

Filleigh Community Primary School

Castle Hill, Filleigh, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 0RS

Inspection dates

12–13 February 2019

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| 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

- The head of school leads with passion and commitment. As a skilled teacher, he is a role model of good practice. His professional expertise has contributed significantly to the development of good teaching in the school.
- The executive headteacher has directed the federation's resources well to support the school's development. Strong leadership partnerships within and beyond the federation underpin the stability of the school and the sustainability of improvements.
- Governors are effective in the support and challenge they provide to school leaders. They are ambitious for pupils' achievement.
- Leaders diligently check the effectiveness of actions in the school development plan. However, they do not use the evidence from pupils' work sufficiently to check that changes are consistently promoting pupils' achievement.
- Leaders have gained the respect of parents and carers, who appreciate the good teaching and wide opportunities the school gives their children.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. The new teaching programmes for English and mathematics are taught well. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress.
- Pupils read well. The standard of reading is high in the Reception and key stage 1 classes. Pupils gain good phonics skills. Across the school, pupils are keen readers who can discuss their wide reading intelligently.
- The teaching of mathematics challenges pupils' thinking. Pupils solve problems and explain their reasoning. However, an inability to recall multiplication tables limits some pupils' attainment in mathematics.
- Teachers develop pupils' skills in writing for different purposes in English lessons and across the curriculum. However, pupils do not consistently write accurately and use the skills of punctuation and grammar they are taught.
- Pupils are enthused by good teaching in science and humanities. Well-planned learning activities build pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy school. They are proud of their learning. However, there is variability in the quality of pupils' presentation. Teachers do not always challenge this.
- Children make strong progress in the well-led early years. Through good teaching and a broad curriculum, they develop good basic skills and enthusiasm for learning. They do not, however, develop sufficiently accurate letter formation.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by all leaders making better use of evidence from pupils' work to judge the effectiveness of actions taken to improve teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Continue to improve the teaching of writing and mathematics so that all pupils make consistently strong progress by:
 - securing children's accurate letter formation in the early years
 - developing the accuracy of pupils' grammar and punctuation so that they more consistently show evidence of writing at the higher standard
 - developing pupils' fluency in recalling and applying multiplication facts
 - all teachers having the highest expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation across all work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Before the arrival of the head of school in January 2017, the school had gone through an unavoidable period of instability. The head of school quickly established a working partnership with the experienced executive headteacher. Together, they have secured good systems of leadership and management in the school. The head of school has modelled and developed good teaching. Teachers are highly positive about the well-planned opportunities to develop their teaching, and morale of staff in the school is high.
- The sharing of staff expertise within the federation brings strength and stability to this small school. Recently, the federation has joined a cooperative of schools. This has widened opportunities for professional development for staff. It has also provided the head of school with leadership colleagues to support his evaluations of the school's development. Senior leaders have embraced the opportunities to share expertise with others.
- Leaders present an honest and open picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, the school's priorities are accurately identified within the federation development plan. Leaders undertake a range of activities to check that improvements to teaching are being sustained and that new programmes of learning are being used effectively. However, they have not used pupils' work as a leading source of evidence about the impact of new learning programmes on pupils' achievement.
- There is a federation leader responsible for ensuring that the provision for pupils with SEND is well planned and leads to pupils' good achievement. He knows the pupils well and supports teachers in ensuring that they are confident in meeting their needs. His expertise is valued by leaders and teachers. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve particularly well. Leaders successfully promote equality of opportunity. They use additional funding well to achieve good outcomes for pupils with SEND and also for those pupils who are disadvantaged.
- The head of school leads on the development of mathematics. Together with the English leader, he attends events and training to keep up to date with the latest picture of good practice in these subjects. Leaders have recently introduced new programmes for teaching writing and developing aspects of pupils' mathematics. Their own checks on teaching confirm that teachers understand and use these new approaches well.
- The curriculum is well planned and recent improvements have ensured that it promotes pupils' progress more securely across the mixed-age classes. There are significant strengths in the curriculum. For example, deep planning of skills and knowledge in science and design and technology means that pupils' achievement in these areas is strong. Improvements to the curriculum for mathematics have increased the opportunities for pupils to solve problems and reason about their mathematics. However, the promotion of pupils' fluency and knowledge of multiplication facts, for example, is not planned for as clearly.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Topics such as the polar ice caps and the tropical rainforest foster pupils' good

attitudes to caring for the planet. The broad approach to the curriculum, through the use of the local environment and outdoor learning, supports pupils' understanding of the world around them. Pupils spoke positively about assemblies where the teaching of respect and values of democracy are explained to them. In discussion, they stressed the importance of treating everyone equally. The school makes good use of the additional sport premium funding. Staff ensure that pupils have access to additional sport at lunchtime and can participate in local sporting competitions with other schools.

