

# Alphington Primary School

Wheatsheaf Way, Exeter EX2 8RQ

**Inspection dates** 5–6 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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

- The headteacher and senior leaders are committed to providing the best possible education for the pupils who attend Alphington.
- The school's leaders have an ambitious vision for the future. This has had a positive impact on the continued improvement of the school's overall effectiveness and performance over a sustained period.
- The governors are very involved in supporting and challenging the performance of the school and are regular visitors.
- Achievement is at least good across all year groups and pupils make better than expected progress in English and mathematics from the time they enter the school. Attainment is typically well above average, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have worked effectively together to improve the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection.
- Children settle into the Early Years Foundation Stage extremely quickly and make very good progress during their first year at school.
- Pupils' progress is accurately monitored as they move through the school and any underperformance is quickly addressed.
- The rich curriculum provides a varied and exciting range of learning experiences which meet the needs of all the pupils.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Their behaviour is very good. They get on well together within the school's family atmosphere and show positive attitudes to their learning.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and are a fundamental strength of the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. There remain some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 which means pupils' progress is not outstanding.
- Subject leaders are not totally confident in analysing data in order to understand how much progress pupils are making.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out over two days with half a day's notice.
- All the full-time staff were observed teaching. A total of 28 lessons were seen, including two joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspectors heard pupils from Years 1 and 3 read individually and observed the teaching of phonics (pupils learning letter patterns and the sounds they represent).
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, subject and key stage leaders, the special needs coordinator and members of the school leadership team. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of evidence which included: the school's improvement plan, the school's data for tracking the progress and attainment of individual pupils and specific groups, performance management documentation, the school's self-evaluation information, minutes of meetings of the governing body and the work pupils were doing in their books.
- Parents and carers were met at the beginning of the school day and the 108 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered. Responses from 32 staff questionnaires were also taken into account.
- During the inspection pupils' behaviour was observed, both inside and outside of the classroom, and the school's safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Mark Anderson, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Ian Cload

Additional inspector

Vivian Venn

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school located on the outskirts of Exeter.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two early years groups. Year groups in Key Stages 1 and 2 are taught in two parallel forms.
- The vast majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with statements of special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club on the school site but they are run by a separate organisation.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, especially in Key Stage 2, by making sure that:
  - best practice in teaching and learning is shared more widely, so that all teachers make best use of opportunities to inspire and challenge pupils of all abilities
  - all lessons are taught at a lively pace and enthuse all pupils
  - all learners know how to improve their work.
- Provide training to ensure that phase leaders and subject coordinators have a greater understanding of how to analyse data and thus the progress pupils make.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The great majority of children join the school with skills broadly in line with those typical for their age. They settle quickly and make good progress so that they are well prepared for their move into Year 1. The substantial gains made in their social and emotional development demonstrate the importance the school places on educating the 'whole child'.
- Rapid progress is seen throughout Key Stage 1 and the improving levels of attainment in reading are a strong feature of this stage of the pupils' education. This improvement has been strongly supported by daily phonics (letters and the sounds they make) sessions. Pupils continue to develop their skills in reading to a high level as they move through the school.
- Levels of attainment in mathematics, reading and writing are significantly above national standards and reflect the outstanding progress that is made by the vast majority of pupils during their time in Key Stage 1.
- Achievement in Key Stage 2 is not quite as consistent as in Key Stage 1. However the proportion of pupils achieving Levels 4 and 5 in 2012 in English and mathematics was significantly above the national average.
- Pupils have continued to make gains in their progress in mathematics in both key stages. This has followed a close focus on the teaching of mathematics to engage and interest the pupils.
- There are no significant differences in the progress made by groups of pupils. In English and mathematics the attainment of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is similar to that of other pupils in the school as are their average point scores in both subjects. Funds are used well to develop their academic and social skills, helping them to increase their confidence.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make progress which is line with their peers.
- The school's systems for tracking each individual pupil's level of progress and achievement are exceptionally detailed and accurate. The tracking data are carefully analysed to establish any areas in need of strengthening and any individual pupils or groups who require additional support.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in Reception and Key Stage 1 is often outstanding, and never less than good. In Key Stage 2 it is predominantly good with a small proportion of teaching that is outstanding.
- The teachers' enthusiasm and subject knowledge mean that the great majority of lessons are well planned and engage all the pupils. This enthusiasm was particularly apparent when Elvis Presley made an unexpected appearance at the start of a Year 6 lesson on the 1960's and a teaching assistant was 'transformed' into a medieval servant in a Year 3 history lesson!
- Most learning tasks are challenging and thought-provoking which means the pupils' attitude to learning is positive and they enjoy their learning.
- In most lessons teachers ensure that learning runs at an appropriate pace and the teachers' questioning skills keep all pupils on task and involved. Sometimes the pace of lessons slows a little when teachers spend too much time explaining the lesson objectives and this slows pupils' progress slightly.
- Staff who teach children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have effectively adapted their planning and observations in line with the new framework for children of this age. Phonics teaching to children in Reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 is precise and carefully adapted to suit different ability levels so pupils learn quickly.
- Marking and feedback are usually effective in helping pupils to meet their learning targets. Pupils get clear guidance on the next steps in improving their work. Occasionally, where teaching is not as strong, this guidance is not as clear.

