

The Priory Church of England Primary School

Wick Lane, Christchurch, BH23 1HX

Inspection dates 5–6 February 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.

- Pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve standards that are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is rapidly improving and is now consistently good. As a result, pupils achieve well from their different starting points.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are accurate and are used well to help them plan work at the right level.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning in all classes.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and respectful. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and pupils have confidence to ask for help.
- Pupils behave well. They conduct themselves well and they are polite and respectful to each other. The school keeps pupils safe and looks after them well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. It makes a strong contribution to the ethos of the school and pupils' attitude to learning.
- Members of staff are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school.
- The early years provision is good. Children get off to a good start in Reception. Their progress is regularly monitored and they are well prepared to continue their learning in Year 1.
- The majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school, describing it as having 'a real family and community feel'.
- Leaders and managers have successfully improved the school since the last inspection. The headteacher has high expectations for pupils and staff and she is well supported by governors.
- Governors know the school well. They are now far more rigorous in their checks on how well the school is doing and what needs to be done to continue the improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The progress that pupils make in mathematics is slower than in reading and writing.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always make clear what pupils need to do to improve.
- Occasionally, the most able pupils are not challenged to complete more demanding work once they have completed the tasks set.
- On occasions, parents and carers are not kept fully informed about aspects of the school's work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 11 lessons, one of which was jointly observed with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors observed small groups of pupils taught by teaching assistants.
- Inspectors heard pupils from Years 2 and 6 read and they also held meetings with two groups of pupils, including the school council.
- Inspectors spoke to five governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, two representatives from the local authority, and staff including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school’s data on pupils’ current progress, planning and monitoring documents. They also considered records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of children. Inspectors scrutinised the school’s arrangements for spending, including the additional funding for sports and the pupil premium.
- The inspectors took into account the views parents and carers shared directly with them and the 126 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. The inspectors also had informal discussions with parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- They analysed questionnaires completed by 17 members of staff.

Inspection team

Sarah Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Spencer Allen

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-size primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is around one in 10. This is in line with the national average.
- Only 10% of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding which supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority). This is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Early years provision consists of one Reception class offering full-time education.
- The school is part of the Christchurch Learning Partnership, a group of nine primary schools who work together to help raise standards and improve experiences for pupils. The headteacher is the secretary for the partnership.
- Pupils are able to use the breakfast and after-school clubs at Poppets Pre-School; this is independently managed by the staff at the pre-school and did not form part of this inspection.
- The school holds the Quality Mark in history

