

St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

Stonyacres, Yetminster, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 6LS

Inspection dates

4–5 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, achievement has declined in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Teachers do not routinely set their expectations high enough to challenge pupils to achieve their best.
- Teaching does not stretch the most-able pupils sufficiently.
- Teachers' marking is not helping pupils to improve the quality of their work. As a result, pupils are not able to make rapid gains in their learning.
- The relatively new leadership team is not monitoring and evaluating the impact of initiatives sufficiently.
- The governing body has not been rigorous enough in checking the impact of the school's actions to make improvements to pupils' outcomes.
- The school's method of tracking and recording pupils' progress is not sufficiently up to date. As a result, the school's leaders do not have an accurate picture of pupils' performance.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has won the respect of the school community through her fortitude and determination during a difficult period for the school.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils feel safe and well looked after. Relationships between staff and between staff and pupils are strong.
- Children in the Reception Year make good progress and are well prepared for the start of Year 1.
- The school's positive approach to promoting pupils' personal development ensures that pupils are mature and thoughtful individuals by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' progress and thereby raise standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that the school's tracking system, used to monitor pupils' progress and attainment, is accurate and provides teachers with precise information that can be used to assess the impact of their work.
- Strengthen the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good across the school by:
 - ensuring that pupils deliver their best work consistently
 - setting more challenging work, particularly for the most-able pupils
 - ensuring teachers' marking makes clear how pupils can improve their work.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders have the skills needed to focus sharply on driving up standards
 - middle leaders contribute fully to the school's improvement priorities
 - governors challenge school leaders and hold them to account for improving standards.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Senior leaders have not monitored the work of their colleagues effectively and held them properly to account for pupils' progress. As a result, Key Stage 1 standards fell in 2015 to be slightly lower than the national average and Key Stage 2 standards dropped to be well below average.
- Leaders do not have an accurate understanding of pupils' attainment and progress as the school system does not provide them with timely and accurate information.
- The new leadership team has not checked carefully enough to evaluate the difference the school's actions are making to improve educational standards. However, senior leaders have prepared a school development plan that identifies key weaknesses. Staff are committed to bringing about the improvements, although it has not yet resulted in any notable improvement in pupils' achievement. The increasing involvement of the school's middle leaders is adding capacity and beginning to enable faster progress to be made.
- The newly appointed headteacher has displayed immense resilience and fortitude in 'holding the school together' over the last year. Her determination for the school to do well shines through in her approach to all that she does. She is receptive to support and guidance from experienced colleagues and external agencies, and she exhibits strong leadership. She is being ably supported by the newly appointed deputy headteacher in the drive to tackle the school's weaknesses.
- The headteacher has developed a strong team ethos and a culture of all staff working together. Teachers with leadership responsibilities for English, mathematics and science are growing in confidence and are increasingly aware of their responsibilities. Their respective action plans link appropriately to the school's current improvement priorities.
- The special educational needs coordinator is making a stronger contribution to the school's work than previously. She has recently started monitoring and tracking the progress and attainment of pupils who have special educational needs or disability. As such, she is well placed to begin evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the different intervention programmes pupils are following.
- School leaders are making good use of pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils' development. Although there are relatively few disadvantaged pupils in each year group, some are making faster progress than other pupils at the school. As a result, their attainment is at least in line with pupils nationally and sometimes it is above.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. There is a strong association with the local diocese that supports the teaching of religious education in line with the school's Christian values. The visits by local community groups help to support the school's work in teaching the pupils stories from the Bible. Pupils respond very well during assemblies, listening intently and volunteering to answer questions.
- The school provides a broad and appropriate curriculum. Pupils' learning experiences are enhanced by the wide range of visits to places of interest, visitors to the school and the school's clubs. Visits, organised as part of the curriculum, ensure that pupils enjoy learning about British history and gain first-hand experience of places of culture. For example, a visit to Salisbury Cathedral gave pupils a good insight into the country's history and, in particular, the opportunity to learn about the Magna Carta. Links with schools in other countries, including Mali and Myanmar ensure that pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs, which helps to strengthen their own understanding of life in modern and multicultural Britain. The numerous visitors to the school broaden the pupils' experiences and encourage them to pursue their interests. For example, pupils really enjoyed the excellent concert provided by secondary-age students from the Gryphon School, which took place during the inspection.
- The whole-school ethos promotes British values well. Pupils have a good understanding of how democracy works and its role in our society. Older pupils have been making good use of their writing skills to contact local Members of Parliament and lobby for an improvement in the supply of clean water for people living in developing countries. In their letters, Year 6 pupils stated that this is a basic human right, which is set out in the United Nations Charter. Pupils benefit from numerous opportunities to take decisions about the running of their school and having responsibilities that are appropriate for their age.

