

Wool Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

High Street, Wool, Wareham, Dorset BH20 6BT

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Frequent changes in leadership have had a detrimental impact on pupils' progress and the quality of education provided by the school.
- Until recently, leaders have been slow to tackle the areas identified as needing improvement at the previous inspection. As a result, these areas remain as serious weaknesses.
- Middle leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are not detailed or rigorous enough.
- The curriculum is poorly implemented. Consequently, pupils do not make good progress across a range of subjects.
- Weak teaching, learning and assessment over time have resulted in pupils failing to achieve as well as they should.
- Teachers do not have a secure understanding of what pupils know, understand and can do. Therefore, learning activities do not meet the needs of pupils well enough.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not have consistently secure subject knowledge, especially in phonics teaching.
- Outcomes for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able, are inadequate.
- Early years provision is inadequate. Frequent changes in staffing have hampered the progress children make.
- When activities do not meet pupils' needs, they become restless and the standard of their behaviour falls.

The school has the following strengths

- The new substantive headteacher has made a significant and positive impact since her arrival. Recent changes, most notably raising teachers' expectations, have the potential to rapidly improve the quality of education.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. The Christian ethos of the school shines through.
- Parents and carers report that their children are safe, happy and well looked after.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management, by:
 - checking that activities planned for pupils in key stages 1 and 2 help pupils to make better progress so they at least meet the national expectations of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics
 - planning a curriculum that develops pupils' skills so they make the best possible progress across all subjects
 - ensuring middle leaders have increased opportunity to monitor and develop the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that they know what does, or does not, work well and why
 - ensuring staff receive high-quality guidance and support to improve their practice.
- Quickly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by ensuring that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve across all year groups and subjects, especially in English and mathematics
 - teachers accurately assess what pupils know, understand and can do to inform planning, so that teaching more effectively meets the needs of all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils and the most able
 - pupils with low starting points are provided with high-quality teaching and learning opportunities to enable them to catch up quickly
 - teachers plan work that motivates, excites and challenges pupils and enables them to achieve well
 - teachers' subject knowledge is improved and becomes consistently secure, especially in the teaching of phonics
 - further work is undertaken in the early years provision to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure children achieve a good level of development at least in line with the national average
 - teachers implement the school's approach consistently to provide incisive feedback to pupils so that they know how to improve their work
 - teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' work are raised so that pupils become more motivated to do their best
 - staff learn from best practice within the school and in other schools.

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

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium 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

- Turbulence in leadership and staffing has significantly hampered the progress of this school. As a result, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The new headteacher has been extremely well received by staff and pupils. She has rapidly gained the respect and support of the staff after what staff describe as being a period of significant turbulence in leadership.
- The headteacher is resolute in her determination to work with governors and staff to overturn a legacy of underachievement. She has quickly and accurately identified the actions needed. Self-evaluation is accurate and used to inform school development planning. However, while plans accurately identify the key weaknesses to be eliminated and actions to be taken, they lack precision.
- Leaders, including governors, are aware that significant work is required to ensure pupils receive a high-quality education. Early indications show signs of improvement, especially the capacity of staff to bring about improvement in pupils' outcomes quickly. However, leaders acknowledge that gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding remain and it is too early to see the impact on pupils' achievement in published information.
- Early in her tenure, the headteacher has demonstrated that she does not shy away from making difficult decisions, for example in taking decisive action when the performance of staff does not meet her high expectations. This strong leadership is enabling the school to move forward in its aim of providing pupils with the best learning experiences.
- Until recently, middle leaders were not able to carry out their roles effectively. Training for middle leaders is now in place, giving them the skills and confidence to carry out their roles and responsibilities. Middle leaders are now able to provide the support needed for staff to improve their practice.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is improving and their progress is accelerating. Parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, speak positively about the support their children receive. For example, 'I am confident he has the support and is making progress' and 'my children receive excellent individualised support to learn and interact' are just two of the positive comments received from parents.
- Following the previous inspection, leaders, including governors, failed to take the rapid action required to deal with the areas identified as needing to improve. Consequently, these weaknesses remain and pupils continue to underachieve. This underachievement is most notable in pupils' English and mathematics standards, especially for the disadvantaged and most able pupils.
- In the past, the school has not made effective use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, for these pupils, differences in achievement are not closing quickly enough in reading, writing or mathematics. However, the new

headteacher has secure plans in place to address this.

