

Parley First School

Parley First School, Glenmoor Road, Ferndown, BH22 8QE

Inspection dates 1–2 October 2013

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| 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:

- Teaching over time has not been of sufficiently high quality to make sure that all pupils make good progress.
- Pupils are not reaching standards in reading that they are capable of by the end of Year 4.
- Lessons are not taught with enough attention to the different needs of pupils. As a result disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are not improving their attainment quickly enough.
- Pupils who are most able of doing harder work are not given enough encouragement to do so in lessons.
- Authorised absence levels are too high and the school's guidance does not show enough determination to reduce them.
- Improvement plans lack specific targets to help leaders and governors measure their impact on pupils' learning and the quality of teaching.

The school has the following strengths:

- Children in the Reception Year make good progress in all areas of their learning.
- Achievement in writing has improved. Stimulating experiences have encouraged boys to make good progress with their writing.
- Pastoral support is strong and helps pupils develop self-confidence.
- Teachers manage lessons well and treat pupils as individuals. As a result pupils feel safe and are respectful and tolerant of each other.
- The headteacher has a clear line of sight about what still needs to be done to continue to move the school forward. He has implemented a range of procedures to hold teachers to account for improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 27 lessons and part lessons. Four of these were seen jointly with school leaders during tours of the school. Eleven teachers were observed teaching.
- The inspectors met with groups of pupils to discuss their work and seek their views. They heard a sample of pupils reading.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' workbooks during lessons and also a selection with school leaders. They considered a range of the school's documentation, including information on pupils' progress, teaching guidance and policies. One of the inspectors reviewed the provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Inspectors paid close attention to the school's information on attendance, behaviour and all aspects of safeguarding pupils.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the staff responsible for leading on the Early Years Foundation Stage, literacy, numeracy and the learning of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. An inspector met with the governing body. A conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account through the 111 responses on Parent View, the online survey.
- The views of the 30 staff who completed the Ofsted survey were noted.

Inspection team

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Jonathan Palk, HMI Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Elizabeth Strange | Additional Inspector |
| Michael Sutherland-Harper | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a large first school. It has two classes for each year group from the Reception Year to Year 4.
- The proportion of pupils who receive extra support through the pupil premium is below average. This is additional money allocated to schools by the government for pupils who are looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, or those with a parent or carer in the armed services.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher started in the school in January 2012.
- The school does not provide any alternative or specialised provision. The governing body manages a before-school club that operates on the school site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is consistently good and outstanding by:
 - improving teachers' understanding of what good progress looks like and ensure that this is reflected in lesson planning
 - improving activities in lessons so they meet the different needs of pupils in the class, particularly for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
 - raising the expectations of what more-able pupils can achieve in lessons
 - using assessment information to match pupils' work carefully to their abilities and making sure more-able students are given work that is hard enough, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Raise achievement in reading across the school for all groups by:
 - ensuring that the teaching of phonics is consistent throughout the school
 - encouraging all pupils to read widely and extend opportunities for them to develop their comprehension skills.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - driving through improvements in teaching more robustly, for example, by closer checking on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils in lessons
 - ensuring that the tools being used to drive improvement, such as the action plan and staff appraisal procedures, contain measures of success
 - improving the governing body's knowledge of the school's work so it can hold school leaders closely to account for their performance by robust questioning and challenge.
- Do more to promote good attendance and reduce absence, including authorised absence, by revising existing policies in line with the advice provided by the Department for Education published in February 2013.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and when they leave school at the end of Year 4 is broadly as expected. Pupils eligible for free school meals reach the expected standard in the national tests and teacher assessments, but few are attaining the higher levels. The proportions of other pupils who attain standards above average are slightly higher than found nationally at the end of Year 2 in the 2012 national tests and teacher assessments. There is a similar picture in 2013.
- The percentage of pupils reaching the national average figures for phonics (the sounds that letters make) in the 2012 check at Year 1 was low. The improved teaching of phonics in Reception and Year 1 means that more pupils are at the expected level this year. Teachers in Key Stage 1 have raised expectations and are tracking the progress pupils are making in this key skill from the Reception classes.
- The progress pupils make across the school is too variable. This is not the case in the Reception classes where all children, from a typical range of starting points, are making good progress towards a good level of development by the time they start in Year 1.
- The progress of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium is better in Years 3 and 4 than for other pupils due to a range of strategies introduced by school leaders, including the use of teaching assistants to help these pupils understand new vocabulary introduced in lessons. The gap with other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics has reduced to half a year.
- Pupils are not making enough progress in reading across the school. Average and above average attaining pupils often spend too much time reading books at a level that is too easy for them. Pupils who are struggling with reading do not have enough skills to tackle harder books as they move into Year 3.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs do not make enough progress to close the gaps that open up during Years 1 and 2. When they are taught in a small group or have specialist support in one-to-one lessons they learn well. In lessons they do not get work set at the right level and this limits the progress they can make.
- Progress in mathematics for all groups of pupils is not yet good. School records show that the focus on problem solving and investigation, encouraged by school leaders, is improving achievement.
- All pupils enjoy writing, including boys. Pupils have a good level of oracy and the rich curriculum provides much stimulus for their ideas. There has been an improvement in progress in writing last year and workbooks show this to be continuing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet good enough to help pupils make consistently good progress in their learning, with the exception of the teaching in the Reception classes. Activities in lessons are not always matched well enough to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. This results in all pupils doing the same activity towards the same goals. The purpose of the learning is not always clear in lessons and the skills to be used or acquired are often too low level for the more able.
- In the main teachers plan lessons that are engaging and interesting. Mathematics lessons are practical and encourage groups of pupils to solve problems together. This was evident in the lively discussions pupils had proving the relationships between numbers and multiplication tables. Some lessons usefully link reading, writing and mathematics skills with topic work, such as the field trip to Brownsea Island.
- In the best lessons there is purposeful pace, a good balance between teacher and pupil talk and sufficient prompts available for pupils to work independently. This was evident in a literacy

lesson in Year 2 when lower ability pupils had cards to help them break up the sounds different words made.