- Parents welcome improvements to the school and their comments reflect their respect for and belief in current leaders and teachers. A parent expressed this by saying:

'There has been a significant positive change in the school. There is increased stability, and a sense of happiness with motivated teachers taking really enthusiastic participation in the school, after-school and extra-curricular activities.'

Governance of the school

- Governors work well with the leaders of the school and have sharpened their practice to better support the development of the school. Following the period of instability, they reviewed their processes of governance. Governors continue to be reflective on their own practice and embrace opportunities for training.
- Most significantly, governors have a clear picture of the strengths and areas for improvement of schools within the federation. They introduced the governor 'champion' model so that a named governor has close oversight of each individual school in the federation. The champion then maintains the focus on that school's interests within strategic planning.
- Governors have worked closely with leaders to agree the format of reports which keep them informed about the work of the school clearly and concisely. This enables them to track improvements over time. The records of champion visits to school show the detail in which they now question leaders' assertions and seek strong evidence that strategic actions are having an impact on pupils' achievement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Policies reflect the latest safeguarding guidance. All staff are given regular updates to ensure that they understand their part in keeping pupils safe. Records are kept in good order and leaders act promptly when concerns are raised with them. They work closely with external agencies to support pupils who may be at risk of harm.
- The federation places safeguarding at the heart of its work and, as such, has commissioned recent reviews of both safeguarding and health and safety. The outcomes from both align with the evidence from this inspection that safeguarding overall is highly effective. Regular detailed risk assessments are made for the school site and for activities undertaken by pupils.
- Leaders ensure that all who work with the pupils are checked in line with the latest guidance. Their recruitment processes are rigorous, including for recruiting volunteers. Checks are recorded in the single central record in line with good practice. Governors

make regular checks on this, as well as on other aspects of safeguarding.

- Good relationships in school underpin the pupils' confidence that they are safe in school. All the parents responding to the online Parent View survey agreed that their children felt safe in school. Parents spoken to remarked, for example, on the vigilance and accessibility of the teachers and head of school at the start of the school day. This gives them confidence in the school's commitment to their children's welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching across the school's broad and interesting curriculum is good. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and accurately. They manage the needs of mixed-age classes very well. Teachers are skilled in planning work which challenges and supports pupils to develop new learning.
- Pupils are given tasks which are well matched to their needs. Sustained vigilance by teachers and skilled teaching assistants ensures that pupils are supported if they are not sure what to do. Staff take time at these points to re-explain the learning, either to individuals or groups of pupils, and pupils concentrate and use this extra teaching well.
- The school's approach to precise planning, using assessment of pupils' next steps, particularly supports pupils with SEND. They are well included in class and through specific interventions achieve the targets in their individual plans.
- The pupils who are forging ahead in their learning, including some disadvantaged pupils, particularly relish opportunities to work with investigations. These extend their thinking, as in Year 2, where pupils worked with coins to investigate how many different amounts could be made with five coins.
- Regular opportunities for pupils to work in this way are now at the heart of the teaching of mathematics in the school. Pupils' attitudes to persevering and working cooperatively on these tasks are well developed. However, on occasion, pupils do not set their work out neatly or write their figures clearly. This can impact on the accuracy of their work. Similarly, some pupils' investigative work is hampered by their difficulty in recalling multiplication facts. Currently, the teaching of the skills of fluency in number are not as consistently planned for as other aspects of mathematics.
- Teachers find interesting contexts to extend pupils' knowledge of the different purposes for writing. Consequently, pupils write across many areas of the curriculum. Teachers set precise writing targets related to each form of writing. For example, pupils writing a diary were reminded to use the first person and write in the present tense. Most tackled this well. However, examples of pupils' work over time showed that their basic writing skills of punctuation and grammar are not maintained over all their writing. Teachers do not routinely overcome this hurdle which, over time, prevents pupils from reaching the higher standard in writing.
- Pupils learn to read early and learn to read well. The teaching of phonics is a strength across both the Reception and key stage 1 classes. Pupils asked to identify their favourite part of the school eagerly identified the library, which has recently undergone refurbishment. Pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 who discussed their reading with the inspector talked about how teachers prompted them to try different authors and styles of books. They could all talk about their current reading book, explaining their choice.