- The physical education and sports premium is being used appropriately to improve the quality of teaching and increase pupils' participation in sport. As a result, pupils have been introduced to new sports, such as wheelchair basketball. They have also been provided with a wide range of after-school clubs, including dodgeball, hockey, basketball, rounders and cricket. In addition, new equipment has been purchased to increase sporting activities at breaktimes. Older pupils have been supported to improve their cycling skills as a strategy to increase the numbers of pupils riding to school safely.
- Communication with parents is developing. The headteacher is acting on feedback gathered from parents and is introducing a 'parent forum', which will provide opportunities to share information about the school's work. The first meeting has been scheduled to discuss the school's 2015 results.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Despite providing good support for the school following the untimely death of the headteacher in January 2015, the governing body has not been monitoring the school's performance rigorously enough and taking action to prevent pupils' achievement declining. Recent changes within the governing body mean that some responsibilities, such as allocating subject links, have been reallocated to include the newly appointed governors. As such, not all governors are fully conversant with the content and focus of the individual subject action plans. However, the Chair of the Governing Body has worked hard on the school's behalf through the difficult times and he has provided good support for the headteacher and staff. He receives strong support from the other members of the governing body. As a team, they draw upon a wide range of expertise and experience from each of the individual members. Governors have attended relevant training courses, which is increasing their focus on holding the school to account.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are vigilant in their responsibilities for monitoring and checking pupils' safety and welfare. The system for monitoring pupils' arrival to and departure from school has been reviewed and strengthened recently. Risk assessments are completed appropriately and the governing body ensures that regular health and safety checks are carried out. Staff maintain appropriate records of incidents occurring at school. Any concerns, including those raised by families, are followed through and dealt with appropriately. The school responds appropriately to safeguarding complaints by following the procedures set out in its comprehensive policy. Concerns raised are investigated thoroughly before reaching a conclusion. The school talks to all parties and draws upon the expertise of external agencies, including the police and social services. Staff and governor training in safeguarding is current. Staff are vetted carefully and recruitment procedures are fully compliant.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Too often, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough and they do not expect enough from their class. Frequently, the activities planned for the most-able pupils are not sufficiently challenging and they are either completing work that is too easy or consolidating what they already know.
- Teachers are too accepting of pupils' work that is not presented neatly, and not demanding enough when it comes to setting work out carefully. For example, the inconsistent approach to improving pupils' handwriting and knowing their times tables results in pupils learning at different rates and not fully developing their mastery of essential skills.
- Teachers do not implement the school's marking policy consistently. When marking pupils' English books, teachers' comments suggesting how pupils' work might be strengthened are often of a higher standard than for other subjects. However, there is little evidence to demonstrate that pupils' work improves as a result of teachers' marking. As a consequence, pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable. Recent changes to the school's marking policy are being led by the deputy headteacher. The new approach is being well received by both staff and pupils. At the time of the inspection, insufficient time had elapsed since this new approach was introduced for staff to demonstrate any significant impact on pupils' development.
- Relationships in the classrooms are very positive. Staff know the pupils very well and encourage them in their learning. Teaching assistants contribute well to the learning taking place. They often prepare resources and work with individuals and groups of pupils.
- Classrooms are well organised with bright and colourful displays that reflect subjects being studied and showcase some examples of higher-quality work. The school grounds provide a good resource and are used well to support pupils' learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school provides an extremely welcoming, safe and caring environment that supports pupils' learning.
- Most parents are very confident that pupils are safe at school. Pupils say that they are looked after very well. Pupils have a good understanding about the importance of being vigilant when using the internet. There are very few incidents of bullying. When incidents do arise they are quickly resolved. As a result, pupils speak very confidently to confirm that they feel safe and say that they are very well cared for by staff working at the school. During conversations, they explained very clearly what they would do if they had any concerns that needed to be shared.
- As a 'Rights Respecting School', which is a UNICEF-led initiative, teachers and other adults at the school successfully promote pupils' respect and responsibility for helping others. Each class elects their representatives to be 'Rights Respectors'. Those elected meet weekly to discuss relevant issues. These meetings focus on current issues that are relevant to the pupils, including deciding which charity the school should support. As a result, pupils are well aware of the role they can play, for example in supporting those children in other countries who are less fortunate than themselves.
- Pupils elected to the school's eco council take responsibility for looking at how the school grounds and the local environment can be improved.
- Pupils benefit from being given many responsibilities around the school. For example, pupils promoted to the role of playtime buddies are proud of their responsibilities and enjoy the opportunity to help others.
- The whole-school approach to learning and using sign language, for example when saying the school prayer, demonstrates a strong sense of inclusivity and a recognition of the importance of being able to communicate with all members of society.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and arrive promptly. Staff supervise the arrival and departure of pupils very carefully and are often available to meet with parents at the start and end of the school day. The breakfast club, known as the 'Early arrivers' club', provides pupils arriving early with a good variety of activities, which pupils enjoy. However, school attendance levels are slightly lower than average and some groups of pupils have higher rates of absence than is usual.
- A number of pupils travel to and from school by bus and taxi. The drivers spoken to confirmed that pupils behave well during the journeys and say that they enjoy transporting children from St Andrew's CofE Primary School.
- On entering school, pupils settle quickly and lessons get off to a prompt start. Pupils behave well in lessons. They are responsive to teachers' instructions and take care of school equipment. At breaktime and during lunch, pupils play and socialise together well.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and want to do well. They are keen to please and take part in lessons.

