

St David's Church of England Primary School

Dinham Road, Exeter, EX4 4EE

Inspection dates

10–11 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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 are achieving higher standards and making better progress in both English and mathematics than at the time of the last inspection. This is because there is more good teaching than previously across the school. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 is especially strong so that pupils get a good start.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and because teachers check their work carefully they are able to improve rapidly. This is true of all groups of pupils, including those that find learning difficult.
- Behaviour is consistently good and pupils are keen to learn. Pupils get on well with adults and each other. Pupils understand how to keep safe and the school also ensures that they are kept safe.
- The headteacher, the governing body and the whole school team have worked hard to improve the school. School leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and ensure that any weaknesses are followed up.
- Links with parents and carers are good and are helping pupils make good progress. Most parents and carers value the school highly and have very few concerns.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is almost always good but there is too little teaching that is outstanding.
- Although pupils are doing well in mathematics, they are not yet doing as well as in English.
- The school does not yet give pupils enough opportunities to apply their reading, writing and mathematics skills in all subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at its planning, policies, assessment records and other documents.
- The inspector observed 10 lessons taught by four teachers over five hours. Meetings were held with staff, parents and carers, pupils and members of the governing body.
- He took account of the 16 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and to the views of individual parents and carers noted during the inspection.

Inspection team

John Carnaghan, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St David's is a smaller-than-average primary school.
 - The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium support (additional money allocated to schools by the government) is above average.
 - The school has below-average proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and whose first language is not English, although these proportions are growing.
 - The proportions of disabled pupils or who have special educational needs is similar overall to the national average. Those supported through school action is similar to the national average; this is also true of those supported on school action plus.
 - The school has a higher-than-average turnover of pupils.
 - The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding by:
 - ensuring all teachers plan in detail what they want pupils to learn and share this regularly with the pupils so that they know what is expected of them
 - setting goals for pupils that clearly guide them to reach the next stage in their work
 - develop exciting opportunities in all the subjects where pupils can use and improve their skills in reading, writing and speaking, and use of number.
- Further improve mathematics so that pupils' achieve as well as they do in English by:
 - strengthening teachers' understanding of how to plan well for learning in mathematics, particularly by making sure that each pupil understands the task expected of them.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Improved teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures children make a good start to their education. They quickly settle into the school and develop an understanding of how to work independently and together. Well-focused activities ensure children make good progress in all areas, including literacy and numeracy. After entering school with skills and aptitudes below those expected for their age, pupils join Year 1 well prepared and at expected levels of attainment in all areas.
- The steady development of teaching across the school has ensured consistently good learning at all ages; this has raised attainment.
- Pupils' attainment is above average at the end of Year 6, but mathematics slightly lags behind English. This is because pupils are still catching up on earlier work in mathematics that was not always well enough understood. A focus on mathematics teaching is steadily improving pupils' progress, but it has not proved easy to help older pupils make up for opportunities they missed when they were younger.
- Teachers act quickly to provide extra assistance to pupils in danger of slipping behind; the effectiveness of this help is regularly checked by senior staff. Pupils supported on school action, school action plus, and those for whom English is not their first language are thus helped to achieve as well as other pupils. The school is very careful to ensure that each child is well catered for, there is no discrimination and all groups of pupils do well. This applies equally to pupils from minority ethnic groups and those supported by additional funding from the pupil premium.
- Good learning is typical in lessons. Pupils participate enthusiastically in all activities and want to please their teachers. When they are stimulated by interesting activities, they learn best. Year 1 and 2 pupils enjoyed preparing a written report on the previous day's visit to a nearby castle. Lively and encouraging teaching helped all pupils join in the discussions. This prepared pupils well for the writing task that followed.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Effective checks by leaders and managers have 'raised the bar'; teaching has improved and in most lessons teaching is now good or better. The resulting good learning has raised achievement across the school.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Although teachers plan most lessons well, the planning of mathematics lessons is not good enough because it does not help all pupils to make good progress. Sometimes, the planning in other subjects lacks detail, so that pupils do not know what is expected of them.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to enjoy reading and develop their skills. Good books are readily available to all pupils, but not all reading opportunities offer the most stimulating experiences.
- In lessons pupils show good attitudes to learning. Teachers create this through good working relationships with pupils; they invariably praise rather than criticise, encouraging pupils to give of their best. This is notable in the marking of pupils' work, which is regular, thorough and offers constructive advice and encouragement. In response, pupils often write courteous replies, saying how they will improve.
- Pupils' targets are displayed on walls along with pupils' names. They indicate what pupils should aim for, but they are often written in difficult language so that pupils have trouble remembering them.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and their calm confidence frequently inspires pupils. A mixed Year 5 and 6 class hugely enjoyed designing and building electric buggies, partly because the teacher's deep understanding of the issues ensured they were thoroughly

prepared for their task.

