

Okeford Fitzpaine Church of England Voluntary Aided School

The Cross, Okeford Fitzpaine, Blandford Forum, DT11 0RF

Inspection dates 14–15 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- The acting headteacher is rapidly driving improvements in teaching and achievement throughout the school.
- Teaching and pupils' progress are improving and are now good across the school, including the early years provision.
- Middle leaders support the acting headteacher well and have made effective use of external support provided by the local authority.
- Governors use high quality information on the school's performance to provide appropriate challenge to leaders. They made highly effective use of their external review and have used this to support continuing improvements in teaching.
- Teaching assistants provide highly effective support to small groups and individual pupils across the school. Leaders have tailored this additional support well to meet greatest need.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs are well provided for and make good progress overall.
- All adults place a high priority on creating a positive family atmosphere. As a result, pupils feel safe, happy and cared for as individuals.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, look after each other, behave very well and are rightly proud of their school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking does not always provide specific guidance on how pupils should improve their work.
- The most able pupils are not always challenged early enough in lessons.
- Pupils do not have a well-developed understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- Some subject leaders are less effective than other middle leaders at initiating improvements in their own areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 14 lessons or part lessons, including examples of teaching in every year group. Three lesson or part lesson observations were carried out jointly with the acting headteacher.
- The inspector looked at pupils' books in a range of subjects to establish the progress and quality of their work over time.
- The inspector talked with groups of pupils and the school council as well as individual pupils during lessons and at playtimes to find out their views about the school.
- The inspector heard pupils read and observed their behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspector talked informally with parents to gauge their views of the school. He took account of 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and analysed nine responses from the staff questionnaires.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, school leaders and governors. The inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement, external monitoring reports, records of checks made by leaders and information on pupils' attainment and their progress. He also scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Stuart Bellworthy, Lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Okeford Fitzpaine Church of England Primary School is a much smaller than average size primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is very low.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible to receive free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is below average. There are no disabled pupils at the school.
- Children in the Reception class attend full time and join pupils in Years 1 and 2 for some of 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 and raise achievement by ensuring that teachers:
 - have consistently high expectations of all pupils
 - give direct and specific guidance when marking, so that pupils can rapidly improve their work
 - provide the most able pupils with challenging work sooner in lessons, so they can make rapid and sustained progress.
- Improve leadership by:
 - ensuring the curriculum enables pupils to deepen their understanding of other faiths and cultures
 - raising the effectiveness of subject leaders through focused training.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher's vision and experience have been effective in rapidly improving teaching and pupils' progress. A culture of openness with staff and governors has led to teamwork, greater accountability and shared responsibility for pupil progress.
- The acting headteacher has trained staff in the effective use of individual achievement information and, consequently, standards are being driven up in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- School leaders make good use of school improvement plans to set clear priorities and maintain regular checks on whether actions taken have been effective or not. Leaders also monitor behaviour carefully, resulting in very few incidents.
- Subject leaders have appropriate action plans, but now need to gain wider experience to bring about further improvements in curriculum development, for example additional training in marking to support improvements in English and mathematics.
- Teachers and teaching assistants create a very positive climate for learning through openness and effective questioning. This has resulted in pupils taking more responsibility for their learning.
- Checks on teaching, linked to teachers' performance targets, have been used effectively to support teachers to improve their practice. This has led to improvements in lesson planning, better use of learning environments and improvements in pupils' achievement. Such developments demonstrate teachers' good capacity for further improvement.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school to bring about improvements in teaching and pupil achievement. Timely visits have supported improvement, particularly by challenging leaders to develop the early years teaching and learning environments. As a result of this and a highly individual approach, all children now make a very good start. A higher-than-national proportion of children achieve a good level of development by the time they complete the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively. Additional teaching assistants focus well on improving reading, writing and mathematics for eligible pupils. As a result, the progress of these pupils has improved and the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils, both in the school and nationally, has narrowed.
- The school's curriculum provides a good range of learning experiences for pupils. Pupils' experiences in lessons, through the election of the school council and visits to the Houses of Parliament contribute well to their understanding of democracy and equality.
- Assemblies provide good opportunities to celebrate pupils' personal achievements and tackle discrimination. However, pupils lack confidence when talking about other faiths and cultures, because their understanding beyond their own experience is limited. School leaders agree that the curriculum could do more to tackle this.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective and meet statutory requirements. All adults are regularly trained and individual cases of concern are followed up rapidly and thoroughly to ensure pupils are kept safe.
- Additional money to improve pupils' participation and ability in sport has been used well. Specialist coaches lead physical education lessons and after-school clubs. Pupils enjoy these lessons and after-school participation is high. The funding has also been used to re-start swimming lessons.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors now have a good understanding of how well the school is performing in relation to other schools nationally. They use high-quality information to analyse the school's performance and ask challenging questions about the improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement.
 - Staff and governors now work together effectively to produce pupil progress reports, work closely with parents to keep them informed and focus on the main priorities for school improvement.
 - Governors have strongly supported the developments made by the acting headteacher, which have led to improvements in teaching and assessment. Governors now hold leaders to account more robustly when checking on pupil progress information.
 - A review of governance has resulted in a better understanding of achievement information and governors' roles and responsibilities. Governors have created an effective school improvement group, supported by the local authority. Consequently, there has been a sharper focus on pupil progress.
 - Governors use their good understanding of performance management to monitor how improvements to teaching are linked to teachers' pay progression.
 - Governors check on how the pupil premium and sport funding are spent, and they are kept informed by

