

Lydford Primary School

School Road, Lydford, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 4AU

Inspection dates 14–15 January 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 and achieve well because they are taught well. The quality of teaching is consistently good.
- Children receive a good start to their education within the Early Years Foundation Stage, with most of them reaching a good level of development by the time they move into Key Stage 1.
- All groups of pupils currently in the school make good progress from their individual starting points in English and mathematics. Their achievement in reading is particularly good.
- Teachers know the pupils very well, giving them confidence to do well. Regular checks made on their progress mean that teachers and teaching assistants are able to support pupils skilfully, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, who need additional help.
- Pupils behave well, they participate enthusiastically in lessons and they are well looked after. They attend regularly, feel safe, are happy and are extremely proud of their school. One pupil described the school as 'fantastic, amazing and the best school anyone could go to'. Parents support this view as one commented that the school is 'fabulous'.
- The headteacher and the governors are very well focused on school priorities and are continuing the drive for further improvement. This has especially been the case since the school entered into the federation and, as a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always move pupils on to problem-solving activities quickly enough in mathematics.
- Pupils, especially those who are more able, are not always challenged to produce enough when they write extended pieces of work.
- When teachers mark pupils' work in mathematics the next-step comments they provide are not as clear and helpful as they are in English.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited six lessons and observed three teachers. The headteacher joined the inspector to observe two of the lessons. The inspector looked at the teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) being delivered by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, parents and a representative from the local authority. A meeting with the governors of the federation was arranged and attended by inspectors from all four primary schools being inspected.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plans, priorities for development, achievement data and documents relating to safeguarding children.
- The inspector took account of the 25 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, the five responses to the staff questionnaire and two letters received from parents during the inspection. The inspector also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lydford is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Dartmoor Federation, which includes Okehampton College, Boasley Cross Primary School, Bridestowe Primary School and Exbourne Primary School. The federation, with a single governing body, was established in September 2011. Since then the federation has become a cooperative trust, working with other local primary schools.
- The headteacher has led both Lydford and Boasley Cross Primary Schools since February 2013.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in Class 1 with pupils from Key Stage 1. Pupils who are in Key Stage 2 are taught together in Class 2.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of boys on roll is much higher than the proportion of girls.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. Currently, there are no pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding overall by making sure that teachers:
 - move pupils on to mathematical problem-solving activities more quickly once they have mastered the required mathematical skills
 - sharpen the next-step comments they provide pupils with when they mark their work in mathematics to match the quality of those provided in English
 - expect pupils, especially the more able, to produce more work when they write at length.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- There are very small numbers of pupils in each year group, so the results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 vary from year to year but are consistently above the national average. This is especially the case for reading, which is well above average.
- All groups of pupils make good progress across the year groups because of the consistently good teaching they receive.
- Children join Reception with skills and understanding that are typically similar to those that would normally be expected for their age. As a result of good teaching, all children make good progress and they move into Year 1 with levels that are above those of pupils nationally.
- Good progress continues throughout the school, with particularly strong progress in reading. Achievement in reading is a real strength and has been enhanced by good phonics teaching. Pupils who read to the inspector did so with emotion and explained their story with great confidence.
- Achievement in mathematics and writing is good, but is not yet resulting in the consistently high levels of attainment reached in reading. However, progress in mathematics and writing is accelerating and the relatively small gaps in attainment are closing.
- Pupils are known individually and teachers monitor their progress effectively, with the result that support is quickly targeted where it is needed. As a result, they achieve well and the proportions that make and exceed their expected progress compare favourably with national averages.
- More-able pupils are challenged well. The proportions of these pupils who exceed their expected progress are consistently higher than the proportion nationally. However, more-able pupils do not always produce enough work when they write at length.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. Teaching assistants complement the work done in lessons well with support activities for individuals and small groups. This is an inclusive school where pupils are valued as individuals, ensuring everyone is encouraged to be the best they can be.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium also benefit from additional adult assistance. This grant is used effectively to include them fully in the range of school activities. The school's own information indicates that eligible pupils are making at least similar progress to their peers in both English and mathematics. However, there are too few pupils to be able to comment on their attainment compared to the others.
- Pupils' participation in sport is good. Additional sports provision and participation by pupils have been achieved by working with other schools in the federation.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching throughout the school is consistently good; teachers know their pupils well and so design tasks that meet their needs and abilities within the mixed-age classes. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage in their education, leaving with above average attainment.
- Pupils engage well with their lessons and the good pace of the teaching gives them high levels of interest and engagement. In Class 2, pupils were developing their understanding of how and when to use adjectives and, for the more able, adverbial clauses. Pupils engaged with their particular task quickly. Effective questioning by the teacher allowed her to target the pupils needing her support, resulting in little time being wasted and good progress made by all pupils.
- Mathematics is taught well and pupils have a secure understanding of mathematical skills and concepts. Teachers make good use of online mathematics software to support the wide range of abilities. However, work in pupils' books shows that pupils do not use these basic skills enough in problem-solving activities to develop their investigative and application skills.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set out clearly what they are required to

achieve. However, when pupils undertake extended writing tasks they all produce similar amounts of work, even though they have different abilities. This is especially the case for more-able pupils who are not developing their ability to write for a sustained period of time.