- When lessons have a lively start, pupils engage and willingly contribute. However, pupils do not always keep up this initial engagement. This is because teachers' expectations are not clear or high enough to ensure they work hard throughout the lessons. As a result the pace of the learning slows and pupils do not get enough done.
- For those pupils supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, the lack of specific detailed planning of their work in lessons means they are not building on the good progress they make in one-to-one sessions. In some lessons the extra adults available are not given a clear role and their time is not used well.
- Teachers are not consistent in their approaches to teaching reading. Older pupils who are still struggling to read new words are not encouraged to sound out the letters or use their knowledge of how words are formed, with enough frequency. There is time built into the day for small-group reading sessions but this is not always planned well enough to consolidate good reading habits.
- School leaders have introduced guidelines for marking pupils' work. In the best examples the targets and feedback help pupils rectify mistakes or make improvements.
- In the Reception classes adults are quick to provide the encouragement and the materials for children to develop and acquire new skills. The teaching is particularly effective in helping children to play, explore and be active in communicating and thinking. All staff encourage children to discuss their activities and help them find the right words to describe what they know and understand.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and respectful of each other and take on a wide range of responsibilities enthusiastically. They play well together during the imaginatively resourced and well-supervised playtimes.
- Parents, carers and pupils share a belief that the school is a safe place, and they are right. Pupils say that bullying does happen and if they fall out with friends, teachers help them put things right. They understand the different types of bullying, such as calling someone gay. They agree that these are not a part of school life. The school has taught them how to stay safe on the internet.
- A few pupils have behaviour which is challenging but this rarely disrupts lessons because school leaders have put in place good management plans. The plans, supported by teaching assistants, have helped pupils to improve their behaviour and take a full part in lessons.
- Pupils do not always show good enthusiasm for learning in lessons. This is because individuals are not given enough guidance on what their best work can look like.
- Pupils enjoy school. Attendance is broadly average. A reduction in absence was achieved in 2011/12, but not sustained in the last academic year. The school leaders have worked effectively to improve the attendance of those with special educational needs and those in receipt of free school meals. Authorised absence is too high.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The experienced headteacher has the full confidence of parents and carers, staff and pupils. They recognise the improvements that have been made to the partnership between home and school to support pupils' reading. They welcome the physical improvements to the school as a sign of higher expectations.

- Self-evaluation is over-generous, but school leaders have an accurate picture of where change is still needed. The school action plan is sharply focused on the correct priorities. The timescales show determination. The measures by which leaders and governors can check on the impact of actions to improve progress and teaching and learning are too broad.
 - The headteacher has introduced rigorous assessment systems so that the teachers now have accurate information about pupils' skills and knowledge. The tracking of the progress of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils in receipt of the pupil premium is now much sharper.
 - Performance management is in place and there is a much clearer culture of accountability for pupils' progress through the school. Low expectations are being challenged and there is now a shared vision for improvement.
 - Through the programme to improve teaching, individuals get the support that is tailored to meet their needs. The headteacher is working closely with good and outstanding schools to provide opportunities for staff to observe high-quality practice and implement improvements in their own classrooms. Leaders are not closely checking that this is making a difference.
 - Pupils are encouraged to maintain their status as a rights respecting school, by contributing to their own class charter and reviewing the system of rewards and sanctions. The regular whole-school themes and topics that form part of their personal, social and emotional lessons contribute to pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - There are regular lessons in the school grounds that provide a rich starting point for linking pupils' enquiry skills with their literacy and numeracy development. An extensive programme of physical educational lessons, supported by specialist teachers, and a wide range of after-school activities contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of the outdoors and sports of all kinds. Parents and carers value this breadth of opportunity as strength of the school.
 - Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. The school works effectively with families and partners to improve the safety of children whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
 - The local authority is aware of a decline in the school's performance, and with this in mind helped secure the appointment of a headteacher with a track record of driving improvement.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - In the past governors did not put sufficient pressure on the school's leaders to maintain the outstanding qualities recognised in the 2008 inspection report. The headteacher is working closely with the governing body to review how governors can both support and challenge the school effectively. Governors are now not afraid to challenge decisions to check they are being made in the best interests of the pupils. They have more control over the information they receive from leaders on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. The governing body has managed finances effectively, including the pupil premium funding. Additional physical education and sports funding has been used well to improve pupils' health and well-being and add expertise to physical education and sport provision.
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What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 113682 |
| Local authority | Dorset |
| Inspection number | 427221 |

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 | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 5–9 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 292 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Reverend Charles Booth |
| Headteacher | John Bagwell |
| Date of previous school inspection | 23 April 2008 |
| Telephone number | 01202 874400 |
| Email address | office@parley.dorset.sch.uk |

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