leaders about the progress of eligible pupils.

- The safeguarding governor meets regularly with the staff responsible for safeguarding. This helps to ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good and is a strength of the school. Pupils' conduct around the school and in lessons is very good. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and take good care of each other. Pupils are proud of the 'Friendship Box' where anyone can place positive messages about friends or good things others have done. The messages are read out during Friday celebration assemblies.
- Staff promote very good behaviour and manage pupils' needs well. Consequently, lessons are very rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Staff and parents are very positive about the management of behaviour in the school.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and respond well to adults' prompts and questions. They move sensibly between activities in lessons and work thoughtfully during group work, carefully considering each other's views and ideas. Pupils show great respect in both assemblies and lessons.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying and very few incidents occur. Pupils are aware of the behaviour system and know who they can talk to if there is a problem.
- The school analyses behaviour logs carefully, although incidents are very rare. Checks on these records show that there have been no exclusions or racist incidents in the last two years.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safe practices are emphasised and embedded in all aspects of the school's work. Leaders and governors are proactive about keeping the school and pupils safe by maintaining effective practice and regularly seeking the views of parents.
- The management of safeguarding is well organised and all staff are appropriately trained. Key staff communicate well with parents and liaise with outside agencies when necessary to ensure individual pupils are kept safe.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves and others safe. They are knowledgeable about the dangers associated with the internet and strangers. Pupils say they feel safe because they can be seen at all times, adults inform them of dangers and the end-of-day handover to parents is effective.
- The school promotes high attendance and any absences are quickly followed up. Pupil attendance rates are in line with the national average for all groups.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The school's evaluation of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning is accurate. Teaching is typically good across the school. Teachers use their subject knowledge to motivate all groups of pupils.
- The system to check individual pupils' progress is well understood and shared with teachers and governors. As a result, teachers have a clear understanding of the progress required by all pupils.
- Teachers plan effectively to meet the wide-ranging needs of pupils. Lessons challenge most pupils and make good use of resources. However, the most-able pupils are not always given challenging work soon enough to enable them to make the progress they are capable of.
- Typically, very good relationships exist between teachers and pupils, enabling high-quality discussions to occur. A good example of this was seen during a detailed analysis of the use of language in the poem *The Highwayman*, which developed pupils' understanding of inference and deduction well. The teacher asked effective questions and pupils responded using the text to support their informed answers.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective and is raising standards of achievement in this subject. Year 2 standards were above the national average in 2014.
- The teaching of writing is helping pupils to improve their progress in this area. Consequently, all groups of pupils are making good progress.
- Current information on teaching and work in pupils' books demonstrate good progress in both mathematics and writing. This supports the school's view that both Year 2 and Year 6 standards in these subjects will exceed the national average in 2015.
- Improved teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is effective and has given pupils a solid foundation on which to develop good reading skills. Year 1 and Year 2 pupil standards in phonics and

