

Lady Modiford's Church of England (VA) Primary School

Walkhampton, Yelverton, Devon PL20 6LR

Inspection dates	14–15 June 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher has taken clear and determined action to raise expectations of teachers, which has led to better teaching. This has resulted in improved pupils' outcomes and attitudes to learning.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They enjoy coming to school and feel safe at school. They want to learn and are keen to challenge themselves.
- Pupils across the school, including the most able and those who have special educational needs or disability, are now challenged well, particularly in their reading and mathematics work.
- The teaching of reading is strong. Pupils of all ages read fluently for their age, with expression and enjoyment.
- In the early years, activities which are interesting and attractive to children make them eager to practise their reading, writing and early skills in mathematics both inside and outside the classroom.
- Governors know the school well. They stringently challenge school leaders about all areas of the school's work, in particular about the attainment of pupils and the quality of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to articulate their reasoning and deepen their understanding in their mathematics work.
- Not all teachers and other adults consistently demonstrate good handwriting that pupils can then follow to improve their own handwriting and presentation.
- The youngest children are not challenged enough by adults to use their knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) to support their writing.
- The monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment by middle leaders does not yet place enough emphasis on identifying what pupils know, understand and can do.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - in mathematics, pupils have opportunities to articulate better their knowledge and reasoning to deepen their mathematical understanding
 - children in the earliest years are challenged more often to apply what they know about phonics to improve their writing.