- Good teaching in science, history and design and technology develops pupils' interest and deepens their knowledge. Pupils carry out interesting investigations and record their results and conclusions. Their writing in science shows how often pupils use greater complexity in their sentences than they do in other forms of writing.
- Teachers enable pupils to apply skills practically to deepen their understanding. For example, after learning about electrical circuitry and drawing technical diagrams, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have gone on to build wooden wheeled vehicles powered by a battery. Their finished models follow their original plans well.
- Good links are made across the school between areas for learning. The older pupils' wheeled vehicles are being turned into Second World War ambulances to fit with their history project. The key stage 1 project on the polar ice caps featured a science experiment where pupils investigated the insulating properties of 'blubber' by coating their hands in fat.
- Teachers' deep, purposeful planning is exciting pupils' interests and motivating them to work hard and with confidence. However, teachers do not consistently hold pupils sufficiently to account for the quality of presentation of their work or the consistency of their handwriting. Consequently, as in mathematics, presentation undermines pupils' efforts to show that they are working at or above the standards that school leaders expect of them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The ethos of the school is to recognise childhood as a time for growth in all areas of pupils' development, particularly their social and emotional growth and feelings of security. Pupils talk about the '10 things you can do which make you feel better', for example drinking water and getting plenty of fresh air. Pupils are learning to take responsibility for themselves and their feelings. Equally, pupils are taught to explore the world around them but to stay safe, including when using the internet.
- The school's key values of 'perseverance, behaviour and achievement' are understood by all. Recently, leaders have reviewed the awards linked to celebrating success in these values by making it more explicit and consistent as to how to be awarded 'star of the week'. Pupils are motivated to show their good attitudes to learning and respect the fairness of the school's approach. Currently, however, leaders and teachers have not fully developed pupils' sense of responsibility in relation to presenting their work as well as they can.
- The school council takes its role in the school seriously. It seeks pupils' views and leaders encourage members to put forward and act on ideas to improve aspects of the school. Recently, they have put in place a 'funky Friday' playtime where they arrange music in the playground for pupils to dance to. Other pupils have roles in supporting the smooth running of the school, such as helping the younger pupils at playtime.
- Leaders and teachers know pupils well. They make use of outside agency advice if they feel that pupils would benefit from support, for example for their well-being or

behaviour.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is a cohesive community where pupils work and play together harmoniously. They are courteous and polite. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and pupils respond to the expectations set for them. Pupils also behave well in the breakfast club, where they get off to a good start to the day.
- Pupils are confident when talking to adults. One pupil explained this was because 'Our opinions are listened to.' They explain that they can put forward ideas or talk to staff about concerns they may have. They trust adults to support them with sorting out friendship difficulties but are proud that often they can do this for themselves. Pupils are convinced that there is no bullying in their school.
- As the school has no hall, lunches are eaten in classrooms. Pupils understand that staff need to supervise both inside and out in the playground so happily draw and read until all have finished eating and are ready to go out. Pupils of different ages play well together at these times. They take responsibility for leaving the classroom in a clean and tidy state before leaving for the playground.
- The level of attendance last year was above the national average. This year, rates of attendance continue at this level and show pupils' eagerness to attend school. The very few instances of lower attendance are linked to individual circumstances and leaders respond to parents with appropriate support and challenge.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress across a range of well-taught subjects. The small size and variability year on year of cohorts and groups of pupils mean that it is not appropriate to make comparisons with national averages. However, over the period of the school's instability, some pupils did not make the progress that they should, particularly in mathematics. Now, older pupils are deepening their understanding and catching up on previously missed concepts. Younger pupils have made consistently strong progress from their time in school.
- When older pupils tackle new work in mathematics, the missed concepts, such as fractions and multiplication facts, are still in some cases evident. However, pupils' current work in books and the school assessment information show a high proportion of pupils in every year group working at the standard expected by school leaders in mathematics.
- Pupils with SEND make particularly good progress in mathematics because of the emphasis on practice and deepening concepts. Some are now catching up to the standards expected of them. They also make good progress in reading and writing. Some weaknesses in handwriting remain to be overcome for this group of pupils.
- Pupils make very good progress in reading after a strong start in the Reception class. Almost every child reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2018. Standards currently in the key stage 1 class indicate that pupils have

equally strong phonics knowledge, which is supporting their confident reading. Key stage 2 pupils read well and for interest. Their current written comprehension tasks show that they can retrieve information from the text and infer the author's meaning.

