

Whitesheet Church of England Primary Academy

Chapel Lane, Zeals, Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 6NL

Inspection dates

16–17 November 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 | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have successfully steered the school through a period of restructuring and have secured good teaching and outcomes for pupils. Leadership responsibilities have been shared so that leaders at all levels are making increasing impact on school development.
- The trust holds the school firmly to account and has supported governors in fulfilling their roles effectively. The trust's work has resulted in financial stability for the school and improvement to the school sites.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers ensure that the work they set, particularly in mathematics, builds on what pupils already know so that they make good progress.
- In the early years and at key stage 1, the teaching of phonics is frequent, systematic and well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils' reading skills are developed through regular one-to-one sessions that have increased pupils' fluency and confidence. However, reading comprehension skills are less well developed.
- Leaders' actions have led to good teaching of writing in key stage 1 in particular. The high expectations of staff are ensuring that current pupils across the school are making good progress, although some writing lacks the increasing sophistication that should be expected.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive timely individualised support and encouragement in lessons so that the curriculum meets their needs.
- The early years curriculum is well planned so that children are making rapid progress. However, assessment of their learning is not yet consistent.
- Increasingly, pupils experience a broad curriculum and other activities that engage them. Consequently, they behave well in lessons and consistently show strong support for one another.
- Most pupils enjoy school and their attendance is good. Parents are very positive about the school; all who completed the online parent survey said that they would recommend it.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement by ensuring that:
 - pupils' understanding of comprehension strategies enables them to deepen their understanding of the meaning of texts read and use and apply this skill across the curriculum
 - teachers' checks within lessons consistently move pupils' learning on quickly, particularly in writing
 - pupils confidently apply their understanding of sentence structure so that the proportion of pupils working at or exceeding the expected levels is increased and never less than that achieved nationally
 - in the early years, assessments in all aspects of learning are as regular and robust as those seen in the prime areas of communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development
- Embed leaders' systems, to monitor the progress of groups of pupils within lessons and over time.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school has experienced considerable change in a short period. The headteacher has provided the needed stability during this time. Recent restructuring, a reduction in classes and changes to middle leadership are now complete. The new school structure is developing quickly.
- Leadership responsibilities are shared across the school. Middle leaders demonstrate the drive and energy needed to make a difference. Although being relatively new to their roles, they have not lost any time in identifying what needs to be done. They monitor teaching in their subjects and provide regular support and advice so teachers can shape and improve their practice further. For example, the mathematics leader has had a marked impact on leading her subject and the concept of deepening pupils' understanding in mathematics is bedding in well.
- Leaders have successfully improved site safety since the previous inspection. The trust has provided good support in this respect.
- All adults work hard to foster pupils' well-being. Staff are quick to pick up on moments when pupils need a little extra emotional support or encouragement. They act as good role models and promote good relationships. Consequently, the atmosphere in classrooms in and around the school is positive and purposeful.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is underpinned by the school's values. Pupils articulated to the inspector how the school's ethos and values are played out every day, which results in them having a high degree of respect, care and empathy for one another. Fundamental British values are promoted within the curriculum. This aspect is developing, for example through the link that the school has initiated with a school in London; and pupils have discussed issues such as the European Union and Brexit.
- Senior and middle leaders closely monitor the impact of additional funding. Recent input from the trust has ensured a strategic approach to monitoring the impact of pupil premium funding. Pupils benefit from finely tuned provision, focused on individual needs. The sport premium is also used effectively and results in pupils taking part in a wider range of sports.
- Currently, the curriculum meets most pupils' needs well. Pupils benefit from the 'learning without walls' programme where they investigate and learn outside in cross-phase groups. For example, 'den building' promotes teamwork and resilience in the school grounds. Music is also a strength. Additional clubs such as football and gardening are also available.
- External support has been effective. Leaders at all levels have acted upon advice quickly to improve teaching and outcomes for pupils. Checks on teaching are regular and weekly meetings to review pupils' progress enable teaching plans to be precise and shaped specifically to need.
- In every case, parents who completed the online questionnaire expressed happiness with all aspects of the school's work. Parents who spoke to the inspector praised the

school and said how happy their children were. The quality of communication between parents and staff came through as a feature that current parents very much appreciate.

