

Archbishop Benson CofE Primary School

Bodmin Road, Truro, TR1 1BN

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well at this school. Their progress in English and mathematics is good.
- Pupils who are eligible for additional funding achieve as well as their classmates in English and mathematics and sometimes better.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start and achieve well.
- Teaching is good, with some of high quality. Pupils benefit from well-planned tasks and effective support so that their progress improves.
- The good teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) ensures that pupils get off to a good start with their reading and writing.
- Pupils behave outstandingly well in and around the school. Their attitudes to learning are excellent. Older pupils regularly help younger ones. Pupils feel very safe at school.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the school. Almost all who responded to the online questionnaire said that their child is happy at school and makes good progress.
- A good range of interesting topics and subjects, strengthened by outstanding provision for music and art, promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.
- The headteacher has a clear and ambitious vision for the school. She has developed a strong focus on raising achievement through high-quality training for staff and careful checking of the quality of teaching.
- The governing body is extremely supportive, manages the budget well and has an accurate view of the school's work. Governors make sure that pupils who receive additional funding fully benefit from it.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Just occasionally tasks are not hard enough so that pupils do not improve their skills sufficiently to reach their full potential.
- The outdoor learning area for the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has not been developed well enough to fully support children's learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 25 lessons, most jointly with the senior leaders. In addition, the inspectors made a few shorter visits to observe pupils' learning, and listened to some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and managers, other staff, several members of the governing body, pupils and some parents and carers. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information, the sports premium action plan, information about pupil premium funding and pupils' books and files.
- Inspectors took account of the 77 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and a few letters sent by parents and carers. Inspectors also took account of 20 responses to the staff inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Ian Cload	Additional Inspector
Mark Anderson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average size primary school catering for pupils from parts of Truro and its surrounding area.
- There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for the youngest children in the two Reception classes.
- Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very low, and there are no pupils new to speaking English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, mainly autism spectrum disorders and/or learning difficulties, is about average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for certain groups, including students known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority, is average.
- The school also receives primary school sports funding for its pupils.
- Archbishop Benson Church of England Primary School converted to become a Church of England academy in August 2011. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- 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?

- Ensure that tasks set are always hard enough for pupils so that they all make rapid progress and fully achieve their potential.
- Increase the range of activities in the outdoor learning area in the Early Years Foundation Stage so they fully support children's learning and progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils across the school, including those from minority backgrounds, achieve well, often from low starting points. They make good progress because teachers develop their learning well. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 has been above average in the past two years.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from good quality additional tasks and effective support so that they make similarly good progress to their classmates.
- Pupils supported through premium funding receive effective individual and small-group support and resources that fully engage them in learning. A learning mentor provides regular support for pupils and their families. As a result most achieve as well or better than their classmates and their attainment at the end of Year 6 is similar in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils usually achieve well because they are set tasks that really make them think in most lessons. As a result the proportions reaching the higher levels of attainment are rising.
- Just occasionally pupils' progress dips because the work provided for them is not hard enough. At these times they do not make the best possible progress.
- Progress in reading is good because pupils quickly learn to match letters and sounds from their earliest age, identifying new and unknown words accurately.
- Speaking skills are promoted well through effective small-group work, in which pupils gain confidence and self-esteem. The use of signs to encourage language is very effective and ensures at least good progress in this area.
- Writing skills improve well at the school because of effective opportunities for pupils to write in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. The effective use of information and communication technology has a positive impact on pupils' research and writing skills.
- Pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics because they enjoy the many practical tasks and the challenges set for them. In Year 5 for example, outstanding learning in understanding of how to calculate the area of compound shapes was a result of pupils' high levels of interest in the task and their excellent attention.
- Children's skills and understanding on entry to the Reception classes are below the levels expected for pupils of their age. They quickly settle and begin to catch up so that by the time they enter Year 1 most have reached the expected standards. They make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1. However, the outdoor area is not fully utilised to develop children's learning.
- The primary sports funding is well used to support a wide range of activities, extending pupils' physical skills. Specialist coaching ensures that pupils' skills in a range of sports are improving.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils across the school benefit from teaching that is almost always good, and some that is of high quality. As a result, they make good and sometimes outstanding progress. Teaching typically enables pupils to work together, share ideas and be absorbed in their learning.
- The effective teaching of literacy is based on good planning. High levels of additional support, often by teaching assistants, are carefully matched to individual needs so that activities are usually set at the right level.
- Pupils who lack confidence in speaking or writing are successfully helped to improve through effective small-group activities which help them to join in and enjoy learning.
- The teaching of reading and writing is supported well through the regular teaching of the sounds that letters make, resulting in pupils quickly learning to recognise and read simple texts.
- Effective teaching of mathematics ensures that there is a high focus on practical tasks that challenge and fully engage almost all pupils. This was also clearly evident in science where

pupils in Year 1, for example, were totally involved in practical tasks, using their senses to quickly identify different objects.

