

Wyke Regis Infant School and Nursery

Shrubbery Lane, Wyke Regis, Weymouth, DT4 9LU

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2014

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		Require improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching requires improvement because some teachers expect too little of the pupils and the work set does not always challenge them. There is not enough outstanding teaching.
- Pupils make inconsistent progress in lessons, and this limits the standards they reach in Year 1, particularly in their writing. Pupils' attainment has declined.
- The feedback given to pupils, particularly through teachers' marking, is not effective enough. Pupils do not respond regularly to the feedback they are given.
- Attendance is below average and while the school has become more determined to confront families for whom this is an issue, improvements are too slow. Pupils' behaviour in lessons requires improvement.
- Leaders across the school have not made sure that agreed strategies to improve teaching, including the marking policy, are implemented consistently by all teachers.
- Governors have not challenged the school rigorously enough; their understanding of the school's data has relied too heavily on school leaders' interpretation.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Their progress accelerates again in Year 2, particularly in reading, because there is a consistent approach to teaching phonics (learning about letters and the sounds they make).
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support they receive.
- Teachers use interesting topics around which to plan lessons, which engage the pupils well.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe.
- The federation of the two schools is helping to develop better leadership and identify key issues for improvement.
- There has been some unavoidable turbulence in staffing, and senior leaders have grappled with this to maintain as much continuity as possible for the pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by three inspectors, who observed 21 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Observations also included sessions led by teaching assistants.
- The inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in lessons and in their books over time. They talked to pupils about their work and what they thought about their learning.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, other leaders across the school, governors and pupils. Inspectors also looked at documentation and records provided by the school, particularly about the progress of pupils. Policies and procedures about keeping pupils safe were also reviewed. The school's self-evaluation and plans for further improvements were evaluated, alongside minutes from meetings.
- Inspectors reviewed the 38 responses to Parent View, the online survey, and spoke to parents and carers informally at the start and end of the school day. The responses to a questionnaire for staff were also considered.

Inspection team

Andrew Saunders, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jacqueline Good

Additional inspector

Elizabeth Strange

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average infant school with three classes in each year group. In the Nursery, children attend up to five sessions per week, run in the morning and the afternoon.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support through the pupil premium funding is broadly average. This is funding provided by the government to promote good achievement for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and the children of parents serving in the armed services.
- Most pupils are White British. The small proportion of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds represents a wide range of different heritages. Some of these pupils speak English as an additional language. Very few pupils join the school when they are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average, although this varies with different year groups. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- There has been some unavoidable turbulence in the teaching staff at the school and some teachers have only recently been appointed.
- The school became part of a federation with the adjacent junior school in 2010. The headteacher is head of both the schools. He is supported at the infant school by a head of school, who joined the school in September 2013, and an assistant headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that teaching in all year groups is consistently good and that more is outstanding, by:
 - raising the expectations teachers have about the level of work pupils are capable of doing, lesson by lesson
 - emphasising how much work teachers expect pupils to complete during each lesson
 - checking that teachers' marking and feedback help pupils to know exactly what they need to do to improve their work.
- Raise pupils' achievement, particularly in writing, and make sure that they make consistently good progress, especially in Year 1, by:
 - giving pupils work which is more challenging, particularly for those pupils who are working towards the higher levels
 - making sure that pupils have more opportunities to do work in their books.
- Improve pupils' attitudes to their learning by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to respond to the feedback they get from teachers and other adults, and making sure that they understand why this helps their progress
 - making sure that all families understand the importance of being at school and the impact that being absent has on pupils' achievement.
- Make sure that leaders at all levels identify and quickly tackle weaknesses in teaching and

learning, by:

- ensuring that teachers who lead subjects and other aspects of the school understand what the data show about the progress pupils are making and then tackle any underperformance
- developing and sharing the best practice in the school.

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

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils do not make as much progress in lessons as they need to, particularly in writing, because the work they are given does not adequately challenge them. This inhibits the progress of the most able pupils so that they do not achieve the levels of which they are capable. In too many lessons, some pupils find the work easy and finish quickly, while others struggle and quickly become stuck. In both cases, their progress is hindered.
- There has been a decline from previous above-average standards at the end of Key Stage 1. In 2013, standards were average, and slightly below average in writing.
- Pupils' progress is particularly weak in Year 1, and this leaves pupils with a lot of ground to make up in Year 2, particularly in writing and to a lesser extent in mathematics. In Year 2, some pupils struggle to achieve the standards the school expects of them in the time that is available.
- The proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check rose to close to the national average in 2013. This is in line with improvements in pupils' reading. Most pupils are confident readers, although some pupils do not have as much confidence when using their phonics skills to try to spell more difficult words. At times this limits their progress in writing because they cannot easily spell some of the words they want to use.
- During lessons, pupils usually make good progress while the teacher or other adults support them. However, their progress slows when they are expected to work on their own.
- When children join the school in the Nursery, they have levels of skill and knowledge which vary widely. In some cohorts, levels are below those that might be expected. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception. Across the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils make up ground so that they start Year 1 with standards which are broadly average.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported by the adults around them. The particular approaches used to help them develop their skills and knowledge are carefully chosen, and the staff involved check that these strategies are making a difference.
- There is no difference between the standards reached by pupils from different backgrounds. For some, this demonstrates good progress, particularly for those who speak English as an additional language.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium reach standards which are lower than those of other pupils, by about a term. Nevertheless, this is an improvement and the gap between these pupils and other pupils is narrowing because the support they receive is improving.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- At times, pupils do not produce their best work because teachers do not expect enough of them, either in the quantity or quality of the work they produce. This is particularly the case with the most able pupils.
- Some pupils are left to struggle for too long in lessons and do not make enough progress because teachers do not always check how well they have understood what they are supposed to be doing. At the same time, pupils who are not trying hard enough are not always challenged to produce their very best work. As a result, some pupils get away with producing a single sentence or mathematics calculation in 15 or 20 minutes, when other pupils of similar ability have produced substantially more work. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to do work in their books.
- There is now an agreed approach to marking books and giving pupils feedback. However, this is very new and is not yet applied throughout the school. Too much of teachers' feedback still lacks specific advice about what pupils need to do to improve, and there is too little expectation that pupils will actually understand or do what is asked of them.