Governance of the school

- External support from the trust has provided financial stability for the school and improvement to premises and site safety.
- The organisational structure within the trust provides strong lines of accountability. Checks on how well the school is doing result in the trust having an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. For example, there are regular visits from the academy improvement director which focus on pupils' performance, improving teaching, learning and assessment and developing middle leadership. Visit minutes confirm that the trust holds the school to account robustly for raising standards. Inspection evidence confirms the strong impact of this work and results in teachers and middle leaders having greater capacity to drive improvement within this school.
- The trust has provided considerable challenge to governors since the school opened. This has brought about improvement to the way governors hold the school to account. Governors' specific roles and responsibilities are developing well. For example, governor visits to review the impact of school improvement initiatives ensure that they are gaining their own information about school performance. There is good capacity for further improvement. Governors know that improvements in their working practice are relatively recent and they are steadfast in their commitment to develop their roles even further.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Detailed policies, risk assessments and guidance are in place and the trust ensures that all training is up to date. This, along with regular reviews by senior leaders, ensures that systems are effectively embedded into the school's safeguarding culture. For instance the school's risk assessments for honour-based violence and the 'Prevent' duty are fully understood by staff. They recognise the need to protect pupils from any risk of radicalisation or extremism. Inspection evidence confirms that they have been trained to spot children at risk of sexual exploitation and staff can articulate risks and what to do should they be concerned.
- Staff who were asked by the inspector what action they would take, in different scenarios, knew exactly what they should do if they become concerned about a child's welfare and safety. Staff understand the importance of completing referral forms and following up any concerns they have.
- Designated safeguarding leaders' records are appropriate and show that referrals are prompt. They work with a range of agencies in a timely and coordinated way.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Current teaching is resulting in pupils' progress that is typically good. Any weak teaching has almost been completely eliminated. Consequently, current pupils benefit from precisely planned activities to help them learn effectively and are making at least typical progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Pupils benefit from teaching that builds specifically on what they already know. Teachers make effective use of the 'chilli challenge' approach in mathematics at key stage 2, with different levels of challenge in each activity. Pupils enjoy this approach and are enthusiastic about mathematics. A similar approach is used in key stage 1; one pupil told the inspector how pleased she was to 'work on difficult maths because it's hard and makes me think'. Consequently, pupils' progress in mathematics is good and pupils' ability to problem-solve is developing well. Increasingly, teachers plan for all pupils to use a range of practical equipment in mathematics to support pupils' understanding of place value. This is particularly valuable for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to enable full access to whole-class teaching.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Teaching is planned specifically to meet the needs of pupils, based on their different starting points. For example, most-able pupils benefited from the teaching of spelling rules and patterns, while other middle- and lower-attaining pupils received tailored phonics teaching at three different levels. Teachers plan work at the right level and this is helping pupils to apply their use of phonics to segment and blend words when reading unfamiliar texts.
- The teaching of reading is highly individualised and encourages independence and fluency. Pupils at key stage 2 talk confidently about their personal reading targets and how these are helping them develop additional skills. Recent work to further develop the teaching of comprehension skills is bedding in well. The school knows that more needs to be done in this respect to ensure that pupils can 'read between the lines' and apply these skills across the curriculum, especially at key stage 2.
- At key stage 1, teachers plan well thought-out writing tasks for a range of purposes across the curriculum. Writing has a high profile in classrooms, with an abundance of examples of extended pieces on display. Pupils are encouraged to use a wide range of resources to help with spelling and to check and edit their own writing. Although teachers build on this good start in key stage 2, the work set is sometimes not as hard as it could be. There are times, too, when pupils are not given opportunities to edit and improve their work, building on the detailed feedback that teachers provide, in line with school policy. Without regular time for this, pupils' ability to swiftly develop their writing is inhibited.
- Teachers plan work effectively using detailed assessments. Teachers usually check pupils' progress and adjust their teaching accordingly, but on occasion when they do not respond quickly enough, pupils' learning slows. This was the case, for example, for middle-attaining pupils in writing.
- Timely additional support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities encourages their independence. Skilful questioning by teaching assistants in lessons is helping current pupils make faster progress than previously. However,

occasionally these pupils' learning stalls because teachers' questioning does not deepen thinking and misconceptions are not picked up quickly enough.

