

Pimperne Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 8UG

Inspection dates

5–6 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Achievement is good. The standards pupils reach by the time they leave the school have improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils love reading and standards are high. Pupils develop the skills they need to become confident readers from their first days in school.
- Pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, make good progress. Teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities.
- Children in the Reception class settle well into school life. All adults take careful account of children's needs and plan activities which help them to make a positive start to their learning.
- Pupils enjoy lessons because teachers make meaningful links across all the subjects pupils learn.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and provide good support for pupils of all abilities.
- Pupils behave well. They are polite and courteous to each other and to all adults. They show high levels of respect.
- Pupils feel exceptionally safe. They are confident that all adults in school care about them. They know that adults would listen to them if they were worried about anything.
- There are high levels of confidence in the school. Pupils are proud of their school. Parents and staff are extremely positive about all aspects of school life.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, know what is going well and what needs to improve. They are ambitious for the school's continued improvement and the actions they are taking are effective.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in writing is held back because pupils do not always use ambitious vocabulary when they write.
- Pupils do not consistently learn and apply the basic rules of spelling.
- Children in the Reception class do not have enough chances to practise their writing skills.
- The comments teachers write when they mark pupils' books do not always help the pupils to understand how to improve their work.
- Teachers do not consistently check that pupils practise and apply the advice they are given.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 10 lessons and parts of lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other leaders in school, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, and with parents and pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the 61 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the views of parents from informal discussions in school.
- Inspectors considered school leaders' views on the quality of the school's work and their plans for school improvement, as well as information about pupils' progress. They also looked at teachers' planning, pupils' work, documentation about safeguarding procedures and examples of the targets teachers are given as part of the management of their performance.
- The inspection team analysed the 14 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Jeanne Simpson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ken Bryan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Pimperne is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding (pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care) is lower than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs on the school roll supported by school action is lower than the national average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also lower than the national average.
- The children in the Reception class are all full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2012. The deputy headteacher has resigned and the post is currently being carried out on a temporary basis until the new appointment is made.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing through the school by:
 - finding ways of inspiring pupils to expand the richness of their vocabulary when they write
 - helping pupils to improve their spelling
 - helping children in Reception to become immersed in developing early writing skills
 - making sure that the comments teachers write when they mark pupils' work always help improve their work
 - checking that pupils apply the advice that teachers give.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership and management of the school have been through a period of instability. The appointment of the current headteacher has re-energised the school. All staff and parents spoken to were unanimous in their praise for the improvements that have happened in the last two years. All parents who responded on Parent View would recommend the school to others.
- The headteacher has a clear vision and demonstrates a drive for improvement. He has the full support of all members of staff. The school's mission statement of 'celebrate, believe, aspire' is evident in the effective actions being taken to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards. However, leaders have not ensured that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress over time.
- Teachers who lead subjects are fully involved in finding out about what is going well and what needs to improve in their subjects. They lead by example. They share their good subject knowledge and their expertise in teaching with colleagues which is helping everyone to improve.
- The headteacher and other leaders use information about pupils' achievement rigorously to make sure that no pupils are falling behind. They are quick to spot any pupils who are underachieving and the support they put in place helps pupils to catch up. This applies to disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are making slow progress for other reasons. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity and commitment to tackling discrimination mean that there are no significant gaps between the achievements of any groups of pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress because the help they receive, both for their work and for their personal development, is effective. As a result, the gaps are closing.