- Carefully chosen topics are developed so they provide pupils with learning activities that reflect their local environment and match their interests and aspirations well. A good example of this is where pupils visit Lydford Gorge, on a monthly basis, to use the outdoor environment to extend their learning of geography and science in a real situation. This results in all pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium, achieving well.
- All parents and pupils agree that teaching is good at the school and pupils say that they enjoy school. This is reflected in their positive attitudes towards learning and ability to work together.
- Teaching in Reception is good. Children are included in most activities that pupils in Key Stage 1 undertake in the same class and 'choosing' activities that are carefully selected to support the work they have just completed in a guided session. In a Class 1 numeracy session, Key Stage 1 pupils were practising their counting and number-bond skills while the Reception children had activities to find shapes and count the sides and corners.
- Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and regularly. Teachers use next step comments with good effect when marking pupils' written work. However, this is not reflected in the mathematics books, where marking is mainly limited to 'ticking' correct answers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils are friendly and polite. All ages mix together well, both around the school and in the playground.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have a positive attitude to their learning; they show enthusiasm for all that is on offer to them. They enjoy school, arrive into lessons promptly, ready to learn and organise the resources they need quickly and quietly. They are highly respectful, courteous and the relationships between pupils and adults are exceptionally strong.
- Children in Reception learn the rules of good behaviour quickly. This continues through the school. There are almost no instances of poor behaviour that have warranted additional attention or recording.
- In lessons, pupils engage with their work and settle to completing the task. They understand what constitutes acceptable behaviour. On the rare occasions when there is low-level inappropriate behaviour, such as pupils chatting socially to each other, teachers quickly intervene and refocus the pupils back onto their work.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. All pupils, including those in Reception, are positive about how the school keeps them safe, a view shared by all parents.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and understand the different forms of bullying, including physical, emotional and cyber bullying. During discussions, they say that there is no bullying at the school. School records confirm this view. Pupils say that the adults in the school support them very well and always deal with any problems that they may have quickly and effectively. All parents report that bullying is not a problem at the school.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school and enjoy taking responsibility and contributing to the life of the school. Older pupils 'look out' for the younger ones and make sure they are included in games at playtime. Pupils' attendance is above average and pupils are punctual arriving at school.
- Pupils are keen to represent the school and enjoy the additional activities that the school provides for them, such as the sports club and recorder club, and are eagerly anticipating the new clubs this term such as chess. These are all very popular and well attended.

The leadership and management are good

- The school knows its strengths and areas to improve well through very systematic and rigorous checking of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress over time. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which is shared by her small team. Staff morale is high and staff report that they that they are 'proud to work at Lydford'.
- Increased challenge and support from governors since the federation was established have increased the ambition of all leaders continually to strive to improve the school and reinforced a commitment to improve the life chances of all its pupils. This has been fundamental to sustaining the good progress and attainment of pupils.
- Effective management of their performance provides challenge, support and constructive advice to teachers in order to help improve classroom practice. Using the headteacher from another federation school for some observations has increased the consistency of the process. As a result, the quality of teaching continues to improve, together with improving outcomes for pupils.
- Targets set for teachers are linked well with the progress pupils make and with staff training. The opportunities for staff training are greatly enhanced by being part of the federation, as teachers can share their expertise and take part in shared training.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by a wide-ranging and interesting variety of subjects and activities, including opportunities to take part in day trips relating to their lessons as well as residential trips such as the visit to the Houses of Parliament for the older pupils within the federation schools. The school promotes equality of opportunity well for all pupils and makes sure that discrimination is not tolerated.
- Leadership and management of aspects of the school that are overseen by other members of staff are good. The learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is well planned and focused on children's needs and interests, so the children are enthused and motivated by all that is on offer to them.
- Strong links with The National Trust, as guardians of Lydford Gorge, give pupils a good appreciation of their local community. The annual Arts Week, focusing on art, music and drama, and other more regular activities such as assemblies ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Leaders plan to make good use of the primary school sports funding. Working with the other schools in the federation, the school has purchased a package of support to enable the school to increase the range of sports available to pupils alongside staff training. This is intended to increase pupils' participation in sport and improve their health and well-being, as well as equip teachers to carry on the work once the funding comes to an end.
- The local authority recognises the good leadership and management at the school and only provides support when the school requests it.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The federation governing body has a good understanding of the school, supporting and challenging school leaders well. Governors regularly undertake an evaluation of their own effectiveness to ensure that they have the most impact on improving pupils' outcomes, both within the school and across the federation, so that pupils are well catered for throughout their school life. Governors understand how well pupils achieve when compared with other schools nationally. They challenge school leaders to expect high quality teaching from all teachers. Appropriate checking procedures are in place to make sure that governors have a clear understanding of how teachers' performance and experience are linked to pay progression. Governors understand the areas for development and work with the school to see the improvement plans through, especially where there is any underperformance. Governors understand how the pupil premium is allocated and its impact on improving levels of pupils' attainment. The governing body ensures the school meets its statutory safeguarding requirements. Governors have undertaken sufficient training since becoming a federation to ensure that they have a full understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

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	113257
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	432433

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Courtney
Headteacher	Linda Wells
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 September 2010
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