

Rockbeare Church of England Primary School and Pre-School

Rockbeare, Exeter, Devon EX5 2EQ

Inspection dates

4–5 July 2017

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The high expectations from leaders and staff create a calm, respectful learning environment where pupils' behaviour is good and they progress well. Pupils are confident, self-assured and prepared well for their next steps in education.
- The headteacher displays determination and drive. Since her arrival, she has overseen rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors support and challenge school leaders effectively. The governing body has provided stability during a period of considerable change. Governors are ambitious for pupils and know the school very well.
- Governors recently became responsible for the on-site pre-school. This has proved to be a successful move. Children make a strong start to their education and this prepares them well for learning in Reception.
- Children make good progress in the Reception Year. The proportion of children achieving the expected standard at the end of the year is above the national average. Some of the most able children do not reach higher standards, particularly in their writing.
- The teaching of phonics is good. All pupils achieved the expected standard in Year 1 in 2017.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics and become confident mathematicians. Teachers challenge pupils to use their skills to solve problems that are more complex and to explain their thinking.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, particularly their reading sessions. Most pupils read widely and complete a wide range of activities to support their reading both at school and at home. Some disadvantaged pupils, however, do not receive the extra reading and writing support that they need to help them to thrive.
- Pupils develop their grammar, punctuation and handwriting skills well. However, some of the most able pupils do not reach higher standards, particularly in writing.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning of writing across the school so that:
 - greater proportions of pupils and children, including the most able, achieve higher standards in writing.
- Improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils by:
 - ensuring that pupils receive the extra support they require in reading and writing.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, working alongside the governors and the local authority, has ensured that staff have the professional development and encouragement they need to improve their practice. When she arrived two years ago, the headteacher accurately identified some key areas for development, particularly to teaching, learning and assessment. Despite staff changes and some difficulties with recruitment, senior leaders have quickly put in place a programme of professional development in order to support staff. While offering on-going encouragement, the headteacher has not shied away from holding staff to account for the progress pupils make.
- The headteacher has instilled a strong set of values and mutual respect. Pupils are prepared well for their next steps. They have frequent opportunities to develop their confidence and are encouraged to do so. Pupils help to choose the key values to explore each year. For example, each week, pupils take it in turns to prepare for and present a whole-school assembly based on the value for that term. Pupils discuss values such as 'courage'. They tell a related story and invite comments, to which their peers respond with interest and respect.
- The curriculum is organised well and helps to develop pupils' spiritual and cultural understanding. Pupils show real curiosity and excitement about their learning and want to know more. Pupils research significant people in history and use this well to discuss important issues. For example, older pupils created their own human rights charter in response to studying Martin Luther King.
- Extra-curricular activities support wider learning, both within school and after school, and contribute towards helping pupils to develop a wide range of skills and interests, including their social skills. School productions are highly valued by parents and evoke a real sense of achievement and pride among pupils.
- Leaders make good use of the sport premium. They ensure that teachers develop their skills to teach a wide range of sports effectively. This additional funding also provides extra clubs after school. For example, as well as being fun, archery club is helping several pupils to develop their confidence and coordination.
- Pupil premium funding is used purposefully to provide additional experiences and teaching for disadvantaged pupils in the form of extra-curricular activities such as music lessons or sport. Teaching assistants receive helpful professional development, and this contributes to the improving quality of support that pupils receive. Leaders are aware, however, that some disadvantaged pupils require a more targeted approach to develop their reading and writing and make good progress.
- The special educational needs coordinator has improved the effectiveness of the system for the identification of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have ensured that identification is accurate and that funding is used carefully and effectively to target the specific needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This helps these pupils to make good progress.
- The school has benefited from the good support provided by the local authority. The