- Pupils report they enjoy lessons and this is evident in their enthusiasm for all kinds of learning. From an early age, they learn to work collaboratively, whether it is turning to a partner to discuss a question or cooperating with a group of pupils to discuss the best way of tackling a problem.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils want to learn and enthusiastically take part in lessons. Teachers' calm and effective pupil management keeps pupils' sometimes unbridled enthusiasm in check, so they rarely become too noisy or disrupt learning.
- Parents, carers and pupils have almost no concerns over behaviour. Exclusions from school are very unusual. Bullying of all kinds is virtually unknown, but pupils confidently report that the school reacts strongly if a hint of such behaviour is detected. Pupils know about various types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and know what steps they should take if it crops up. Racism is very rare.
- The school is very welcoming. The playground is generally calm and relaxed; older boys know their enthusiastic football games can disrupt others and they moderate their matches so they do not take place when the play areas are most crowded.
- Pupils feel that school provides a safe place in a crowded city centre. They appreciate they are well looked after and show a clear understanding of potential dangers, such as those on the internet and on the busy local roads. Attendance has improved and is at the national average for primary schools.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is strongly supported by staff and members of the governing body in her drive to improve the school. She has raised expectations for the staff and shown good judgement in focusing on any important weaknesses. The local authority has supported her strongly in her work.
- Leaders, managers and the governing body have actively promoted developments and improvements in teaching, mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage. There have been considerable improvements in all three areas, although the school acknowledges there is more to be done, particularly in mathematics. The school's capacity for continuing improvement is good.
- Leadership is shared amongst the small staff team. Recent appointments have strengthened middle management. This is evident in the well-informed, well-organised leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the way new leaders of mathematics are quickly pushing forward improvements in mathematics teaching.
- Regular checking of the work in all areas of the school is central to the school's success. Regular assessments enable the school to track individuals' progress. If a pupil's progress slips, the school acts quickly to put in place appropriate additional support, such as individual tuition or assistance in small groups. Support staff are used sensibly and effectively to help pupils learn well.
- Information from checks is used well to provide suitable staff training, drive up teaching standards and speed up the pupils' progress. Class teachers regularly meet with senior leaders to discuss the progress of individual pupils. This enables the school to hold staff to account. Teachers' performance is well managed and additional training provided where needed.
- The emphasis on promoting higher attainment in English and mathematics means developments in other subjects have been less rapid. The curriculum meets requirements

and is enlivened by trips and visitors. These often provide great stimuli to writing and discussion activities, and provide good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A visit to a castle invoked awe in Year 1 and 2 pupils and promoted an understanding of life in another era. Constructive behaviour and positive relationships are a strong testament to good moral and social development.

- The curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to work across subjects and conduct independent research. Teachers do not always make the most of possible links between subjects to help pupils learn better. The school does not systematically promote the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects.
- Parents and carers are welcomed to the school and enjoy numerous opportunities for informal discussions with staff. Newsletters and the school website ensure a steady flow of information reaches homes. Inspection and other surveys indicate a very high degree of parental satisfaction.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- members of the governing body have many skills and their challenging questioning of the school's leaders ensures that they are kept fully informed about the school. This enables them to provide strong support to the headteacher as she tackles areas of concern
 - governors show a good understanding of information on the pupils' performance. Their analysis of the impact of the pupil premium has helped ensure that these monies are allocated well to support this particular group, specifically by providing additional teaching assistant time
 - the governing body gives due weight to safeguarding pupils. Checks are thoroughly done and policies are subject to regular reviews; the school is a safe environment. Safeguarding meets requirements.
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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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	113353
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	401363

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	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Cobbold
Headteacher	Francesca Brinicombe
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 November 2009
Telephone number	01392 255569
Fax number	01392 255569
Email address	admin@stdavidsprimary.devon.sch.uk

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