- The curriculum covers the subjects in the national curriculum. However, it is underdeveloped. Teachers do not teach topics in sufficient depth and learning is not sequenced effectively so that it builds on pupils' prior knowledge. Consequently, pupils are unable to make links in their learning and this hampers their progress across different subjects.
- Pupils have access to a range of additional curriculum activities. Pupils talked enthusiastically about the clubs they can attend, including those for dance, football and science. However, leaders have not made effective use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium to extend pupils' experience of sport in the curriculum.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is effective. For example, pupils understand the importance of treating everyone equally and with respect. Pupils demonstrate strong social skills. This was exemplified during the inspection where older pupils were helping and playing well with much younger pupils. Pupils are tolerant of each other's differences. For example, pupils talked openly to the inspector about the support they receive from their peers when they feel anxious or angry. The strong links with the local community and church are of significant importance to the school and are underpinned by the school motto of, 'rooted in the community to grow and flourish'. The spiritual garden is available to pupils for quiet and reflective time and is welcomed by the pupils.
- Parents who spoke with the inspector, or who responded to the online survey, Parent View, are confident that their children enjoy school, and are safe and well looked after. 'The school is a very happy, a very positive and safe environment', 'my daughter looks forward to school every day' and 'my child is nurtured' are typical of the comments received.
- The school should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- There has been a high turnover of governors since the previous inspection. Even though many governors are relatively new to their roles, they bring a wide range of skills and expertise to the school. They have recently received training to develop their understanding of the roles and responsibilities of being a governor. This training is showing early signs of impact.
- Governors are now holding leaders more robustly to account for the quality of education pupils receive. However, they acknowledge that more work needs to be completed to support school leaders in driving forward the rapid improvements required.
- Governors understand the importance of safeguarding. Safer recruitment practice is securely in place to ensure that all checks are carried out prior to new staff starting in post.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school makes sure that all statutory requirements for protecting pupils are met. Relevant policies are in line with government guidance and published on the school's website.
- Staff receive training in all aspects of safeguarding, including child sexual exploitation and the 'Prevent' duty. This training means that staff have the confidence to take the action required should they spot any concerns regarding the safeguarding of a pupil. This minimises risk and keeps pupils safe.
- Staff know their pupils well. Staff are not only vigilant, but also knowledgeable about pupils' needs and the issues that might affect them.
- The school site is a safe environment. External doors and gates are secure, so that the management of people who visit the school is appropriate. The use of coloured lanyards for visitors enables pupils to quickly identify which visitors they can hold conversations with. This allows pupils to move freely around the school grounds and feel safe and secure.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors reported unanimously that they feel safe in the school. Parents who responded to the Ofsted survey agreed that their children are safe, well cared for and looked after.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is still not enabling pupils to catch up quickly enough. As a result, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in the subjects they study, especially in English and mathematics. This underachievement is widespread for groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and the most able pupils.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. Teachers do not check the learning and progress of their pupils well enough. Consequently, the work they plan does not meet pupils' needs and enable them to achieve well.
- Too many pupils have significant gaps in their learning from previously weak teaching. Teachers welcome the support and guidance they are receiving by leaders to improve their teaching. Recent actions taken by leaders through their monitoring are showing signs of improvement in pupils' work and there is some evidence of pupils beginning to catch up. Nonetheless, it is too soon to see the impact on pupils' overall achievement, especially in English and mathematics.
- Teachers do not demonstrate well enough a deep understanding of how pupils learn. Too often, planned activities are not sequenced well enough to support pupils in building on their previous learning. This lack of sequencing is particularly evident in the topic work that pupils study. Activities are not well linked and are often disparate. This leads to pupils not being able to make links in their learning.
- Across different subjects, the subject knowledge of staff is too variable. This variability

is because, over time, they have not received adequate guidance or training in how to improve their practice. This variability in subject knowledge is most notable in phonics.

- Teachers are not consistent in their expectations of the quality of pupils' work. Consequently, too many pupils do not take sufficient care with their work.
- Teachers are not consistently using the school's agreed policy to provide the pupils with information about what they need to do to get better, or to completely understand their targets. This inconsistency is further hindering 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.
- Leaders monitor pupils' attendance carefully. Overall attendance is in line with the national average. The rate of attendance of disadvantaged pupils is too low and the rate of persistent absence is too high. Nevertheless, leaders' actions to tackle the underlying reasons for this are beginning to have a positive effect. The rate of attendance of this group is beginning to show signs of improvement.
- Pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles. They are encouraged to eat healthily by eating fruit and drinking water during the school day.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe. The school is proactive in inviting visitors to talk to pupils about keeping themselves safe. For example, the NSPCC recently visited to promote its 'Let's talk pants' and 'stranger danger' initiatives.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school and know that there is always a member of staff they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. They said, 'We are treated well.'
- Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff. Staff are caring towards pupils and they appreciate the level of care they receive, especially in moments of anxiety. For example, pupils welcome the 'relaxation barometers' in classrooms, which are used effectively as a form of communication when they feel less calm and need support.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. When activities are not well matched to the needs of pupils, they become restless and do not behave as well as they could. Consequently, their learning stalls. Over time, this behaviour is hampering the progress they make.
- Pupils do not consistently demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning. They do not show resilience and independence when learning. For example, too often they sit and wait for the teacher to respond to their individual needs. This was exemplified during the inspection when, shortly after the start of a writing activity, a pupil with their hand up told the inspector, 'I don't know what to write next'. This lack of independent learning has come about because staff have not taught pupils well enough

how to apply their skills with confidence.