- Teachers and teaching assistants teach phonics very well and, along with the good support of volunteers, this means that pupils quickly become confident readers. They enjoy a wide range of books and opportunities to read. In some classes, phonics is not always as well promoted when pupils are spelling more complex words.
- The teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching and carefully choose topics that are interesting to boys and girls alike. Pupils appreciate this and say the topics make learning fun. This includes the home learning packs, which give pupils ideas about what they can do at home and show parents and carers how they can help their children's learning.
- Teachers make sure that the teaching assistants know what is expected of them, and that they are an effective part of the teaching team. Teaching assistants are particularly well informed about the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs whom they support. They also provide well-focused support for pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding. This helps to ensure these groups of pupils make good progress.
- Classrooms are spacious and well organised, and the displays celebrate the work that pupils are doing. There are lots of reminders about what the school expects of pupils' behaviour.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Too often, pupils rely on the adults around them to keep them focused on their work. They enjoy learning and do what they are asked, but are not always willing to sustain good effort, and this has an adverse impact on their progress.
- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In lessons, when there is not an adult keeping an eye on them, some pupils distract others. As a result, these pupils get very little work done. At times, some pupils avoid their work by wandering around, getting equipment or looking busy while not actually doing much work at all. While such behaviour is discouraged when it is noticed, too often it goes unchallenged.
- Attendance has declined in recent years and is below average. While there has been a slight improvement in this school year, attendance remains an issue for some families and too many pupils are away from school too often. Changes to the routines about where parents, carers and pupils enter the school in the morning mean that there has also been an increase in the number of pupils who are late for school.
- Around the school, pupils are usually polite and well behaved. They are kind to one another and they say that bullying is very rare in the school because they know how to treat each other. Pupils respond quickly to reminders about what is expected of their behaviour.
- Pupils respect the school environment and take pride in their school uniform. However, their pride in their work is not always as evident and some pupils too readily accept untidy or incomplete work as being good enough.
- Parents, carers and pupils say that the pupils feel safe at school and the school makes sure that they learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils feel that adults care a great deal about them and that there is always someone they can talk to if they are worried. The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Recent changes have made the maintenance of above-average standards difficult. Turbulence in staffing, which has been difficult to resolve, and a relatively high proportion of new appointments have meant that the quality of teaching has declined along with standards, particularly in Year 1. There are now appropriate procedures in place to make sure that the performance management of teachers helps them know what they need to do to improve. However, these procedures have not yet had sufficient time to have an impact and senior and

middle leaders have not made sure that agreed strategies to improve teaching, including the marking policy, are implemented consistently.

- At times, too much attention has been paid to checking what teachers are doing in lessons rather than the progress pupils are making. Teachers who lead subjects are now beginning to make better use of checks on pupils' progress to identify pupils who are not making rapid enough progress. However, this does not yet lead to enough effective action to help these pupils accelerate their progress, particularly in writing. There is still too little development and sharing of the good practice in teaching which exists in the school.
- The new federation is helping to develop better leadership and identify key issues.
- The curriculum provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and skills, which are carefully chosen to appeal to as many pupils as possible. Within the curriculum, there are also good opportunities to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- Ideas and procedures to manage the support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are shared with the junior school in the federation. This helps to make sure support is effective and that the pupils who benefit from it continue to get the support they need as they move into Year 3 and beyond.
- Pupils who need additional support, including for learning English or improving their speech, benefit from the good partnerships the school has developed with external agencies. Together with these partners the school promotes equality of opportunity for all pupils well, whatever their ability. The focus on the rights and responsibilities of pupils also helps to foster good relations and makes sure that there is no discrimination.
- Along with other schools in the area, leaders have begun to take a more robust approach to attendance by challenging families where pupils are not in school regularly enough. However, this has not yet proved as effective as it needs to be and attendance remains an issue for some families.
- Senior leaders have made sure that the funding to improve the provision of physical education has been carefully allocated. Some teachers have already had training to help engage pupils more actively in physical education and in running a lunchtime 'energy club'. Further training is planned. The funding has also provided equipment to help pupils be more active during break times, and some of this is overseen by the play leaders who help organise games at lunchtime.
- The local authority has provided the school with only light-touch support, checking that the school's self-evaluation matches performance data. School leaders have demonstrated that they understand the issues facing the school and have begun to tackle them. The school has the capacity to continue the improvements its leaders have begun.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have not always challenged the school sufficiently. As standards have declined, members of the governing body have continued to rely too heavily on the views of others without testing them against their own understanding of what the evidence is showing. The governing body has taken some time to absorb the changes in governance since the school became federated. Members of the governing body have undertaken some training to keep up to date with developments, including training on the interpretation of school performance data. They consider and validate the senior leaders' views about the performance of teachers, and pay awards take this into account.
 - Governors work with the school to check that the statutory requirements are met and that staff understand their responsibilities in relation to the safety of pupils. The budget is managed carefully to provide good value for money. Governors have checked that the pupil premium funding is used appropriately so that it is improving the achievement of eligible pupils. The governors and senior leaders have made sure that there are robust procedures to check that all the adults working with pupils are safe to do so.

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	113713
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	440351

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.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Debbie Morgan
Headteacher	Carl Saunders
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 September 2007
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