

St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Lyme Regis

Kings Way, Lyme Regis, Dorset DT7 3DY

Inspection dates

15–16 May 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Governors have not held leaders to account sufficiently to halt the decline in standards, especially at key stage 2.
- Governors have not been vigilant in ensuring that the funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used to improve pupils' academic success.
- Leadership capacity is limited because of the newness of leaders to their positions of responsibility. Consequently, there are inconsistencies in teaching and achievement.
- Some teachers' expectations are too low. As a result, the most able pupils, including the disadvantaged, are not achieving at greater depth.
- Too many children in Reception are not achieving their early learning goals, especially in literacy and mathematics.
- Leaders have not promoted pupils' moral, social and cultural development effectively. Too many pupils are not aware of the fundamental British values.
- Although attendance overall has improved, attendance of the most vulnerable pupils has not yet reached national averages.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is relentless in his determination to improve outcomes for pupils. Many necessary policies have been put in place recently and it is too soon for them to have measurable impact.
- Pupils are kept safe at school and feel safe.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and are ready and eager to learn.
- Children in the pre-school are provided with a good start to school. Leaders plan well and ensure that children's needs are met.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Governors must ensure that:
 - they support and challenge school leaders to bring about improvements quickly
 - leaders have the skills to monitor the work of teachers more stringently so that pupils' progress is rapid and teaching is consistently good or better
 - expectations are raised so that pupils' progress by the end of each key stage, including the early years foundation stage, reflects their potential and is at least in line with national expectations
 - British values and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum are embedded so that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain
 - the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities improves so that it is at least in line with the national average.
- Leaders must improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers provide opportunities for pupils to write extensively and at greater depth in literacy and additional subjects
 - pupils are given regular opportunities to improve their conceptual understanding alongside their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics
 - the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are provided with learning that is sufficiently challenging and deepens their thinking
 - disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress, with support that stretches their learning further so that they can achieve more.

An external review of the impact of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Governors have not provided a clear and strategic steer for the school. They have been over reliant on receiving information from leaders rather than taking the initiative themselves.
- Leaders, including the headteacher, are relatively new to leadership and their positions of responsibility. They are aware of the need to secure better outcomes, but planning does not focus sufficiently on the expected impact of actions on learning. As a result, pupils' progress is not rapid enough.
- Leaders at all levels have not monitored teaching effectively. Consequently, teaching is inconsistent and outcomes in every key stage are below the national average.
- The curriculum does not provide sequential development within subjects across the span of year groups. Leaders are aware of these issues and a review is planned for implementation in September 2018. In key stage 1, pupils are not building on prior learning effectively in English, mathematics and science. Teachers plan learning in foundation subjects that is not sufficiently based on the next steps pupils need to take to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding. However, there is an improving picture in lower key stage 2, especially in the planning of mathematics. The curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to have a good understanding of British values of democracy, the rule of law and equality of opportunity. Pupils have a strong understanding of Christian values and spirituality but there has been a limited focus on the moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum. Pupils are not prepared well for life in modern Britain or the next stages of their education in these aspects.
- Information about pupils' achievements is not used well yet to improve outcomes.
- The headteacher has a resolute attitude to succeed. His openness to advice and constructive criticism is a strength of his leadership. He is a role model for teachers and pupils alike. There is a positive energy within the school and a collegiate attitude that supports future initiatives for improvement.
- The local authority adviser and the diocesan challenge and support partner have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have provided invaluable support, challenge and advice to leaders this year. The embryonic improvements are attributable to their input.
- Leaders have invested in professional development for staff. The evaluation of this has yet to be done so the efficiency of initiatives taken is not clear.

Governance of the school

- Governors are committed to the school and their most recent meetings, particularly of the standards committee, reflect a changing attitude, with the challenge needed for the school to improve more rapidly. However, the urgency required to manage the

improvements was not established quickly enough. It is recommended that a review takes place to help speed up the process.