- Pupils who have fallen behind or joined the school late, for example, catch up as the result of the teaching they receive as well as teachers' support for their social and emotional needs.
- Workbooks confirm strong provision in science at both key stages. Pupils experience a range of topics. Teaching encourages pupils to learn about key ideas and pupils are expected to draw conclusions from their investigations and think scientifically, for example in working on parallel electrical circuits in key stage 2 and habitats in key stage 1.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school provides a positive and calm environment where pupils feel supported.
- Pupils benefit from a curriculum that teaches them about safety, cyber bullying and road safety, for example. Consequently, pupils understand how to keep safe and say they know what to do if they have concerns.
- Pupils say bullying is rare. Pupils comment on the specific support they receive from adults in the school and how this helps them build effective relationships with each other. They say that adults look out for them and they value opportunities to talk through any minor differences they have with friends.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attendance is good, being above the national average. Where, historically, pupils have not attended regularly enough, this is monitored by leaders closely. Consequently, their attendance is rising swiftly.
- Pupils look out for each other. With so few pupils, everyone participates in most activities. Lunchtimes are sociable occasions for pupils to enjoy. High levels of collaboration and teamwork are evident and pupils look out for one another and ensure that everyone is included. For example, during a 'wet play' pupils benefited from a wide choice of activities that they enjoyed.
- Pupils are keen to learn in lessons. They demonstrate good attitudes to learning. Pupils take pride in their work and present work well. Occasionally, when teaching is not precisely matched to their needs, a few pupils do not sustain their concentration and their progress slows.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupil numbers are small and vary considerably from year to year, as does the attainment profile of each year group. As such, it is not possible to compare the progress and attainment of pupils with their peers nationally.
- Pupils currently in key stage 2 are making good progress. In Years 3 and 4, most pupils are on track to meet age-related expectations and a greater proportion of pupils are now targeted to achieve the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. The attainment of pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 remains below the national average in reading and writing, reflecting their different starting points. Nevertheless, they are making good progress because they are receiving teaching which is adapted to meet their diverse needs.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is good. This is because work is precisely matched to pupils' needs and there is a strong emphasis on pupils using and applying their understanding and solving problems. At key stage 2, previously weaker teaching that resulted in the historical fragility in pupils' progress has been eradicated. Current pupils benefit from an individualised approach to teaching, where ample opportunities are provided for pupils to master mathematical topics. Consequently, current pupils' progress is swift and most pupils are on track to meet the standards that are expected of them nationally, with a growing proportion set to exceed this. At key stage 1, good teaching is enabling pupils who previously fell behind to catch up quickly and achieve standards that are expected of them nationally.
- Pupils read fluently, and understand what they are reading. This is because they read to adults often at school and have developed their confidence and expression well. Parents who talked to the inspector confirmed how pleased they were with this approach to teach reading. Current work to further improve pupils' comprehension skills in reading is also making an impact. Where pupils' starting points are low, pupils' achievement in reading is rising steadily to expected standards.
- By the time pupils reached the end of key stage 1 in 2016, all pupils met the required standards of the phonics screening check. Some pupils enter the school with knowledge and understanding considerably lower than expected for their age. Individualised programmes of support delivered by staff ensure that these pupils catch up so that they are well prepared for key stage 2. Outcomes for current pupils in early reading and spelling are good, including the most able.
- In writing, pupils in key stage 1 present their work well and most pupils have developed a cursive script effectively. At key stage 2, pupils' writing shows an understanding of narrative structure and factual writing, for example, but they are less successful in writing for specific impact or using more complex sentence structures.
- Pupils who join part way through key stage 1 or 2 make good progress from their starting points, particularly in reading and mathematics. This is because the school uses its initial assessments effectively to ensure that provision is tailored precisely to pupils' needs and to fill gaps in learning.
- Across the school, most pupils eligible for the pupil premium grant are making good progress from their different starting points. Additional support ensures that these

pupils are well supported academically and emotionally.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from specific targeted support in lessons which tackles gaps in learning effectively. Due to better teaching over time, some pupils' learning needs have lessened; these pupils are catching up to expected standards. For those pupils who have considerably greater need, wide ranging resources are used to ensure these pupils access the curriculum with confidence and make progress in lessons and gain independence.

Early years provision

Good

- Current numbers are too small to report outcomes for specific groups of children. However, children make at least typical progress from their varied starting points. Specific tailored support is ensuring that the early years provision meets children's different needs well.
- The leadership of the early years is good. A clear focus on raising academic standards and ensuring that children make strong progress in the early years prevails. Small-group work to develop early language skills is effective and this is helping children to learn by building their confidence in early speaking and reading.
- Individualised targets and assessments ensure that work is precisely matched to children's needs and motivates and interests them. Consequently, children show genuine curiosity and willingness to learn and their progress is good.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years is regular and systematic. All children show an inquisitiveness about words and their meanings. One child asked the inspector to join her on her search for 'qu' words in the setting. Children are keen to apply their initial mark making, word and sentence writing. Consequently, children are making good progress from their different starting points.
- Children benefit from a well organised and vibrant area to learn out of doors and in the classroom. The outdoor area is effectively zoned and there are ample opportunities for children to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding across all aspects of learning. They use the available resources with independence and confidence.
- Children are encouraged and supported to sustain their concentration. Adults make regular assessments of what children can do and these are used to plan for next steps. Assessments in literacy, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development are very regular. More frequent assessments of other aspects of learning now need to be honed with the same precision. Nevertheless, children's progress is good overall.
- Safeguarding in early years is effective. Children enjoy school and feel safe.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 140351 |
| Local authority | Wiltshire |
| Inspection number | 10019941 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 46 |
| Appropriate authority | Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust |
| Chair | Lesley Bennett |
| Headteacher | Karen Brooker |
| Telephone number | 01747 840394 |
| Website | www.whitesheet.dsat.org.uk |
| Email address | office@whitesheet.dsat.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than the average primary school. The school is on a split site with the junior phase on one site and the early years and key stage 1 on the other.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils learning across the school. Some lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, middle leaders and a number of other staff, as well as the chief executive, and academy improvement director from the academy trust.
- Meetings took place with four governors and the chair of the trust board.
- The inspector scrutinised a number of school documents including the school action plan and the school's self-evaluation document. Records relating to behaviour and safety, attendance and safeguarding were also reviewed.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at lunchtime.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils to find out about their learning and development.
- The inspector looked at work in books to establish the current quality of pupils' work and their progress over time.
- The inspector considered responses to the online survey, Parent View. The inspector also considered comments provided by parents' text messages and also spoke to parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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