

Okeford Fitzpaine Church of England Voluntary Aided School

The Cross, Blandford Forum, DT11 0RF

Inspection dates 7–8 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good throughout the school.
- Lessons are too often based on what pupils are going to do rather than what they are going to learn and pupils focus on completing tasks rather than making progress in their learning.
- Pupils do not always understand how to achieve tasks well so they lack confidence when working independently.
- Teachers take too long to explain activities to the whole class and pupils have to wait for tasks that provide suitable challenge.
- Too few teachers check the level of pupils' understanding during lessons; as a result they fail to adjust activities to help pupils make more rapid progress.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress throughout Key Stage 2, or in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, do not use and interpret the information they collect from monitoring activities accurately enough to create action plans that help the school to improve at a fast enough rate.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' achievements have continued to improve at Key Stage 1 and their attainment is above average by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils have a well-developed sense of responsibility to the community and to one another. Their behaviour is good.
- Pupils entitled to pupil premium funding benefit from the extra support they receive. They grow in confidence and their achievement is good.
- The school makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by ensuring that they all have opportunities to participate regularly in a variety of activities and events.
- There is a strong emphasis on team working among members of the governing body, senior leaders and teachers that creates a positive ethos within the school and is helping to improve the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in 12 lessons taught by six teachers. Two of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with representatives from the governing body, the headteacher, teachers and groups of pupils. The inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- There were 11 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the inspector took account of the views of the parents she met at the school.
- The inspector examined various documents, including the records of pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Juliet Jaggs, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Okeford Fitzpaine Church of England School is smaller than most primary schools.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is low.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is broadly average. No children are looked after by the local authority or are from service families.
- The number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receiving support at school action and the number supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Children in the Reception class join pupils in Years 1 and 2 for their learning.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good throughout the school by ensuring that all teachers:
 - make pupils aware of what they are going to be learning about during lessons
 - introduce the variety of activities prepared for different groups of learners as soon as possible after the lesson has begun, including giving children in the Early Years Foundation Stage more opportunities to learn through play
 - discuss pupils' learning with them so that they understand how to achieve well on their own
 - ask questions to check pupils' understanding during lessons so that they can adapt their teaching.
- Ensure that pupils make the same good progress in Key Stage 2 as they do in Key Stage 1.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the information gleaned from monitoring teaching is used to identify precise actions for improvement
 - targets to raise attainment in English and mathematics in the school's development plan are precise and measurable.
 - an external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because they do not make consistently good progress and their performance is weaker at Key Stage 2 than it is at Key Stage 1.
- Pupils do not make better progress because there is too great an emphasis on them repeating exercises without understanding the underlying principles. This means they are slow to use mathematical methods effectively when solving problems and they find it difficult to express their ideas in writing when they are required to use particular grammatical structures.
- Children join the Reception class with levels of skill and experience that are typical for children of their age. They settle well among pupils in Years 1 and 2 but they do not investigate learning confidently because they are required to sit alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2 for too long before they have the opportunity to learn through play. Pupils go on to make good progress through Key Stage 1 so that their attainment is above average by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils' attainment in reading is broadly average. There are organised systems for enabling pupils to take increasing responsibility for selecting books that challenge them to develop their vocabulary and comprehension skills. As a result, most of them want to carry on reading at home and parents are keen to support them. Pupils in Year 1 attained above average scores in the phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) screening check at the end of last summer.
- The school has introduced brief daily skills sessions where pupils of a similar ability are able to work with pupils from other classes in practical English and mathematical activities. These help pupils think about literacy and numeracy in different ways and this is beginning to have a positive impact on their progress.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is carefully monitored and they make similar progress to that of their peers. The strength of the relationships in the school means that pupils with behavioural and emotional needs grow in confidence and develop positive attitudes to school.
- The pupil premium is used well to support pupils entitled to this funding and to provide them with extra support in literacy and numeracy. As a result they are making good progress in both English and mathematics so that their achievements, as measured by their average point scores, are in line with those of all other pupils nationally.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is not yet consistently good. Too many teachers initiate activities without discussing with pupils what they will be learning before they begin. Most pupils are motivated to complete simple tasks and they do so quickly but they have limited understanding of their purpose.
- For many pupils, whole-class discussions continue for too long. Class teachers allow themselves to become sidetracked into having discussions with higher attaining pupils which are too complex for some learners. As a result their learning slows as they find it hard to keep up.
- Teachers prepare varied materials for different groups of learners but they do not provide sufficient guidance about using these resources and pupils lack confidence in beginning tasks independently. For example, teachers often suggest the interesting vocabulary they want included in pupils' writing, but pupils do not always understand how these words can be used in context so they are slow to construct sentences.
- Teachers do not ask pupils to describe how their learning is developing during lessons so they are not alert to signs that tasks need to be modified or developed. This means that not all pupils make sustained good progress.
- In the better lessons, teachers are innovative in their preparation. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 made good progress understanding about the relationship between the interior and exterior angles of a triangle because they enjoyed investigating the shape with the strips of card