local authority has contributed to the effective professional development that has improved the quality of teaching and learning, particularly for mathematics. Leaders, including governors, have also received support to ensure that there are strong systems in place to monitor the school's performance. This is helping to secure good-quality outcomes for pupils across the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors are supportive of the changes and the rise in expectations that have taken place over the past two years under the leadership of the headteacher.
- Governors ensure that they are well-informed about safeguarding and attend appropriate training and regular updates at school.
- Following a review of governance, several changes have taken place to the governing body. Governors now have a clearer understanding of their role to both support and challenge leaders. Governors have a wide range of skills. They know the school well and have a detailed knowledge of how the additional funding supports pupils' progress. However, they are fully aware that more needs to be done to ensure that some disadvantaged pupils receive the additional support to better develop their reading and writing skills.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior leaders ensure that there is contact with external agencies as needed, in order to support pupils or their families. Staff receive a wide range of training, including information about preventing radicalisation and child exploitation. Appropriate checks are in place to ensure that new staff are recruited safely.
- Staff meetings keep staff up to date and help to ensure that staff are vigilant about reporting any concerns they may have. Pupils have regular reminders about keeping themselves safe, including about how to be safe while using the internet.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and parents agree that the school is safe, with comments such as, 'It is a warm, welcoming environment. Everyone knows everyone and everyone looks out for each other here, it feels very safe.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Staff have contributed to the drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Staff across the school now regularly expect pupils to think for themselves, to have a go before asking and to keep trying without giving up. Teachers encourage pupils to work together and to support each other in lessons. As pupils progress through the school, they are increasingly expected and trusted to complete tasks without being reminded. A typical comment from pupils was, 'Teachers do help you if you don't understand but really they want you to have a go at working it out first.'
- In reading, writing and mathematics, teachers accurately assess pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The headteacher has in-depth conversations with each

teacher and this ensures that all possible strategies to improve progress for individual pupils are in place and working effectively.

- Teachers are skilled at using questions to develop pupils' thinking. In classes, there is a healthy 'buzz' of pupils talking to each other and helping each other to explore learning activities. Teachers plan stimulating learning activities and ensure that there is a range of challenge provided within the different tasks. Pupils confidently choose from these challenges and enjoy having some responsibility for managing their own learning.
- In mathematics, pupils use their numeracy skills confidently and fluently to solve problems. They have a wide range of resources to draw on to support their understanding. Similarly, in reading sessions, pupils support each other to ask questions about the text and to think more deeply about the meaning or intention of the author.
- Pupils are encouraged to write at length, including when writing in other subjects. The most able pupils, however, are not consistently challenged to use their writing skills to improve their work and produce higher standards of writing.
- Following the period of professional development, teaching and learning across the school are consistently good. However, there have been inconsistencies in staffing over recent months, which has been disruptive for some older pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that disadvantaged pupils receive additional support with their learning. However, this support is not specifically targeted to meet some pupils' individual needs. For example, extra support for reading is not consistently allocated to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Leaders work hard to ensure that pupils become confident, secure learners across the school. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour.
- Pupils are proud of their school. Pupils know who to talk to should they have any worries or concerns. They are secure in school, and feel valued and trusted. Support for pupils' emotional well-being is good. The school is an inclusive and nurturing environment.
- Pupils have a firm understanding of how to stay safe, including how to manage any incidents of bullying and how to stay safe online. Pupils say, and parents overwhelmingly agree, that staff react positively and quickly to any concerns raised.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Staff have high expectations and pupils learn to manage their own behaviour, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils say that there are rarely any cases of poor behaviour and, when this does happen, there are

swift and consistent consequences. Pupils are interested in their learning and want to achieve.

