get to know our children very well'.
- Children in Reception have access to outside learning spaces. However, their movement outside is currently organised into set times due to the supervision needed

between the classroom and the outdoor space available. Governors and leaders are currently reviewing the physical space to see whether improvements can be made to ensure that children can access outside learning more freely and independently.

## School details

Unique reference number	113435
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10024975

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Channon
Headteacher	Carron Saunders
Telephone number	01395 568 326
Website	<a href="http://www.raleighfederation.org.uk">www.raleighfederation.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@raleighfederation.org.uk">head@raleighfederation.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	29–30 November 2012

## Information about this school

- This is a much smaller school than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly the same as the national average.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The school is receiving support from a local authority adviser.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is federated with The Drake's Primary School and there is one headteacher



working across both schools. There is one governing body that takes responsibility for both schools in the federation.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and senior leaders. A meeting was held with five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. A telephone conversation took place with the local authority adviser who supports the school.
- Learning in all classes was observed along with senior leaders. Playtimes and lunchtimes were also observed. Pupils' books were scrutinised.
- A range of documents were taken into consideration, including the school's evaluation of its performance, the development plan and information that the school uses to review pupils' performance. Documents relating to safeguarding and behaviour were also looked at.
- Views from parents were gathered throughout the inspection and from the 45 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Pupils' views were considered through an online survey and a meeting with a group of pupils, as well as talking to pupils throughout the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff throughout the inspection and took account of the responses to the staff online survey.

## Inspection team

Tonwen Empson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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