- Governors have not overseen the spending of extra funding, such as pupil premium, efficiently. Similarly, they have not paid sufficient attention to the spending of funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. This has contributed to low standards of achievement for these pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher has created a secure site. This is important as there are several entrances to the school buildings.
- Pupils have received training on fire and road safety practices. Pupils understand the dangers of the internet and social media.
- Child protection processes are thorough and vulnerable pupils are safe. Systems are effective and have been over time.
- Records of recruitment are of a high quality and detailed. Staff receive training on how to keep pupils safe from abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of radicalisation and extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching in Reception and key stage 1 is not planned effectively. Teachers are not using assessment information to ensure misconceptions are corrected and the most able pupils are challenged continuously. In the pre-school and most of key stage 2, planning is more secure.
- Too often, pupils are set similar work regardless of age and ability differences. The variation in work planned is not focused on pupils' individual needs. As a result, too many pupils, especially the most able and most able disadvantaged, are not making enough progress.
- Teachers are not preparing pupils adequately in science. Equally, pupils are not achieving well in the wider curriculum as they are limited by the resources used and tasks set.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Pupils are keen to learn and are generally engaged in their work, even if it is too easy or too difficult.
- Teachers are more secure in their teaching of mathematics in key stage 2. The subject leader is using her recent training in her teaching with her class of Year 3 and 4 pupils. As a result, expectations are higher and pupils are achieving more. Planning has been shared with other teachers and it is having a beneficial impact in Year 5 too.
- Low-ability pupils are supported well in class by teaching assistants. Frequently, these pupils are making better progress than their peers.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making better progress when they have support with their learning. However, other pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, who are not supported in their work, are not doing as well. This is because teachers are not adapting learning for their particular needs.
- Parents receive useful information about their children's strengths and areas of weakness through the school's reporting systems.
- The school's teaching assistants are a committed group of practitioners who undertake a range of tasks to ensure that the school community is well supported. Their energy and enthusiasm is infectious. They are flexible in their roles, work well together, and are having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Too many pupils do not show pride in their work and some teachers are failing to challenge poorly presented work and incomplete tasks.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning reflect a belief in compliance rather than enquiry. They are not given consistent instructions on how to be successful learners, nor do the tasks set encourage this.
- Pupils say there is little bullying and that teachers deal with it when it occurs. Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying but are less sure of the ways to resolve it.
- As yet, pupils do not have opportunities to take on positions of responsibility within the school.
- Pupils are very aware of the Christian values within school and have a good understanding of the benefits of spirituality. However, they struggle to explain how and when they learn about moral and cultural values.
- Pupils have some understanding of British values, especially the importance of the rule of law. They are less certain about what democracy means.
- Pupils are taught well about safety and keeping themselves safe.
- The emotional well-being of pupils is a priority in the school. Teaching assistants are trained specifically to support the most vulnerable pupils. This is a strength of the school community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.

- Attendance and persistent absence have been below national averages for some years. There are improvements in overall attendance, but the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is still a cause for concern.
- Pupils are respectful of each other and adults working in and visiting the school.
- Low level disruption is rare and pupils are ready and willing to learn.
- Pupils who have shown poor behaviour previously are supported well and their behaviour has been modified as a result

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- For the past two years, progress in writing and mathematics has been in the lowest 20% nationally.
- Too few pupils achieve the phonics screening checks. Although there has been an overhaul of the way phonics is taught, there are still too many pupils who are not achieving. This has an impact on attainment in spelling and writing as pupils continue in school.
- For younger pupils, leaders have engaged volunteers to hear them read regularly and this is having a positive impact on their fluency. Pupils understand what they are reading and can explain ideas articulately and with confidence. Despite this, reading comprehension in the key stage 2 end of year tests is weak. Books chosen by older pupils are not monitored consistently and expectations are too low for some of the most able pupils.
- There has been some improvement in the progress of disadvantaged pupils. However, too many are still underachieving as systems put in place have not been evaluated.
- The headteacher has put in place processes for measuring the progress of pupils on a regular basis recently. The newness of this means that its impact cannot be measured as yet.
- There is a variance in the effectiveness shown by teachers to intervene when pupils fall behind. The best practice, often delivered by skilful teaching assistants, ensures that pupils make better progress, especially the low-ability pupils. For some pupils, improvements in progress remain limited.
- The new leaders of English and mathematics are planning and providing support for teachers. It is too soon to tell if this is having an impact throughout the school.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Outcomes in reading and writing are below the national average and progress is too slow for some children.

- Some children in the early years, mainly the most able and some middle-ability children, do not make the progress of which they are capable. These children are not well prepared academically for Year 1.
- Leadership of the early years is not fully effective, as planning and assessment are not having the desired impact on raising standards.
- Parents are not included in the development and learning of their children in Reception in a systematic way. Teaching in Reception has not supported parents in understanding what would be most helpful to know about children's behaviour and learning, in order that they might help at home.
- Adults in pre-school have high expectations of children based on an accurate assessment of children's skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Children experience a wide range of activities in the pre-school that help them progress towards being ready for school. They make good progress, often from low starting points because of the high-quality teaching and provision.
- Children in Reception and pre-school are settled in their learning. The routines established ensure that children respect the equipment used.
- Children are polite to each other and to staff. They are enthusiastic about being involved and are gaining confidence in their own abilities.
- Children's personal and social development is strong because staff know the children well.
- Children respond well to adults. They take responsibility for their actions eagerly.
- Children behave well and are able to share and take turns effectively.
- Safeguarding is effective within the pre-school and Reception. There is good communication between adults with regard to the protection of the most vulnerable children.

School details

Unique reference number	113851
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10048571

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michaela Ellis
Headteacher	Nick Kiddle
Telephone number	01297442623
Website	www.stmichaelslyme.dorset.sch.uk/
Email address	office@stmichaelslyme.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	January 2018

Information about this school

- St Michael's Church of England VA Primary School is smaller than the average primary school.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2016.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited lessons jointly with the headteacher.
- A wide sample of pupils' work, from all year groups and a range of subjects, was scrutinised.
- The inspector met and talked with a group of pupils from key stage 2, as well as with pupils informally across the site.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, middle leaders and members of the governing body, and telephone conversations took place with the school's local authority adviser and the challenge and support partner for the diocese.
- Information and other documentary evidence were evaluated, including that relating to safeguarding, school evaluation and external reviews.
- The inspector took account of the 25 responses to and 24 comments in the online Parent View survey, the 24 responses to the pupil and the 13 responses to the staff online survey.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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