- Leaders have worked hard on improving attendance. Consequently, there are a number of examples where the attendance of key groups of pupils has shown marked improvement. Overall attendance, however, remains stubbornly below national averages and rates of persistent absence remain high for some pupils. A few families continue to take holidays during term time.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current pupils' books show that pupils' written and mathematical work demonstrates good progress over time and is of a good standard. Books also show that most pupils use their developing skills effectively across a range of subjects, for example to write interesting historical accounts and produce informative writing in religious education.
- Outcomes in the early years have improved each year for the past three years, and are currently well above national averages. This means that pupils are prepared well for learning as they enter Year 1. Across a wide range of activities, children develop their reading and mathematics skills particularly well.
- Pupils' phonics skills are good, with all pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening tests over the past two years.
- In 2016, pupils in Year 2 did not make sufficient progress in reading, writing or mathematics. However, due to improvements made to the quality of teaching and learning in key stage 1, current outcomes in Year 2 show that pupils are now making good progress and are achieving above the national average in these subjects. This includes the most able pupils, who are now achieving higher standards, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- This good progress continues in key stage 2. Pupils' books and the school's own progress information show that pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders are aware that the most able pupils could be challenged even further in order to reach higher standards, particularly in writing.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and most disadvantaged pupils make good progress. This is due to the accurate identification of their starting points and the adaptations made to ensure that learning is successful. A few disadvantaged pupils do not receive precise enough targeted support in order to ensure that they make even better progress in reading and writing.
- The headteachers' drive to raise expectations has ensured that, despite several staff changes in upper key stage 2, outcomes overall are good. These unforeseen changes have reduced the consistency of progress of Year 6 pupils this year. However, overall, pupils make rapid progress across the school.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders ensure that children, including those in the pre-school, are safe, settle quickly and thrive due to the effective teaching and the good care provided by staff.

Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff get to know children very well and adapt the learning environment successfully to meet individual children's needs so that they feel safe and secure and learn well.

- Staff ensure that parents have wide and detailed information about their child's activities and achievements, as well as more general guidance about how to support learning at home. Parents are very pleased with the strong start that children make in the pre-school and with the progress they continue to make during the Reception Year.
- After an engaging and well-supported start to the day, children as young as two years old explore the environment happily and confidently. Their play, whether inside or outside, alone or with their friends, is interspersed with short teaching sessions that provide good activities and successfully develop children's reading, phonics, writing and counting. Staff are positive, patient and considerate. They listen carefully to children, taking full account of their views and ideas.
- Adults have high expectations of behaviour and children respond well to this. Snack time, for example, is well ordered and calm. Staff use this opportunity to develop social skills, encouraging children to share, take turns and talk politely to one another. As a result, children make good progress and they are ready for learning in the Reception class.
- Staff across the early years classes work closely together. Information about what children know, understand and can do is shared and used effectively to plan stimulating learning activities. This contributes to a smooth transition for children as they move from the pre-school through to the Reception class.
- In the Reception class, there are engaging activities inside and outside for children to develop their learning. For example, children cooperate well with each other, putting plasters onto animals' 'injuries', and making lists of missing pets in the vet's surgery.
- Regular detailed observations provide staff with the information they need to plan activities that support the next steps for each child. Additional funding ensures that disadvantaged children receive the additional support they need, either within school or from a range of professional agencies.
- Effective teaching leads to children making good progress through the Reception Year, and they are therefore prepared well for learning in Year 1. Leaders are aware, however, that the most able children could achieve higher standards, particularly in developing their writing skills.

School details

Unique reference number	113436
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10025119

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	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wyn De'Ath
Headteacher	Julie Spencer-Smith
Telephone number	01404 822501
Website	www.rockbeareprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@rockbeare-ce-primary.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 July 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This primary school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school includes a pre-school, situated on site. This caters for two-, three- and four-year-olds on a part-time basis.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support through the pupil premium is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning across the school, including the pre-school. A number of these observations were carried out with the headteacher. The inspector also listened to pupils read and looked at a wide range of pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff and governors. A phone call took place with the local authority representative who has overseen the support offered to the school.
- Documents scrutinised included the school's own evaluation of its performance and records relating to attendance and safeguarding.
- The views of parents were taken into account, including several conversations with parents at the start of each day, a telephone call and the 21 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Responses to the online pupil survey as well as to the staff survey were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Tonwen Empson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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