provided by their teacher.

- Following the previous inspection, there has been a growing emphasis on pupils' reviewing one another's work and some pupils now make these assessments voluntarily. Such is the strength of the relationships in most classes that this offer of help often leads to effective discussions between pupils about further improvements.
- Teachers use an effective system for marking pupils' books. Pupils take pride in the comments written in pink and they are taking increasing responsibility for responding to the guidance written in green.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' conduct is good and they are keen to follow their teachers' instructions. They can become restless in class when they do not understand how to learn independently but they are reluctant to explain this to the teacher. This means their behaviour is not outstanding.
- Pupils are lively and energetic and they enjoy vigorous play. Both pupils and their parents recognise that some pupils control this better than others but they all agree that the school manages behaviour well. Records show that pupils' behaviour is good over time.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and happy. They are proud to come to the school and their attendance is average.
- Pupils know that bullying can take several different forms but they say that instances are extremely rare and when they do occur they are dealt with appropriately.
- Pupils have a strong sense of their responsibilities to their community so they willingly offer to take on formal duties such as playground pals and recycling monitors. There are also those who recognise when others need help. For example, when one pupil suggested that the school establish links with another in India, pupils came forward voluntarily to take their share of administrative tasks.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Since the previous inspection, school leaders, teachers and members of the governing body liaise more closely over their shared responsibilities for aspects of the school development plan. Checks on the impact of recommendations and other actions are not sufficiently objective, so the plans and targets have not been refined so that they are specific enough to raise pupils' attainment more quickly.
- The headteacher has led the development of the more rigorous systems used by all staff for monitoring the quality of teaching. This means there is no underperformance but the information gathered from these activities is not analysed thoroughly enough to identify the precise aspects in need of improvement.
- The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Work in the classroom is often enhanced by visits to areas of local interest and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 were able to include a good variety of adjectives in their sentences about transport because of an earlier visit to Shillingstone railway station. Pupils are encouraged to foster good relationships within the school by organising events, such as the Tea Dance, that are arranged to conclude a topic.
- There have been effective consultations to ensure consistency in the teaching of mathematics and teachers have benefited from training to develop their knowledge; the impact of this is beginning to be seen in the better progress being made by pupils. The school is sharing this information with parents so that they can support their children's learning at home.
- Representatives from the local authority have worked closely with the school to produce a clear strategy for improving it. More robust systems for monitoring pupils' progress mean that leaders now evaluate the effectiveness of their areas of responsibility more accurately. Together they

are determined that all pupils have an equal chance to achieve well and information about pupils' progress is checked routinely for signs of potential underachievement and for pupils who would benefit from greater challenge.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body use their frequent visits to maintain a strong focus on their vision for the school. They understand about more detailed aspects of provision for groups of pupils because of their well-organised committee structure and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well looked after as a result. They are beginning to challenge school leaders about why pupils do not make better progress but this has yet to have an impact on raising pupils' achievement. The budget is carefully managed and the pupil premium funds are used effectively to provide the pupils entitled to it with additional support in literacy and numeracy so that they achieve well and their attainment is in line with all other pupils nationally. Members of the governing body understand about the quality of teaching, performance management and teachers' pay awards as they are reported to them. They are keen to develop their expertise and they regularly attend training sessions, particularly so that they have a good level of understanding about safeguarding procedures, and arrangements in school meet statutory requirements.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	113810
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	401392

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Berry
Headteacher	Mark Acreman
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 June 2010
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