- Strengthen leadership and management further by ensuring that:
 - monitoring by middle leaders of the impact of teaching, learning and assessment places more emphasis on what it is that pupils know, understand and can do, so that this information is used systematically to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The executive headteacher has taken clear and resolute action to hold teachers to account, raise expectations and improve the quality of teaching.
- The challenge and support provided by the executive headteacher and the leadership team he has built have enabled teachers to improve the quality of their teaching. Teachers and support staff who have been in post for some time say that the school has changed immensely for the better since the last inspection. They say that, 'The difference is that we are a team now'. Staff new to the school comment on the support they have been given, saying that it helped them 'hit the ground running' on their arrival.
- The challenging decisions that the executive headteacher, and governors, have sometimes had to make to ensure school improvement have not always been easy for some parents to accept. The majority of parents would now recommend the school to others and many speak very positively of the impact of the school, the executive headteacher and other staff, on their children's progress and development.
- Middle leaders in English and mathematics demonstrate a love and knowledge of their subjects, which helps them to support and improve the practice of colleagues. However, the monitoring they carry out is not yet focused enough in identifying what it is that pupils know, understand and can do to identify clearly their next steps in learning.
- The skilful and knowledgeable support of the senior leader with responsibility for the early years provision has ensured rapid improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and a rapid improvement in the outcomes for children in a short space of time.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning well. Close links with the local church, an active role in the community, and opportunities to learn about the cultures of others mean that pupils are well prepared to join in modern British society. Pupils are encouraged to think about their role in the world, for example through their links with two schools in Tanzania and through thought-provoking information such as the '100 children of the world' display. Pupils play an active part in school life; for example, members of the school council were recently involved in the interviewing of new staff for the school. Pupils also care for the school's chickens and grow their own vegetables. Pupils value the extra-curricular opportunities they have. The school's leaders and teachers continue to evaluate and refine the curriculum to reflect the interests and needs of pupils and involve them in its development. This is one of the reasons why pupils are making better progress.
- The additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium and the primary sports funding are well spent. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium across the key stages make progress that is the same as and sometimes better than that of their peers and other pupils nationally. The funding for primary physical education (PE) and sports has enabled an increasing number of pupils to take part in after-school sports provision and to represent the school in competitive sports events.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors know their school well. They effectively challenge school leaders about the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and the spending of additional funds for pupils eligible for the pupil premium and the funding for primary PE and sports. They understand well the role of the performance management of staff and of continuing professional development for all staff in raising the quality of teaching. Governors have a clear vision for the school. They have used their skills well to lead and guide the strategic direction of the school as a member of the West Dartmoor Federation and in their decision to join a local multi-academy trust.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding is an integral part of the ethos of the school. Staff have been trained appropriately and are clear that they know what to do to support children at risk of harm. Pupils overwhelmingly say that they feel safe, and their parents agree. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, said that their children were safe at school. A safeguarding charter in every classroom reinforces for pupils and adults alike pupils' right to feel safe. Leaders and school staff know their pupils well. They make good use of external agencies, on occasions challenging them vigorously, to pursue the best outcomes for pupils vulnerable to harm. Detailed and accurate recording means that leaders have the information to challenge other agencies well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The pupils in this school are keen to learn. Teaching is now much more closely linked to the needs of pupils, including the most able, than at the time of the last inspection. This is because of the work of the executive headteacher and leaders to raise the expectations both of staff and pupils themselves regarding what pupils can do.
- Pupils speak of the higher expectations teachers have of them. They say that teachers encourage and challenge them to challenge themselves, for example by having a go at the hardest of the 'chilli' tasks.
- More accurate use of assessment and new assessment processes that clearly show the gaps in pupils' learning mean that there is a much closer match between the needs of pupils and the learning tasks they receive. Consequently, pupils, including the most able, are making much better progress, particularly in key stage 2.
- Skilful questioning by teachers and other adults checks and extends pupils' learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson in the Year 5 and Year 6 class, the teacher's probing questioning allowed pupils to spot a misconception and reason their way through why it had happened.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability and those with education, health and care plans are well supported in their learning. For example, through careful questioning and modelling of the skills needed, a pupil with an education, health and care plan was enabled to use his knowledge of number to measure everyday objects well.
- Teachers continue to adapt their planning of the curriculum to meet the needs and interests of pupils at this school. They use the local area of the moorland of Dartmoor to explore mathematics in the environment by taking pupils on to the moor to carry out surveys and count and explore the stone rows. Teachers use the curriculum to make effective links with pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They use the school's own environment to help pupils learn about other cultures. In a project entitled 'What can I see from my window?', pupils compared the plants grown in their locality with those in the areas around the schools in Tanzania with which they have a link. As part of this, vegetables such as sweet potatoes were grown in the school's polytunnels and then eaten as part of the school lunches.
- Pupils use their spelling and writing skills well across other areas of the curriculum. A drive to increase writing for mathematics is helping pupils see how writing helps them explain answers and solve problems.
- The school teaches reading well. Pupils enjoy books and read confidently, and commonly with fluency beyond that which might be expected for their age. Already, in Year 2, pupils can use strategies such as underlining key words and phrases to help them get the information they require to answer questions from texts they use. The school shows its commitment to developing pupils' love of reading by maintaining a well-stocked and spacious library where pupils can find books themselves. They enjoy reading a range of texts, including fiction, poetry and non-fiction books. The school also hosts a regular reading group for parents and local pre-school children in the library area.
- Phonics is well taught. Pupils across the range of abilities in Year 1 and Year 2 are particularly adept at using their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) to decode words that they may be unsure of. They showed persistence with more complex words such as 'unique', 'career' and 'mechanic' in a text about the life of the athlete Mo Farah that they were working with in the classroom. In Year 1, pupils working together on the blend 'wh' could identify for themselves why the spelling 'whing' was not correct for the word 'wing'. They went on to think of and write for themselves words such as 'wheel', 'where' and 'whisper'. However, in the youngest years of Reception and Year 1, adults do not always sufficiently challenge pupils to use their good knowledge of phonics to develop their spelling and writing further.
- Some teachers and other adults do not consistently provide a good model of joined handwriting. This means that not all pupils have clear examples to follow to help them improve their work.
- In the later years, for some pupils, there is an element of catch-up still in spelling and punctuation, which is a legacy of previous weaker teaching. The increase in focused teaching for grammar, punctuation and spelling is making sure that pupils are catching up. For example, the accurate identification during marking of a misconception about apostrophes in Year 3 led to a brief, discrete activity for the whole class which improved pupils' skills.
- Pupils do not consistently get the opportunity to think about and articulate their reasoning in mathematics to deepen their understanding.
- Pupils enjoy the project- and challenge-based approach to homework such as the 'Extreme Reading' challenge and a challenge to find digital mathematics in the environment. The majority of parents

