

Chickerell Primary Academy

Rashley Road, Chickerell, Weymouth, DT3 4AT

Inspection dates

11–12 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Too few Year 1 pupils meet the expected standards in their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make. In 2013, pupils performed below the national average for this measure and the performance of the subsequent cohort declined in 2014.
- Pupils in Year 6 do not achieve as well as they should. Not enough of them make the expected progress in writing and mathematics.
- In a minority of lessons, those pupils in the lower set in mathematics make slower progress in comparison to their classmates in the higher set. This hinders their ability to catch up quickly.
- Teaching is not consistently good across the academy. Pupils do not always get the guidance they need to make good progress, especially in writing.
- The quality of marking and feedback is inconsistent and does not always help pupils to know how to improve.
- Leaders have not always acted with enough rigour or urgency to address inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. While leaders have begun to monitor the academy's work more actively, this has not led to good-quality teaching across the academy.

The school has the following strengths

- Teachers in the Foundation Stage have high expectations. They use information about pupils' knowledge and skills well.
- Children get off to a good start. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the proportion reaching a good level of development is higher than the national average.
- Leaders have worked effectively to improve pupils' attendance, which is now broadly in line with the national average.
- The academy is friendly and inclusive. Pupils treat adults and each other with courtesy and respect.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through assemblies, displays and interesting topics that reflect current issues and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.

Information about this inspection

- This was an unannounced inspection.
- Inspectors observed two assemblies, playtime and lunchtime behaviour, 31 lessons or parts of lessons and one-to-one and group support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior leaders, members of the governing body and the consultant employed by the school to evaluate its work.
- The inspection team scrutinised a range of documentation related to school improvement, including safeguarding information.
- Inspectors held informal discussions with parents as well as taking account of the 86 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Questionnaire responses from 33 members of staff were also analysed.

Inspection team

Tracy Hannon, Lead inspector	Seconded inspector
Dale Burr, Team inspector	Seconded inspector
Elizabeth Strange, Team inspector	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Chickerell Primary converted to become an academy in January 2013. When Ofsted last inspected its predecessor school, Chickerell Primary, it was judged to be good.
- It is a larger-than-average primary academy.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is lower than the national average. This is the additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs identified as eligible for SEN support is in line with the national average. The proportion of these pupils who are supported by a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use information about what each pupil already knows, understands and can do to plan learning opportunities that challenge all pupils to make good progress and close gaps in their learning
 - check on pupils' learning in lessons more frequently and react promptly to adapt the task so that pupils make better progress
 - provide marking that helps pupils to understand how to improve their work
 - insist on a high standard of presentation and handwriting in pupils' written work.
- Increase the positive difference that the leadership team makes to raising standards over time by:
 - implementing comprehensive and systematic checks that focus closely on pupils' achievement
 - ensuring the outcomes of monitoring activities provide staff with clear guidance and areas for improvement which are followed up rigorously to improve the quality of teaching.

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 leadership and management **require improvement**

- The academy's leadership and management require improvement because the inconsistencies that exist in achievement and progress for some groups have not been resolved. Academy leaders have not always had high enough expectations; their monitoring of teaching has not been systematic or incisive enough to bring about swift improvement.
- Self-evaluation is honest and transparent, but too generous. The academy collects a comprehensive set of information about pupil attainment and progress. However, this information is not always acted upon rigorously enough.
- Pupils benefit from interesting learning opportunities across a wide and balanced range of subjects. Leaders have evaluated the school's approach to learning by 'topics' as sometimes failing to provide pupils with deep subject knowledge and understanding. As a result, they have devised a plan which is to be implemented this term and which is based around all aspects of the new National Curriculum. This places an emphasis on developing strong subject-specific knowledge and skills and includes a clear and systematic approach to tracking how much pupils know about particular subjects. It is too soon to judge whether this new approach is raising standards or not.
- The academy has a strong commitment to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. For example, when studying a project on chocolate, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of slavery and fair trade issues. Pupils discuss their views respectfully and with sensitivity.
- Leaders use the additional sports funding that the academy receives to improve teachers' knowledge and skills in physical education. The academy provides a broad range of sports activities to all pupils and, as a result, pupils' skills and participation rates are improving. This is having a positive impact on their physical well-being.
- Several dedicated new leaders have been promoted from within the staff. However, they have not used the broad range of monitoring evidence to improve pupil achievement within their teams, and this has hampered their impact.
- Checks on teachers' work have addressed inadequate performance effectively, but have not systematically involved a wide range of evidence and discussion to sharpen teachers' practice and raise standards. Targets are not always sufficiently challenging to drive improvement and bring about change.
- The academy has rigorous procedures in place to safeguard pupils. Staff keep meticulous records when concerns are raised. The school works closely and swiftly with families and external agencies to address such concerns.
- The academy regularly gathers the views of parents, and the recent 'Snug Group' initiative by the inclusion manager has been extremely effective in involving parents and improving communication.

■ The governance of the school:

- While governors ask challenging questions in meetings and have engaged an external adviser to challenge the effectiveness of the academy, they have not always followed this up with further regular checks on whether teaching is improving equally well or fast enough in all classes. As a result, inconsistencies in teaching have not been addressed swiftly enough to eradicate underperformance. Governors know where the best teaching is in the academy and have systems to reward it. They have supported the academy's efforts to address inadequate teaching. They have been effective in addressing challenging financial budgets and, as a result, are now able to direct funds to address academy priorities. For example, the effective deployment of additional funds to support those pupils eligible for pupil premium has had a positive impact on the outcomes achieved. Governors are knowledgeable about the academy's performance in relation to national and local authority standards. They ensure that the academy meets the statutory safeguarding requirements, which can be seen in the thorough records kept.

