

Shoscombe Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

St Julian's Road, Shoscombe, Bath, BA2 8NB

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress, achieve well and attain above average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is consistently good, with skilled teaching assistants as well as teachers working effectively to support the good learning of all pupils.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. This is greatly appreciated by parents who work closely with staff to promote the pupils' above average attendance and enjoyment of school.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy very happy relationships, with older pupils warmly helping younger pupils at break times.
- The school promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development strongly through a rich range of practical outdoor learning activities and visits.
- Strong leadership by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors, increasingly enhanced by sharing staff expertise across the federation, have resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They also indicate the school's capacity to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure that all pupils fully develop their descriptive writing and mathematical problem-solving skills as they move through the school.
- Subject leaders are not yet playing a full part in checking and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 12 lessons and was accompanied by the headteacher for most of these observations.
- The inspector observed morning playtime and lunch breaks and also visited an assembly.
- Meetings were held with members of the school parliament and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes.
- The inspector also met with school governors and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector held meetings with staff, including senior leaders.
- The inspector took account of 32 parents' responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and undertaking the inspection. He also spoke informally with a number of parents as they brought to and collected their children from school. The inspector received and considered eight staff questionnaires.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, planning and leaders' checks on the quality of teaching.
- The inspector also examined records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding policies, procedures and practice. The inspector also considered the school's sports premium action plan.

Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is a well below average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school staff is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. This additional funding is for children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are accommodated in a combined Reception and Year 1 class. Other pupils are also taught in mixed-age classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school is a member of The Church Valley Schools Federation, which is a partnership of three local primary schools. A single governing body is responsible for all the schools in the federation.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher share their duties equally across the schools in the federation. Each school is managed on a day-to-day basis by its own assistant headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding by:
 - making sure that the range of learning activities set for the pupils enables them to improve the quality of their descriptive writing and their ability to solve mathematical problems
 - developing the role of subject leaders to improve their effectiveness in checking and improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Differences in the number of pupils within the often very small year groups lead to variations in results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Nevertheless, the school has a record since the previous inspection of mostly above-average attainment by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. This shows that all groups of pupils, including those with most ability, typically achieve well from their differing starting points.
- Children begin school with a wide variety of skills, but which mostly are below those normally expected for their age. Children make good progress in Reception. This is because they have fun working and learning together through a range of practical activities, such as welcoming trains in 'Shoscombe Single Hill Halt'.
- Pupils make good progress and also develop their speaking and listening skills well as they move up the school. By the time they leave, pupils can express their ideas thoughtfully using an extensive vocabulary. This was, for example, the case in the Years 5 and 6 class when pupils explained how to use a protractor correctly to measure angles.
- Over time, pupils' attainment in mathematics has not been as good as in English. This means that their progress in these areas is not outstanding. However, in response to teachers' and school leaders' increasingly successful focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills, pupils are now making better progress in all classes.
- Pupils' learning in lessons, work in books and school records of pupils' progress now show above average attainment in mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 6. This includes an increased number of the most-able pupils who are on course to attain the highest Levels 5 and 6 this year.
- Pupils' writing, especially their handwriting skills, is also being improved this academic year and has already lifted the quality of presentation of their work. Efforts to improve pupils' ability to write descriptively have yet to bring this aspect of writing up to the same standard in all classes.
- In this school, the pupil premium is used well to support individual pupils. For example, additional adult assistance enables them to achieve as well as their peers.
- Similarly, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of effective support in class from teaching assistants and teachers.
- Pupils are encouraged to enjoy books and develop a good understanding of phonics (the links between letters and sounds) in response to effective teaching. The school's good use of the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 to improve teaching is seen in the pupils' improved performance in 2013. In particular, the good performance by boys in the re-screening check at Year 2 last year also showed that all pupils are learning how to work out new words accurately.
- Pupils become increasingly confident readers as they move through the school. By the time they leave pupils express enjoyment in reading and talk knowledgeably about characters and authors.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall. There are some examples of excellent teaching, including adults boosting pupils' confidence and enjoyment in learning by establishing positive and encouraging relationships with pupils.
- Teachers engage pupils' interests well by adapting activities, modelling the correct use of technical terms and re-phrasing questions. The teachers' increased emphasis on widening pupils' vocabulary in mathematics and literacy is strengthening the learning of all pupils, including the most able. During an English lesson in Years 5 and 6, for example, the pupils' ability to check and improve their own and each other's writing was developed well by the teacher's skilful questioning.
- Teaching assistants are also used well to increase the effectiveness of guidance given to groups of pupils. For example, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils helped by the pupil premium receive close attention, which builds their confidence. This was seen in

Year 3 when pupils who have not always enjoyed their work were inspired to extend their ability to multiply and divide. One boy typically also reflected the good learning of his classmates when he proudly exclaimed, 'Now I really know what an inverse operation is!'

- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, make reference to their targets displayed on classroom walls and frequently identify the steps pupils need to take to improve their work.
- Teachers set various forms of homework and encourage parents to listen to their children read at home. As a result, all pupils take their reading books home regularly and most read each day.
- On occasion, learning slows for some pupils because they lose interest and, when not supported directly by an adult, begin to chatter. Teachers are increasingly focusing work on providing interesting topics to prevent this, for example by enabling pupils to study plans of the new building. This means that boys are now learning as well as girls.
- Teachers are also encouraging pupils to learn better through practical outdoor investigations and imaginative work. However, this has not been fully successful in all classes in fully enabling pupils to extend their writing and problem-solving skills. Overall, teaching is not yet outstanding because it has not yet resulted in pupils' achievement being outstanding.
- Pupils settle into good learning quickly because teachers skilfully explain what they are to learn and guide them into their work effectively by leading them through a few examples. These features helped children in the Reception and Year 1 class to become engrossed in their role play and practical learning activities. Similarly, in Years 3 and 4 pupils produced some thoughtful poems in response to the teacher's clearly expressed expectations.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are very polite to adults, are keen to talk about their school and work well together. They are keen to learn, and this contributes positively to their good learning and progress.
- Pupils move around the school considerately, use equipment sensibly and look after the school environment. Break times are harmonious and fun. They are often enriched by the way older pupils look after younger children and help pupils play safely and enjoyably together.
- Pupils' behaviour is not outstanding because at times a few pupils tend to chatter in class and need reminders from adults to concentrate more closely on their work. Even so, most pupils listen and respond well, especially older pupils who enjoy explaining their ideas to other pupils.
- School records show that the very few past incidents of misbehaviour were resolved rigorously and effectively by staff with pupils responding very positively.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Staff and governors check and implement safeguarding procedures regularly and diligently to keep pupils safe. For example, pathways are carefully supervised to protect pupils from the current building work.
- Pupils say they feel very safe. They also say that one of the reasons for this is that 'staff visit and check the safety of the places they take us, including other countries, before we go.'
- The large majority of parents responding to Parent View and those who spoke to the inspector expressed no concerns about bullying. Pupils say that there is no bullying because extremely caring staff and the 'Steps Behaviour System' help them understand and deal with any disagreements should they occur.
- Pupils know about different forms of bullying. They know, for example, about verbal and cyber bullying and point to the 'Internet Safety' display board, which shows them how to use computers safely.
- Attendance is above average, additionally showing the pupils' joy in coming to school and the positive way that staff and parents work together.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides determined and encouraging leadership that is increasingly involving all staff in school improvement. As a result there is strong teamwork and high morale.
- Since the formation of the federation the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors have worked very effectively to gain a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They rigorously check data about pupils' attainment and progress, and visit classes regularly to observe the quality of teaching and learning.
- Information on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress is fully shared with governors. This ensures that detailed plans for the school's future development are well founded and have led to improvement. Improved standards in Key Stage 1 and sustained above average attainment in Key Stage 2 also confirm the school's capacity to improve further.
- The leaders' accurate view of pupils' learning and progress means that timely additional adult help is provided for those pupils who need guidance to keep them moving forward. As a result, pupils supported by the pupil premium and others, such as disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve as well their peers.
- Leaders and managers also ensure that considerations of teachers' pay, performance and training needs are closely linked to raising pupils' achievements. Staff are diligent in eliminating discrimination and work hard to treat pupils equally so that all achieve well.
- All staff work hard to ensure that pupils learn through a wide range of stimulating activities, which strongly promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These include visits to other countries, such as France and Spain, much enjoyed by pupils.
- Leadership and management are not outstanding. This is because, although subject leaders share expertise productively with colleagues across the federation, they are not yet fully involved in improving teaching and learning. Even so, teachers are welcoming increased responsibility and this is leading to more pupils improving their learning by, for example, taking part in outdoor activities.
- The school is using the new sports funding efficiently together with other schools in the federation to enrich its already extensive provision. Specialist coaches are increasing staff and pupils' skills, for example in dance, where improved teaching is now lifting pupils' performances. The school continues to check this work and has noted that more pupils, especially younger pupils, are participating in the increased range of activities.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire expressed full support for the school. Parents, and the pupils themselves, particularly appreciate the way all staff provide strong support and undertake careful checks to keep pupils safe.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good and improving school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body of the federation has a well-organised system for checking on the performance of its schools. This involves governors visiting regularly to observe the work in school and to meet with staff, pupils and their parents and reporting back to the main governing body. Governors keep their skills up to date through frequent training, including on safeguarding and understanding pupils' achievement data. As result, governors ensure that pupils are kept safe and know how the school's performance compares to that of schools nationally. Governors question the headteacher with determination, hold senior staff to account and assist in driving improvement. For example, governors play a key role in extending accommodation and outdoor learning facilities. Governors also work closely with the headteacher to ensure that checks of staff performance, training needs and salaries focus closely on raising pupils' achievement. Governors carefully check the use of the pupil premium funding so that it enables eligible pupils to achieve at least as well as their peers. Governors are similarly diligent in ensuring that the additional sports funding is well used.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	109236
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	444175

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Tombs
Headteacher	Jane Gascoigne
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 October 2009
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