- The subjects pupils learn are linked together well through the topics they study. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They understand their rights as young people as well as their responsibilities as good citizens. They respect those who are from different cultures and have different beliefs. When asked about whether any pupils were teased about their race, the response from pupils was, 'Why would we do that? We are all the same underneath. It's just on top that we are different.'
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. Pupils have excellent understanding of right and wrong. They demonstrate high levels of responsibility in the roles they carry out in school. These roles include eco monitors, peer mediators (pupils who are trained to help each other to sort out minor disagreements), house captains and school council members. There is a strong ethos of Christian values and pupils' cultural development is enhanced by music and art.
- Effective use has been made of the additional funding for primary sport. Coaches have been employed to work with pupils and staff so that all can improve their skills. Pupils are benefiting from a wider variety of sports, including hockey, gymnastics and swimming. The number of pupils attending football club has more than doubled and pupils are taking part in an increasing number of competitive games outside school. Pupils who attend breakfast club take part in sports activities to increase their levels of fitness. Attendance has improved as a result of the initiative.
- The school's systems for keeping pupils safe and secure meet statutory requirements. All adults in school know the pupils well and are quick to spot and support any pupils who may be at risk. Good links are made with outside support agencies. Adults in school who were spoken to during the inspection were very secure about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding pupils.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. The levels of support and challenge provided are appropriate.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a wide variety of skills to their roles which they use to provide high levels of support and challenge. They attend courses to improve their skills further and they share their knowledge in meetings so that all can benefit. They make good use of information about pupils' achievement. They regularly check that achievement is improving and they compare achievement in school with other schools nationally. They are not reluctant to challenge leaders through their questioning. They have detailed knowledge of the achievement of disadvantaged pupils so that they can assure themselves that the funding is making a difference. Their visits to school help them to check on the quality of teaching and they regularly meet with teachers to check on the quality of specific aspects of the school's work. They know that the targets that all teachers are set to improve their performance are challenging. They make sure that any teachers who are underperforming are given help to improve and that effective teachers are rewarded by progression through the pay scales. They show high levels of commitment and are ambitious for the school's future success.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Around the school pupils are consistently polite and courteous to each other and to adults. They are welcoming, friendly and they are extremely proud of their school. During the inspection, no examples of unkind or intimidating behaviour were seen.
- In lessons most pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They concentrate well and try hard because they want to do well. In a few lessons levels of noise were allowed to rise, which meant that some pupils became distracted from their work and their progress suffered.
- Pupils respond quickly to staff's instructions. There is no difference in their behaviour, whoever is teaching them.
- Pupils willingly help each other in lessons and when they are playing. There is a bench in the playground where pupils can sit if they are feeling lonely. However, pupils say that it is rarely used because they would notice if someone was on his or her own and they would go to them and ask if they wanted to join in.
- Pupils, parents and teachers are very positive about behaviour. Pupils think that the systems of rewards and sanctions are fair and they understand the consequences of their actions. They say that there is no bad behaviour, only behaviour which could be better.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils feel exceptionally safe. They know that all adults in school care about them. Parents and staff unanimously agree that the school is a safe place in which to learn.
- Pupils show very clear understanding about the different forms of bullying. They are horrified to think that there could be any bullying in the school. They feel confident that if they were worried about anything, including any bullying which might occur, the adults would listen and help them. During the inspection one child described how, if an adult did not listen to her concerns, she would go the headteacher to complain about the incident and the adult!
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when they are using the internet. They valued and benefited from the recent discussions about internet safety with a police officer who visited the school.
- Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe in other situations, appropriate to their age. The younger pupils learn about road safety and stranger danger. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop a clear awareness of substance abuse and how to protect themselves from risks they might meet as they get older.
- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is above average. The school is vigilant in following up absence to make sure that pupils are safe.