The behaviour and safety of pupils **are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are courteous, polite to each other and respectful towards staff and visitors.
- The academy has implemented six 'key learning' skills. Pupils value this approach and it helps them to conduct themselves well across all aspects of academy life.

- Low-level disruption in classes is rare and pupils are attentive and responsive in most lessons. Behaviour is not outstanding because there are variations in the level of pupils' attitudes to learning across classes. Where teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high, some pupils lose focus.
- Pupils particularly enjoy learning through topic work about different cultures and lifestyles. They speak with enthusiasm about how the academy helps them to become 'good members of society who respect all faiths and religions'.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Leaders rigorously follow up any absence. Attendance is now broadly in line with the national average.
- The majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire and spoke with inspectors agree that behaviour is good. The inspection team concurs with this view.
- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe in the academy and incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils who spoke to inspectors knew the difference between unkind behaviour and bullying. Effective systems are in place to monitor patterns of behaviour, and records show that parents generally engage with this.
- There is a culture of care and respect in the academy. Pupils know who to go to if they have worries and are rightly confident that any concerns will be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Leaders have effective systems to make sure that the building is secure and staff are carefully checked prior to appointment.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good enough to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The leadership team has been successful in eliminating inadequate teaching. The external school improvement partner verifies academy records about faster pupil progress as a result of a greater element of good teaching across the school. This work has not had time to embed sufficiently to impact on all pupils to ensure they make better progress in all classes.
- Good teaching in the Foundation Stage helps pupils to acquire new knowledge and skills. Children cooperate well and carefully targeted questions by the teacher and other adults support strong assessments, which are used to plan the children's next steps. This practice is not replicated in all classes across the school. In a few lessons, teachers do not check on pupils' learning or react promptly to adapt the task to accelerate progress.
- In most classes, teaching assistants effectively support pupils and deepen their understanding. Staff re-shape their questioning to support pupils and encourage less able pupils to produce their best work.
- When marking pupils' work, teachers do not give specific guidance routinely on how to improve. Pupils are not always sure about what they need to do to move to the next level in their work.
- Reading is taught well across the school, but there are inconsistencies in the teaching of writing. At times, teachers' expectations of pupils' work are too low, particularly in relation to presentation and handwriting.
- In mathematics, the quality of teaching varies across the different ability groups. Pupils in the most able set are making better progress because the teaching is better matched to their needs than it is in the other groups.
- Enthusiastic teachers use topical issues to engage and motivate learners. For example, in one of the Year 6 classes, pupils were learning to present arguments. Groups were self-motivated, challenging and supporting each other when role-playing issues around local council disputes. They were sharing their understanding of democracy and what is fair.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- While pupils get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and make at least good and some rapid gains in their learning, this is not sustained for all pupils as they progress through the year groups. By the end of Year 1, not enough children have sustained the good progress made in the Foundation Stage. The number of pupils meeting the expected standard in their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) has declined in 2014, increasing the gap between pupils at this school compared to those nationally.
- Information provided by the school shows that, in Year 2, the number of pupils achieving the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics has declined in 2014. The biggest drop is in mathematics. There has been an improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels in writing.

- The academy's records of attainment for Year 6 in 2014 indicate that standards have dropped, with the exception of mathematics.
- Pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6 is not consistently good. In 2013, the proportions making expected progress were lower than the national average in writing and mathematics. Least progress has been made in writing, where early indications for 2014 are that, while there has been some improvement in mathematics, there has been a further decline in writing, especially amongst more able pupils.
- The most able pupils in the Foundation Stage do well. However, thereafter, the process of the most able pupils is inconsistent. Too few have reached the highest levels over time.
- The attainment gap between pupils receiving additional funding and other pupils is closing. In 2013, eligible pupils in Year 6 were, on average, three terms behind their peers in mathematics and writing. However, this is an area where the school has used assessment well to target additional support and improve progress. As a result, the gap has reduced to a difference of one term.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress against their individual targets, particularly in reading. A higher proportion of this group of pupils make better-than-expected progress compared to their classmates. This is the result of effective targeted support arising from robust monitoring and astute deployment of funds by the governing body.

The early years provision

is good

- The proportion of pupils making good progress in the Foundation Stage is good. Children come into the Nursery and Reception classes with the level of skills typical for their age. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage, most have made good progress and leave with skill levels above national standards.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve a good level of development is above the national average.
- There is a strong and carefully planned induction procedure in place for children starting school. Parents are very positive about the way the academy engages with them and involves them in their child's learning.
- Records of children's learning, 'the learning journeys', show predominantly good outcomes over time, especially in literacy. Reading is a strength, with a larger proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development compared to national figures. The school has rightly identified the use of mathematical language as an area for development.
- Teachers have high expectations and seize many opportunities to reinforce letters and the sounds they make throughout the school day. They are precise in the articulation of sounds and carefully monitor the progress of individuals. As a result, a very high percentage of pupils are working at a higher level than those nationally.
- Girls sometimes achieve at a faster rate than boys, but teachers have put in place targeted support which helps the boys to catch up.
- Teaching engages and motivates the children and, as a result, they become confident and enthusiastic learners who are keen to talk about what they are doing.
- Pupils behave well. They share equipment and take turns when speaking. They move safely around the school and listen carefully to adults.
- The Early Years leader has put in place effective plans for improvement. For example, when assessments demonstrated that pupils were not achieving highly in mathematical language, staff training was put in place, an agreed policy determined, and a leaflet to support parents was produced. Leaders are carefully monitoring outcomes, which are rising.
- Safeguarding in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good.

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	139147
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	449221

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	448
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Clive Dibbin
Headteacher	Miss Jody Harris
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01305 783876
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