responding to the Parent View online survey agree that homework is appropriate, and a recent opportunity in Year 3 and Year 4, where pupils presented their homework projects, was well attended.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy school. They are keen to learn and want to challenge themselves to do better. They enjoy being able to take some responsibility for their learning, such as challenging themselves to 'have a go' at the harder 'chilli' tasks during their learning. Pupils say that they are increasingly confident to 'take a risk' to develop their understanding and skills, particularly in mathematics work.
- Pupils overwhelmingly show courtesy and respect to each other and to adults. The way in which they listen carefully and considerately to the views of others, including in particular those pupils who have special educational needs or disability, demonstrates the inclusive ethos fostered by the school.
- The welfare and social and mental well-being of pupils underpin the school's work. Parents and pupils, in particular those who have come to the school at times other than normal transition, say that the school has helped to improve the well-being of pupils. They give examples such as the impact of nurture programmes in building pupils' resilience and the tactful support that is enabling a pupil to be more open to a wider, healthy diet.
- Pupils, staff and parents feel strongly that pupils are safe and well looked after by the school. All respondents to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, were of the opinion that their child feels safe at school. Pupils are clear about how to keep themselves safe, including online. The school works well to ensure the safety of pupils within their local context; for example, pupils learn about safety in the natural environment using the Forest School area, and Year 6 pupils attend a life- skills course and benefit from risk-taking on an annual local residential adventure trip. Pupils of all ages are taught to swim in the school's outdoor pool to ensure that they reach curriculum expectations in this area.
- A minority of parents who responded to Parent View felt that the school had not dealt well with bullying. This was not the view of pupils themselves, who felt that incidents of bullying were uncommon and that adults at school had dealt with them. Pupils were very clear that they knew whom to turn to if they had a concern of any nature. The majority of parents responding to Parent View, and spoken to, were clear that the school had acted swiftly to address any concerns they had.
- Pupils, including the youngest pupils, understand the importance of healthy eating in having a healthy lifestyle. Pupils enjoy eating the eggs from the school's chickens and the vegetables and fruit they grow in the school's polytunnels that are used in school meals.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils, including the youngest and oldest pupils, conduct themselves well throughout the school day including at break and lunchtimes and in the lunch hall. During transitions around the school, for example from break to lessons or in-between the elements of a lesson, pupils were calm and orderly and followed well-known routines and instructions from adults quickly and purposefully.
- In lessons, pupils, including the youngest children, worked well together. This was particularly the case where teaching was strongly challenging pupils to develop their reasoning, for example during Year 5 and Year 6 investigations into algebra and in Years 3 and 4 during the writing and performing of playscripts.
- Both pupils and parents speak very positively about the way in which pupils of all ages play together and that, as Year 6 pupils said, 'We all know who everyone is here'. The school has deliberately encouraged pupils to have friends in other year groups through the 'buddy' system, which older pupils understand helps them when they move up to the next class and when their friends in Year 6 move on to their secondary schools.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities and take these seriously, for example as members of the school council, in the care of the school's chickens, in being singing playground leaders and in being responsible for the star-award photographic-celebrations board.
- Currently, the number of pupils in the school who have joined the school at times other than normal transition is much higher than the national average. Overwhelmingly, the parents of these pupils and the

pupils themselves said how welcome they felt in school and how quickly they had settled and made friends. These comments were echoed strongly in the written comments of parents in Ofsted's online parent survey.