The quality of teaching

is good

- 'Teachers are brilliant and they give you fun lessons' was the first statement when a group of pupils was asked to describe the school. They say that teachers make them work hard enough to produce good work and help them if they get stuck, but without making them feel small.
- The quality of teaching has improved in the last two years. All teaching is at least good and an increasing amount is outstanding.
- In the classes where pupils make the most rapid progress, learning is characterised by high levels of challenge and well-matched support so that pupils can get on with their learning without interruption. Adults work alongside pupils to help them and there are good resources for the pupils to use if they get stuck.
- Teachers use information about pupils' achievement to match the work well to the needs of pupils of all abilities, including the most able. When teachers are explaining new information, they regularly check, through their questioning, that the pupils understand the new learning. They are quick to support those who need it without holding the more confident pupils back. Where learning is most successful, teachers also notice if pupils are finding the work too easy and they adapt the activities to make them more challenging.

- Pupils are able to think for themselves if they feel challenged sufficiently. They are confident to ask the teachers for harder work once they grasp the new learning. This helps them to make fast progress.
- Pupils are encouraged to read regularly, both at home and in school. They say that teachers 'get us into books'. The youngest pupils learn about the sounds that letters make while older pupils are taught how to use more complex skills to read for meaning.
- Pupils are confident writers because they frequently write at length through their work in English and through recording their understanding in other subjects they learn. However, the quality of their work sometimes suffers because the range of vocabulary they use is limited. Their spelling is relatively weak because teachers do not always make sure that pupils learn the common patterns of spelling and apply their learning in their work.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in mathematics. This means that they are able to break down the learning into small steps to help the pupils build their understanding. Pupils are confident to use their understanding of mathematics to solve problems. They enjoy carrying out investigations to practise and apply their skills.
- Pupils are able to reflect on their learning and they often indicate at the end of their written work how well they think they have achieved. When teachers mark pupils' work, they often respond to the pupils' comments by helping them to understand anything they found difficult. They also give the pupils advice about their next steps. However, this is not consistent and sometimes the advice is not specific enough for the pupils to know exactly what they need to improve.
- Pupils are sometimes given time to put into practice the advice teachers give them, which helps them to learn well. However, this is not consistent. As a result, pupils do not always learn from their mistakes and the improvement in the quality of their work is not as rapid as it could be.
- Disadvantaged and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well because of the high quality support they receive from both teachers and teaching assistants. Teachers make sure that the work they are given in lessons is not too easy or too difficult. As a result, they gain confidence in their own ability which helps them to make good progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well at Pimperne Church of England Primary School. Children make good progress in the Reception class and in both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, their standards are broadly in line with national averages. The attainment of pupils who left the school at the end of Year 6 in 2014 was above average.
- The results of the national tests at the end of Year 6 were not published in 2013 because the number of pupils was very low. There were also very few pupils in Year 6 in 2012. This means that it is not appropriate to compare the attainment of those year groups with the national average.
- Pupils make rapid progress in reading. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the national reading check at the end of Year 1 has risen over the last three years and is well above average.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved since the previous inspection and are broadly average, including the proportion of pupils who reach the higher levels.
- In 2014, standards in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 were also in line with the national average. Attainment in reading was significantly above average and pupils were about two terms ahead of other pupils nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who make the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 is average, as is the proportion who make better than expected progress in reading and mathematics. However, in writing, too few pupils of all abilities make rapid progress. This means that some pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable. Leaders are aware of this and have put actions in place to improve progress. However, it is too soon for the impact to be seen.
- The most able pupils make progress which is about the same as similar pupils nationally. The proportion who attain the highest Level 6 in the national tests at the end of Year 6 is in line with the national average in reading and mathematics, but is below average in writing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well over time. This is because the help they are given is effective and is well matched to their needs. Teaching assistants are skilled in asking questions which help the pupils to develop their understanding so that they are able to take the next steps in their learning. Their progress is regularly checked to make sure that the help they are given is effective and changes are made if they are not catching up rapidly enough.

- Pupils who are eligible for the additional funding make good progress from their starting points. Their progress speeds up as they get older which means that the gaps between their attainment and that of their classmates get narrower over time. However, there are very few pupils which means that comparisons about attainment against national averages are unreliable.

The early years provision

is good

- Children in the Reception class make good progress because the adults make careful observations of the children at work and play. They use their observations to provide experiences which build on children's understanding and skills. By the time children move into Year 1, a higher than average proportion reach a good level of development.
- There are no gaps between the achievements of different groups of children. Those who are behind when they start school catch up rapidly. Standards are very similar across all the areas of the children's learning, except in writing where attainment is relatively weaker.
- Children make good progress in developing the skills they need to hold a pencil securely. They also have a good understanding of the sounds that letters make and most can use their knowledge to write simple words. However, they do not have enough opportunities to practise writing through all their learning activities, both indoors and outdoors. This limits the progress they make.
- Adults make sure that children are safe and develop an understanding of safety. Good habits are established from the very start. Children know that it is important to listen carefully to instructions and they respond very quickly to adults' requests.
- Children enjoy the wide variety of learning experiences available to them. They are able to sustain their concentration and they become engrossed in what they are doing. The questions that the adults ask when they play alongside the children help the children to learn well.
- All adults have high expectations. They consistently expect children to speak politely to each other. They recognise and praise children when they show good manners and gently remind them if they forget. As a result, the Reception class is a very positive place in which to learn.
- Parents spoken to in the playground were all very complimentary about the way their children have settled into school life. They value the care that was taken to get to know the children before they started school. They also value the book that goes between home and school where teachers and parents can share children's learning and development. This means that the learning can continue at home.
- The leader uses her knowledge about how young children develop to make sure that the classroom is a place where children can thrive. This is particularly evident in the way children get on with each other and in how they develop positive attitudes to learning. The leader shares her knowledge effectively with the other adults so that there is consistency in the way all adults talk to children and help them to learn.

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	113774
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	443906

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Fielding
Headteacher	Jerome De Silva
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 March 2011
Telephone number	01258 452025
Email address	office@pimperne.dorset.sch.uk

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