- Individual teachers regularly check and accurately judge pupils' rates of progress. Pupils know their targets for learning and what is required for them to achieve at different levels.
- In lessons activities are well matched to the different abilities of pupils. This results in almost all pupils making at least expected progress as well as gaining growing self-confidence. Pupils talk confidently to adults and this reflects the strong progress they make in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Teaching assistants are deployed very well to provide extremely effective intervention and support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. This teaching support is carefully focused to meet the learning needs of individual pupils.
- All parents and carers who responded to the school's questionnaire, the on-line Parent View questionnaire or spoke to the inspectors considered that their child was taught well and made at least good progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Behaviour in lessons and around school is of a high standard. Pupils are respectful of each other. This consideration has a positive impact on the quality of learning and contributes to the caring ethos which is evident throughout the school.
- As they start school children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught what is expected regarding good behaviour. These expectations are reinforced as pupils progress through the school and the older pupils provide very strong role models.
- Parents and carers have a very positive view of behaviour. They appreciate that the school is caring, approachable and will deal appropriately with issues.
- Pupils are very polite towards staff and visitors. They are taught to show respect and consideration for others. They get on well with each other across the age groups in lessons and on the playground areas where they show a good awareness of each other and how to keep safe.
- Pupils have good attitudes towards learning and quickly settle to the tasks they are set with enthusiasm. They respond enthusiastically to questions and requests throughout the school day. Sometimes a small minority lose concentration which results in minor disruption to learning.
- Pupils are keen to take an active part in school life and take on a variety of roles and responsibilities such as being members of the environmentally aware 'Green Team' and acting as 'anti-bullying ambassadors'. The school council provides a pupil voice and there is a wide range of clubs and activities which are well attended and enjoyed.
- Good attendance is rewarded and celebrated. The school has worked hard with parents and carers to encourage consistent attendance. This has resulted in above average attendance over the last three years.
- Pupils say they are well cared for and feel safe at school at all times. They feel able to speak to an adult if they have a problem. They show a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying, including physical, emotional and cyber bullying and commented that the adults always deal with any instances of inappropriate behaviour quickly, fairly and firmly.
- Any pupil with behavioural difficulties is extremely well supported by well-trained staff who work hard to ensure equality of opportunity for every child and contribute very successfully to maintaining a very strong inclusive ethos. The pastoral support coordinator plays a vital role in this area of the school's support network.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The school's leadership team is led resolutely by the headteacher, who is ambitious and committed to the school's ongoing development. The senior leaders have a united vision for the school and have been determined in their pursuit of achieving the highest standards. The school's leaders have a good understanding of its strengths and how to improve further.

- Leaders and managers rigorously collect data on pupils' attainment and progress. The information is analysed and pupil progress meetings are scheduled every six weeks to identify those pupils who may be falling behind or not making expected progress and to put in place appropriate support and intervention. Some subject leaders are not yet fully confident in these processes as they have only recently been appointed.
- The school's self-evaluation is detailed and accurate and the school improvement plan is clearly focused through success criteria, targets and timelines.
- Improvements to pupils' outcomes, attendance and the quality of teaching during the last five years reflect a strong capacity to maintain improvement.
- Safeguarding arrangements comply with statutory regulations. The leadership identifies and responds very well to any concerns regarding child welfare.
- Senior leaders regularly observe teachers' work and make accurate judgements relating to the quality of their practice and the progress their pupils make. These findings are linked to appraisal and performance management and used to decide teachers' pay and internal promotion. Senior leaders have rightly recognised the need to ensure best practice is shared across all year groups.
- The school places a high priority on professional training for the staff and developing their teaching skills and knowledge.
- The school's curriculum provides an extremely wide and exciting range of learning experiences for all age groups that are well matched to the needs of the pupils. Parents and carers are provided with regular opportunities to support and take part in their child's learning. Examples of this include a recent Early Years Foundation Stage 'Nightwalk', the Year 5 Viking museum, Grandparents' Day and a Year 1 French breakfast which was enjoyed by over 120 visitors. An example of the real breadth of the new curriculum was the mass evacuation of every Key Stage 2 pupil by train to nine different schools in Devon to recreate the evacuation of school children during the Second World War!
- There are numerous opportunities for the development of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and understanding. The close links with a school in Uganda have included staff, from both continents, making reciprocal visits. This contact has greatly increased the pupils' understanding of their role as a 'global citizen'.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is determined to improve the school further and hold leaders to account well for the effectiveness of the school. Governors have a clear understanding of its strengths and how well it performs in comparison with similar schools. They work closely with the school to refine and implement the school improvement plan. They are regular visitors to the school and are all 'attached' to individual year groups. They have a clear understanding of the links between teachers' performance and progression through the pay scales and how underperformance is addressed. Governors have a clear understanding of how the pupil premium funding is allocated and its impact in improving levels of pupils' attainment. Governors also attend regular training so that they can fulfil their roles effectively.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113073
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	403192
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	406
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ian Guy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Debbie Buckingham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16–17 January 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 254291
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