- The attendance of pupils has improved and is now very close to that of pupils nationally. The attendance of girls has improved so that it is just above that of boys. The school continues to work with pupils and their families to increase attendance, particularly for the small number of pupils who are persistently absent.
- In the last three years, the school has not excluded any pupils for a fixed period. The school has not permanently excluded any pupils in at least the last four years.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Across all year groups, and from a wide range of starting points, pupils currently at the school are achieving a higher standard and making better progress than formerly.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work, talking with pupils about their work, and observations in lessons show that pupils are making clear progress, notably in writing and mathematics, across both key stages. They make the best progress, for example, in mathematics in Year 5 and Year 6, where teaching is challenging them to develop their knowledge and skills and deepen their understanding even further.
- In the early years and in key stage 1, children and pupils now achieve at the same level or slightly above that of children and pupils nationally from a wide range of starting points. Previously, the proportion of pupils attaining at the highest level has sometimes been small. However, in the present Year 2, in reading in particular, a good number of pupils are now working at a higher level of skill than might be expected for their age.
- In key stage 2 in 2015, the proportions of pupils achieving at the same level as, or above, other pupils nationally increased. In reading, the number of pupils who achieved the highest levels was above the national average. In mathematics, although the percentage of pupils who achieve the expected level at Year 6 was below that of pupils nationally, it has doubled in the last two years.
- In key stage 2, the proportion of pupils making the progress that is expected of them is well above that of pupils nationally in writing and very similar in reading. The proportion of pupils who make more than expected progress is increasing over time, and in reading is above that of pupils nationally.
- Across year groups, the most able pupils are now challenged with work that meets their needs. In the current Year 6, it is clear from lesson observations, talking with pupils and scrutiny of their work that the most able pupils are working at a higher level of knowledge, skill and understanding, particularly in mathematics and reading, than might be expected for their age.
- Pupils who are eligible for the additional funding of the pupil premium make progress which is commonly equal to, and sometimes better than, that of others in the school and pupils nationally. In key stage 2, this is particularly the case in reading and writing. In key stage 1, the gaps in attainment between these pupils and others in school and pupils nationally have closed or narrowed to very close to national figures.
- Pupils who receive additional help for their learning needs are well supported to make strong progress from their relative starting points.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school at a time other than normal transition is higher than in schools nationally. In addition, they form sizeable proportions of the small cohorts in each year group. Scrutiny of pupils' work and of data provided by the school show that these pupils commonly make strong progress in their time at the school.
- Pupils read with fluency and comprehension above what might be expected for their age, including in the earliest years. Pupils, especially in Year 1 and Year 2, are skilled at using their knowledge of phonics, (letters and the sounds they represent) to help them read. In 2015, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 who attained the required standard in the phonics screening check was below the national figure because of the transfer of pupils in and out of the class. Of those pupils whom the school had on roll during their Reception Year, the proportion reaching the required standard in the check was above the national figure. In the current Year 1, more pupils than nationally are on track to reach the expected standard.
- However, although pupils use phonics well to help them read, they are less secure in using phonics to improve their writing. This is because adults do not challenge them often enough to apply what they know when writing unfamiliar words. This is particularly the case in Reception and Year 1.
- For some older pupils, there is a legacy of poorer teaching to overcome in their knowledge and

understanding of spelling, grammar and punctuation, which the school is tackling with discrete and specific teaching. The quality of pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling is improving because teachers are addressing misconceptions quickly, for example in correcting the use of apostrophes in the Year 3 and Year 4 class.