- Pupils know that poor behaviour is not tolerated by staff. They are aware of, and understand, the consequences if they do not follow the school's charter for behaviour.
- Pupils say that bullying in school is rare. They are confident that on the rare occasions that it happens, staff act quickly to deal with it.
- Pupils are well mannered, polite and courteous. They demonstrated this frequently during the inspection, for example, making the inspector feel welcome and standing back to let others pass through the door.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Overall, outcomes are not good enough. Pupils do not make securely good progress in their learning. This lack of progress is most prevalent in pupils' writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils make particularly weak progress.
- Pupils do not reach the expected standards in key stage 1 in reading, writing or mathematics. Similarly, in key stage 2, pupils do not achieve the expected standards in writing and mathematics. Consequently, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' work indicates that, over time, underachievement has been prevalent in a range of subjects. While there is evidence that leaders are working hard to ensure the curriculum is fit for purpose, they recognise there is much work to be completed to ensure that pupils have access to a curriculum that is purposeful and meets their needs.
- The most able pupils are not achieving greater depth in reading, writing or mathematics in Year 2 or Year 6.
- The provision for pupils with SEND is leading to signs of improvement in pupils' outcomes. The special educational needs leader is working closely with staff to ensure that activities are better meeting the needs of pupils. Recent training, for example in autism spectrum disorder, is increasing teachers' knowledge and understanding of how to plan learning sequences to meet pupils' specific needs.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check remains below the national average. Over time, leaders have not ensured that there is a systematic and consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Until recently, middle leaders have not had the opportunity to monitor and support staff when their subject knowledge is insecure. Consequently, not all pupils are able to apply confidently their knowledge of phonics when reading unfamiliar texts.
- The stringent focus of leaders and the determination of staff to improve urgently pupils' achievements are tangible. There are early signs that the downward trend in pupils' achievement is beginning to turn. This can be seen in more recent work completed by pupils, for example in their writing. However, it is very early days, and the improvements in teaching are not yet secure.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Frequent changes in staffing in the early years provision have hampered the progress children make. Over time, teaching has been too variable. As a result, children do not make the best progress of which they are capable.
- Most children start in Reception with skills that are below those expected for their age, especially in communication and language. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development remains below the national average. These outcomes demonstrate that children do not have access to learning opportunities that enable them to catch up quickly enough. Consequently, they are not sufficiently well prepared to start Year 1.
- Activities planned for children, while exciting, do not consistently meet their needs, especially for the disadvantaged and most able children. For example, the children were enjoying the story 'Supertato' linked to their topic on super heroes. However, when completing the activities, such as making the masks and wrapping the vegetables, the children were not able to make the links to the story or explain clearly what they were learning. Therefore, staff are not consistently maximising the learning opportunities for the children.
- Safeguarding in the early years provision is effective. Leaders ensure that staff have received the required safeguarding training, including in paediatric first aid. As a result, children in early years are kept safe and are well looked after.
- Staff form positive relationships with the children. These relationships help children to settle quickly and enjoy school. Parents who spoke to the inspector are confident that their children are happy, well looked after and cared for.

School details

Unique reference number	113822
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10088297

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Glanville
Headteacher	Ellie Griffiths
Telephone number	01929 462569
Website	www.woolprimary.com
Email address	office@woolprimary.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 February 2017

Information about this school

- Wool Church of England Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher took up the substantive post in April 2019.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND who receive support is above the national average.
- The proportion of girls in the school is lower than average.
- The school last received a section 48 inspection on 5 July 2016.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited classes to speak with pupils, hear them read and observe their learning. All observations took place with the headteacher. Together with the headteacher, the inspector scrutinised the quality of pupils' work across a range of subjects.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, middle leaders, staff and governors. The inspector considered the 15 responses to the staff survey.
- The inspector met with pupils from the school council and considered 29 responses from the pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector spoke with the chair of governors on the telephone. The inspector also held telephone conversations with two education advisers from the local authority and Salisbury Diocese.
- The inspector spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day and considered the 33 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 21 text messages.
- A range of documents were looked at, including information about pupils' achievement, the school's evaluation of its own performance, school development plans and minutes of governors' meetings. The inspector also checked the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements, and behaviour and attendance information.

Inspection team

Jen Southall, 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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