- The checking of pupils' progress is accurate and typically helpful, providing examples of how pupils can improve their work. This is particularly strong in Years 2 to 6 in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is always good in the classrooms and high staffing levels ensure individual support is available. Outdoor learning is less successful because children are not challenged well enough to improve their skills, make their own decisions or check their own work.
- Teaching is not outstanding because, sometimes, work is not hard enough for all pupils to enable them to make rapid progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The very high focus across the school on the personal development of pupils in a community where all pupils are highly valued has resulted in the outstanding behaviour and safety of pupils across the school.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are polite and helpful, and older pupils are regularly on hand to help younger ones. Pupils listen carefully to each other in lessons, value the comments of their classmates and are kind to others.
- Pupils say that they really enjoy school. This is evident in the way that their attendance has improved so that it is now above that found in most similar schools. The rate of absence is low and there have been no exclusions in the past few years.
- Pupils' attitudes are extremely positive. They are always eager to help in classrooms; many of them were observed helping to give out books and tidy resources. They show high levels of determination to succeed as they present their work to others in the class and in assemblies.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 told the inspectors that they feel really safe. They are fully aware of the importance of staying safe while using the internet and in the community.
- Pupils also told the inspector that there is no bullying at the school of any kind. Scrutiny of school records and of pupils playing together showed this to be true. There are no incidences of racist behaviour or homophobic name calling.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour is promoted well by the wide range of activities that the school provides. After-school clubs and very effective sporting links with other schools, as well as trips to places of interest, ensure that pupils come to school regularly.
- All pupils know and understand what is accepted and what is not because of very effective behaviour management. Their outstanding behaviour was very evident in assemblies where in one session pupils in Year 2 organised, managed and delivered the assembly successfully on their own.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely effective. Very close links with the Church and active links with other local schools help to develop pupils' personal skills extremely well.
- Outstanding provision for music and art, annual visits to London and the school's sponsorship of an orphanage in Mozambique ensure that pupils fully understand about life outside Cornwall and are fully prepared for their futures.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has high aspirations for the school and she is ably supported by other leaders

and the governing body. This is leading to clear improvement in pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching since the academy opened.

- Middle leaders have improved and updated their subjects and they support other leaders well in improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement.
- Leaders make effective use of the national standards for teaching to improve teachers' skills. There are several examples of staff at all levels progressing up the pay scales because of effective training which has helped them to improve pupils' progress.
- Leaders check pupils' progress regularly to make sure that they are making good progress. As a result, they know about any pupils falling behind and quickly put new targets in place to help them catch up.
- School information shows that leaders have successfully improved pupils' results and are closing the gaps in achievement.
- The school provides regular training for staff in aspects such as behaviour and safeguarding, ensuring consistent practice across the school.
- The local authority provides light touch support for the school because it is confident that pupils are progressing well. The school's church academy status has enabled positive links with other similar academies, providing support for staff through joint planning and sharing of ideas.
- There are strong local partnerships that fully benefit pupils. Senior leaders regularly support other local schools, helping them to improve their provision and outcomes.
- The good range of subjects and topics taught contributes exceptionally well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not fully developed and work is not always hard enough for pupils to make rapid progress.
- Responses to the online parent questionnaire show that the vast majority of parents and carers are pleased with the school.
- Through what they provide, leaders successfully eliminate discrimination and promote good relationships which make sure that all students have equal access to the experiences on offer.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is supportive and provides good challenge to leaders. Governors are fully involved in checking what the school offers to pupils, and checking teaching and behaviour as well as pupils' achievements. Governors have improved their roles through high-quality training. As a result they have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. They understand how the performance of the school compares to that of similar schools. Governors have a wide range of skills which they use to benefit the school. The governing body takes its safeguarding role seriously and complies with its duties for safeguarding children. Effective management of finances means that money is well spent to promote pupils' learning, including additional funding for those pupils who are eligible, enabling them to make at least the same progress, and sometimes better progress than their classmates. Governors know about setting targets for teachers and work to ensure that the best teachers are rewarded through promotion. They rigorously tackle any underperformance.

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	137258
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	439637

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	430
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Gardner
Headteacher	Penny Shilston
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
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