reading have exceeded the national average in 2013 and 2014. This ensures pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- Teachers' marking does not provide specific guidance on how to improve a piece of work and suggestions are not always followed up. This hinders pupils' ability to improve their work rapidly and transfer these skills to their next piece of learning.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide effective support for pupils. They use detailed questioning, both in lessons and with small groups, to maintain pupils' concentration and challenge pupils to deepen their thinking.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. This has improved achievement and led to better pupil skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Work in pupils' books and the school's own information on reading, writing and mathematics demonstrate that progress in these subjects is accelerating and is now good throughout the school. Pupils have responded well to challenges set by teachers and taken greater responsibility for their own learning.
- Provision across the early years is good. Most pupils enter Reception with the skills typical for their age and make good progress, particularly in their mathematics, language and personal skills. Nearly all pupils leave Reception confident and well equipped to start Year 1.
- Children read well. A structured approach to the systematic daily teaching of phonics has resulted in a sharp increase in the number of pupils meeting the expected level in the Year 1 phonic check.
- The overall standards achieved by the end of Year 2 have continued to improve since 2013, when they fell. In 2014, standards in all subjects were above the national results in nearly all areas, with a slightly higher proportion of pupils achieving above expected levels than previously.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective and their needs are met well. They make good progress as a result of effective teaching and well-directed support. Their achievement is in line with other pupils in the school.
- Due to the very small numbers of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, meaningful comparison with national information is not possible. However, close monitoring and work in books indicate that these pupils are progressing in line with other pupils, both in school and nationally. In 2014, pupils eligible for the pupil premium in Year 2 closed the achievement gap on their peers and other pupils nationally. There were no pupils eligible for the pupil premium in Year 6 in 2014.
- The achievement of the most able pupils is starting to improve. However, they are not always challenged soon enough in lessons. This means they are not always reaching the same standards as similar pupils nationally by the time they leave the school in Year 6.
- The school ensures that all pupils are treated equally and that social skills are developed. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and other staff and are successfully prepared for the next stage of their education.

The early years provision is good

- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and the organisation of the classrooms has recently been improved. Staff know the children very well individually, track how they improve their skills through play, and modify activities according to children's needs and abilities.
- The majority of children start in the Reception class with skills typical for their age. They are keen to learn and show good levels of concentration when working independently. Well-directed support encourages both children's independence and their ability to work with others.
- Well-focused teaching and effective provision enable children to make good progress, particularly in their mathematics, language and personal skills. As a result, they are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Children's positive attitudes are promoted well because the learning environments are engaging. Exciting activities, such as an outdoor number walk, are well matched to the children's needs and interests. A good example of this resulted in good progress when the children completed a number activity back in the classroom. The children were asked what they noticed about the number 13. One child replied, 'It is over 11.' This led to a lively and engaging discussion that promoted children's better understanding of number digits.
- Teachers effectively promote early reading skills through daily phonics sessions. Children's active participation helps to develop their enjoyment in learning letters and the sounds they make.
- Children's behaviour is excellent as a result of high quality personal, social and emotional provision.

Children adapt well to new routines and respond positively to whole-school rewards. Whether playing and learning indoors or outdoors, children behave in ways that keep them safe.

- Parents are encouraged to play an active role in their child's learning through maintaining good communication with the school. For example, they contribute evidence of their child's development by sharing 'wow moments' that have happened outside school.

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	453699

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	55
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Berry
Acting headteacher	Alan Frame
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 March 2013
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