Early years provision

is good

- Children in the early years are making better progress than before because the quality of teaching has improved.
- Clear action by the executive headteacher and the knowledgeable and skilful support of a senior leader, who is a strong early years practitioner, have strengthened the teaching of the early years so that, from a wide range of starting points, children currently in the early years are now making progress that is at least in line with that of others nationally.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development is rising. In 2015, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was above that of children nationally. In the current year, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development is expected to be above the national figure. Increasing numbers of children are working above the expected early years outcomes, particularly in reading and number and in physical development.
- Assessment has accurately identified children who have special educational needs or disability and they are supported effectively to make good progress from their starting points.
- Careful use of the additional funding of the pupil premium means that the achievements of disadvantaged children are similar to, or better than, those of their peers. If they need to catch up, the support they receive means that they can do this well.
- Children in the early years are very motivated to learn. Well-planned and attractive activities inside and outside the classroom engage children's interest and make them eager to practise their reading, recording and early number skills. For example, in an activity to find plastic worms in a bark tray, children were counting the worms, recording their findings and counting on to find out 'how many more' were needed to make 20.
- Teachers make a range of resources available which children use to extend their learning. For example, children using a bat and ball to play a cricket-type game had devised their own rules, were recording their batting success on the outside blackboard and were using their knowledge of number to add and find the difference between their scores.
- Children demonstrated good independence; for example, when a child had finished a painting activity, she carefully cleaned the paint brush she had been using. Children had also written their own rules for using the sand tray which were posted above it. They chose to use an electronic tablet to record learning events that they felt were important to them, such as a friend reading their writing to their teacher. Children moved between the inside and outside areas to explore their learning with purpose and enjoyment, regardless of the inclement weather.
- Children in the early years use their phonics knowledge well when reading. However, when they are writing, the adults around them are not always as clearly focused on supporting children to use their phonics knowledge to develop their writing. For example, children engaged in an activity in the travel agent role-play area were not sufficiently encouraged to think about their phonics as they wrote luggage labels and passports.
- Children feel safe and secure. They have strong relationships with the adults around them. Parents feel very strongly that their children are safe at school and enjoy school, and that their children are well looked after. Safeguarding is effective. Routines are well understood, which means that children handle transition times in their learning quickly with very little disruption to their learning.
- The parents of children in the early years value their children's experience in the early years. They say that their children have 'flourished' and 'come on in leaps and bounds' since joining the school. Parents of the most able children say that their children 'love the challenge' that the school provides, particularly in reading, and that the school has kept them well informed about their children's progress.
- However, while parents are invited to contribute to their children's assessment over the course of the year, it is not always easy for them to do so. Leaders and teachers in the early years plan to make it easier for them to contribute by ensuring that they can add their reflections online and by offering regular 'stay and play' opportunities where parents can share in their children's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	106156
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10012355

This inspection 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	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Jenny Sharp
Headteacher	Gavin Hamilton
Telephone number	01822 853277
Website	www.ladymodifords.devon.sch.uk
Email address	admin@ladymodifords.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 June 2014

Information about this school

- Lady Modiford’s is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- The number of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government money to support children who are looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is similar to the national average. Very few pupils receive the service premium; this is additional funding to support children in service families. Very few pupils receive funding because they are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support for their special educational needs or disability is slightly below the national average. The proportion with an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The school is one of two schools in the West Dartmoor Federation. This was established in 2012. The headteacher is executive headteacher of both schools. In September 2016, both schools will become academy schools as members of the St Christopher’s Multi-Academy Trust.
- The proportion of pupils who have joined the school at times other than normal transition times is higher than the national average.
- Cohorts are small, and well below national averages. Currently, Reception children and key stage 1 pupils are taught together in a single class. In key stage 2, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils are taught together, as are Year 5 and 6 pupils.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Pupils' learning was observed, jointly with the executive headteacher or other leaders, in seven lessons or parts of lessons. A series of learning walks with middle leaders also took place. The inspector scrutinised work from pupils in all year groups and also spoke with many pupils about their work during the course of lessons. The inspector listened to pupils from across year groups read and gathered views about their experiences at school.
- The inspector held discussions with the executive headteacher, senior and middle leaders, governors and members of the teaching and support staff. A telephone conversation took place with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 to gather their views on their work and learning and about school. The inspector also spoke informally with pupils from all year groups during lessons, at breaktimes and around the school.
- The views of parents were taken into consideration, including the responses of 24 parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Discussions were also held with parents after they had dropped their children off at the school. The views expressed in one letter received from a parent during the inspection were taken into account.
- The inspector considered documentation, including information on pupils' attainment and progress, the school's improvement planning and minutes of governing body meetings. The school's records of the monitoring of teaching and information on the management of teachers' performance were analysed. Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils, including information relating to attendance, behaviour and the exclusion of pupils, were examined.

Inspection team

Sarah O'Donnell, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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