Outcomes for pupils

requires improvement

- Last year, few pupils at the end of both key stages made more than expected progress and attained the higher levels. As a result, standards at the end of Year 2 have gradually fallen over the last three years and are now slightly below the national average.
- Although there has been an improving trend in recent years with increasing numbers of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check, the school's results remain lower than the national average.
- In 2015, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 fell from being significantly above the national average to being well below. This was partly because of an unusually high number of pupils with special educational needs or disability in the cohort.
- Although most boys do well in the Reception Year, their progress and attainment in English starts to fall behind the girls as they move through the rest of the school. However, in mathematics, boys do better and achieve higher standards than the girls.

- Although there are relatively small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in each year group, they do well and achieve higher standards than other pupils at the school. In many instances, their progress and attainment are above those of pupils nationally.
- Teachers are aware of the challenges they face to improve pupils' outcomes. During the current academic year, there has been a concerted effort to improve and strengthen the quality of teaching and thereby increase pupils' rate of learning. Pupils' current work is beginning to show signs of improvement, although more remains to be done. Evidence in work books indicates that more attention is being paid to challenge pupils to make faster progress than was previously the case.

Early years provision

is good

- Children starting school in the Reception class frequently do so with skills that are at least typical for their age. They get off to a rapid start and most make good progress, so that by the time they join Year 1 they achieve the standard expected (a good level of development). There is little difference in the achievement of boys and girls, and the small number of disadvantaged children make good progress and achieve in line with other children in the class.
- The early years provision is good. Children in Reception benefit from the same strengths for personal development as pupils in the rest of the school. In addition, the focus on making progress over the year helps children to do well. The school's provision for this age group is safe and secure. Children feel safe at school and parents and carers enjoy seeing their children flourish.
- The early years leader has developed good links with the local pre-school groups. Working with colleagues in the feeder pre-schools, the early years leader arranges opportunities for children to visit the school before they start in September. In addition, the talks arranged for parents to hear about school routines help the children's transition into school to operate smoothly.
- The early years leader and the teaching assistant work together well. They know all the children's individual needs and work together successfully to support and promote each child's learning.
- During children's time in Reception, staff communicate regularly with the families to share information and discuss their child's development and progress.
- The curriculum for the Reception children is well balanced and adapted effectively to respond to the children's interests and needs. There are many opportunities for the children to investigate and explore first-hand using a wide range of practical resources: for example, making their own musical instruments, which they enjoyed playing while the class sang the nursery rhyme, 'Row, row, row your boat'.
- Children also enjoy being in the outside space, which has a wide range of resources that supplement the classroom equipment.
- Children enjoy learning their letter sounds through developing their knowledge and use of phonics. However, the various schemes used by the school do not support a consistent approach across the school. As a consequence, children do not make as much progress in this aspect of the curriculum as they could.
- The early years leader assesses children's progress rigorously and uses the information gathered to identify any child not making sufficient progress.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 113781 |
| Local authority | Dorset |
| Inspection number | 10011314 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 143 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Paul Sparks |
| Headteacher | Jane Prelogauskas |
| Telephone number | 01935 872430 |
| Website | www.standrewsyetminster.org.uk |
| Email address | office@yetminster.dorset.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 3–4 December 2013 |

Information about this school

- Following the headteacher’s tragic death in a road accident in January 2015, the school was led by the deputy headteacher in the capacity of acting headteacher. In April 2015, she was appointed as the school’s substantive headteacher.
- In January 2016, the governing body appointed a deputy headteacher.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils attending the school are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through additional funding (the pupil premium) is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have been identified with special educational needs or disability is higher than average.
- Children in the early years are taught together in a single-age class. Pupils in the other year groups are taught in either single-age or mixed-age classes.
- The school operates a breakfast club for pupils arriving early.
- In 2014, the school exceeded the government’s current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils’ attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited every class on at least two occasions to observe lessons.
- Inspectors made observations around the school at breaktimes and during the lunch period. They also visited the breakfast club and attended an assembly. Inspectors also observed the arrangements for pupils at the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors talked with individuals and groups of pupils. They also looked at a wide range of pupils' work, both in their books and on display.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and several members of the school's governing body. Inspectors also held meetings with the school's senior leaders, teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime team.
- Inspectors talked with parents at the start and end of the school day. The lead inspector also talked with two of the school's bus drivers.
- The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority and held a telephone conversation with the local authority's head of safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of school documentation, including the school development plan, minutes of the governing body meetings, job descriptions and reports about the school's effectiveness. A wide range of the school's safeguarding documentation and records was also scrutinised.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed in the 20 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 15 staff questionnaires. Inspectors also noted the content of an email received from a parent.

Inspection team

Ken Buxton, lead inspector

Hazel Callaghan

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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