- Pupils make good progress in writing. However, some pupils skilled in writing expressively are less skilled in applying basic skills of punctuation and grammar. Consequently, their handwriting does not maintain its form and fluency from task to task.
- Pupils' skills and knowledge in science are strong across the school. They can explain their understanding and work systematically through investigative tasks. They are gaining good skills in designing and making a range of artefacts in design and technology.
- In history, pupils gain good understanding of chronology and develop opinions about why major historical events took place. In geography, pupils have good skills of reading and making maps. They are aware of issues which affect the planet and what needs to be done to overcome them.
- As a result of good teaching, pupils' attitudes to learning and their knowledge across the curriculum mean that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years is well led. Teaching is reflective as to how best it can be planned to ensure that all children make the best possible progress. Teaching reflects a deep knowledge of how children learn, and accurate analysis of assessments of children's progress has driven plans for improvement in the setting. Teaching has, for example, identified that many children start school with weak pencil control, which hinders their first attempts at writing. Consequently, the class teacher has reviewed teaching and resources to better develop children's hand strength. Children's progress across the curriculum now shows their strengthened skills, not just with pencils, but in a range of cutting and making activities.
- Last year's assessments showed that children, including those with SEND, made good progress and most reached a good level of development. Cohorts of children are too small for national comparisons but, even so, the proportion exceeding the expected level in reading was very high. The Reception class also offers places for three-year-old children. Currently, this is not being taken up by many parents. Nonetheless, the children who had the benefit of strong teaching as three-year-olds last year have made a particularly strong start to their Reception Year.
- Children quickly acquire a secure knowledge of phonics and use this to both read and write. The teacher skilfully puts the phonics sound in context so that children deepen their understanding. For example, for the sound 'ie', the class independently wrote about children eating the pie. Some children still struggle with forming letters accurately but confidently try to express themselves in writing. Already, most children can write several sentences, for example recording events in their lives.
- The teacher assesses children's skills quickly and accurately when they join the setting. She identifies children who need to catch up and those whose development and knowledge are above those usually found. She takes account of this information when

planning activities for all children, for example to enable some children to work with numbers higher than 20. Children use good problem-solving strategies such as drawing diagrams and 'striking out' to tackle subtraction and develop their knowledge of space and shape through frequent measuring opportunities.

- Children are developing a love of learning new skills. They show confidence and independence in using the extensive resources in the class and the well-planned outdoor area. The children's strong progress in basic skills means that they are well prepared for the move to Year 1. However, for some children, weaknesses in letter and number formation continue with them into key stage 1.
- Children benefit from a wide curriculum and explore their knowledge of the world through well-planned activities. The teacher responds to children's interests and helps them form concepts and explain their thinking, for example about why ice melts. The current topic of rockets has sparked children's ideas for imaginative play and creative activities. Samples of children's work fill the room and celebrate their interests and successes.
- Children behave very well and form good relationships with staff and with each other. They relish individual attention but also listen and attend in whole-class teaching time. Routines for dressing for outside are well established and, because children know what adults expect of them, they are learning to keep themselves safe.
- Parents have great confidence in the adults who work with their children in the Reception class. They value the recognition of the children as individuals and the good communication between home and school.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 113148 |
| Local authority | Devon |
| Inspection number | 10081343 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 81 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Jayne Hooper |
| Headteacher of school | Michael Wright |
| Executive headteacher | Stephen Mellor |
| Telephone number | 01598 760 295 |
| Website | www.filleigh-primary.devon.sch.uk/ |
| Email address | admin@filleigh-primary.devon.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 17–18 November 2016 |

Information about this school

- Filleigh Community Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized school, with very small cohorts. Some groups may consist of only one individual. The pupils are largely of White British heritage.
- The school is part of the Devon Moors Federation, which includes three other primary schools. The federation is led by the executive headteacher and all schools are governed by the same governing body.
- Recently, the federation joined with the United Schools Co-operative Trust. The federation now works within the trust to increase opportunities and resources to facilitate school development.
- The school is organised into four classes. Most children join the Reception class at the usual age. There is a facility for children to join the class at the age of three but,

currently, few do so. Otherwise, there is a mixed Year 1 and 2 class, a mixed Year 3 and 4 class and a class comprising Years 5 and 6.

- The school operates a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with the head of school and the executive headteacher throughout the inspection. Together, they visited lessons in all classes and reviewed a wide range of pupils' work in English, mathematics, science and the humanities. She discussed pupils' reading with a group from Year 6 and listened to some Year 2 pupils read.
- The inspector held a meeting with representatives of the governing body and reviewed minutes from governors' meetings. She held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and considered a range of external reviews of the school.
- The school's self-evaluation and improvement planning were considered, as was leaders' monitoring of teaching. The inspector took account of pupils' current assessments and the progress they had made over time.
- The inspector discussed safeguarding with leaders, governors and several members of staff. The school's procedures, records of training and policies were taken into account. The inspector considered the recent review of safeguarding and health and safety commissioned by the federation. School leaders presented information about pupils' attendance and the action taken to reduce persistent absence.
- Pupils' views of the school were taken into account through a discussion with a group of pupils and also through talking with pupils in class, at the start of the day and at lunchtime. The 21 responses to the Ofsted pupil questionnaire were also considered.
- The inspector talked to parents at the start of both days of the inspection. Additionally, she took account of parents' views through the 31 responses to Parent View and the comments expressing their views of the school. The views of staff were considered through the nine responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Wendy Marriott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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