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics so that attainment matches that in reading and writing.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - teachers' marking provides clear guidance on improvement and has more of an impact on the quality of work pupils produce
 - the most able pupils are further challenged to complete more demanding work when they have finished the tasks set in class.
- Strengthen communication with parents and carers to ensure they are well informed about the work of the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school with commitment and determination. She is well supported by managers and governors. The headteacher has promoted a culture of pupils wanting to do well and this is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning.
 - All leaders, including those staff who have responsibility for supporting disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and subject leaders, are very enthusiastic about their roles. They work hard to ensure that all pupils get the best possible support to achieve well. They carry out regular checks on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making. This has helped to improve teaching and learning across the school.
 - The systems for checking pupils' progress are thorough and help to inform teachers' planning. This ensures that all pupils receive any extra help they need to support their achievement.
 - The range of subjects and activities offered, together with assemblies, are all central to the school's motto 'Aspiring to greatness'. Well-planned and interesting topics link learning well across different subjects. Pupils enjoy the topics they study; for example, Year 4 could speak with enthusiasm about what they had learnt in their topic on Egyptians.
 - The school strongly promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in a variety of ways. Pupils' understanding of the wider world is developed through a range of experiences, for example business enterprise week. Pupils' understanding of democracy is enhanced through a planned visit to Parliament and the school makes sure that they develop an awareness of, and respect for, different religions and cultures. These aspects well prepare them for life in modern Britain.
 - To support the changes in subjects and the new approach to assessing pupils' work from September 2014, both senior and middle leaders have worked with Christchurch Learning Partnership to share ideas, with the aim of raising standards and improving the experiences for pupils. This is having a positive impact on the school's work.
 - Systems for managing the performance of teachers are rigorous. Teachers' pay is clearly linked to how well pupils achieve. Regular staff training is in place to support teachers and is linked to the whole-school targets of improving the school.
 - The school uses the government's additional sports premium funding effectively. Sports specialists are being used to work alongside staff to develop their expertise in teaching physical education. For example, a golf session was taking place for pupils in Year 6 during the inspection. Pupils have had the opportunity to participate in local tournaments and have also had the benefit of additional equipment that has been purchased to promote their health and well-being.
 - The majority of parents and carers are very positive about the school. The support from the newly appointed pastoral care worker has been welcomed by parents and carers. However, there are some parents and carers who feel communication could be better as a few felt that staff do not always respond quickly to requests made.
 - The local authority has provided support for the school; this includes regular meetings with senior leaders as well as courses for teachers and governors. There has also been some guidance on how to develop the outdoor space as part of the early years provision.
 - There is no discrimination and the school is committed to equality of opportunity for all. This is evident in the progress all pupils make. The pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils by purchasing resources and additional staffing to provide pupils with individual support.
 - The school's arrangements to safeguard pupils are good and meet the statutory requirements. As a result, all pupils are safe and well cared for.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors are effective. Governors know the school well and have an understanding of both the strengths and the areas for further development. They have recently completed a skills audit to ensure that they are fully equipped to challenge and support school leaders. They question leaders on the performance of different groups of pupils and on the school's planning for further improvement. Governors engage in regular training in order to support the school. They have a clear view of the quality of teaching. Some governors have made visits to classrooms, taking the opportunity to talk to pupils about their learning. This understanding of the quality of teaching helps inform the management of teachers' performance in relation to rewarding teachers as well as tackling any underperformance. Governors manage finances effectively and are aware of how the school is using both the pupil

premium and additional sports funding to improve pupils' overall achievement. The governing body makes sure that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and that there are appropriate procedures to check the suitability of staff appointed to the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are warm and receptive to visitors, welcoming them to their school.
 - Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, they are well engaged and enjoy the work.
 - Pupils enjoy the additional responsibilities they have, such as the opportunity to act as head boy and head girl or playground buddies. School council members spoke about their achievements, including fund raising for the Child of Hope Uganda charity.
 - The majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View thought behaviour at the school is good.
 - The school works effectively with families to encourage good attendance and reduce absences. The attendance of pupils continues to be above average.
 - There have been no permanent exclusions from the school in the last three years.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding as on occasions pupils lose concentration.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. This judgement is supported by the parents and carers who spoke to inspectors and the large majority who responded to Parent View.
- Pupils could speak to inspectors about their understanding of the different forms of bullying, such as cyber bullying and any discriminatory name calling. Although pupils say incidents are rare, they are confident that they would know who to talk to if they had any concerns. The majority of parents and carers felt the school dealt well with any bullying issues.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe when using computers. They made reference to the posters in the computer suite, including 'It's important to change your password as often as your toothbrush' in order to keep safe. They are confident that they would speak to an adult if they had any concerns while working online.
- Pupils' well-being and pastoral care are central to the school and support is provided both internally as well as through the use of external partners for pupils with particular needs.

The quality of teaching is good

- As a result of rigorous checking and the effective tackling of any underperformance, teaching is now consistently good. Consequently, pupils are now making good progress and achieving well over time.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They provide pupils with clear and accurate explanations to help them learn and develop their reading and writing in a range of different subjects. There is also a growing emphasis on developing pupils' mathematics skills across subjects and this is helping to improve achievement further.
- Pupils' progress is rapid when both teachers and teaching assistants effectively question and probe pupils' understanding to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed to support pupils. Teaching assistants work with pupils of all abilities; they provide clear explanations that contribute to the progress pupils make.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons. They like it when the teachers make lessons fun and appreciate the challenges. Pupils also spoke with enthusiasm about the additional learning opportunities they have, especially in the topics they study, and gave examples of the Fire of London, 'Farm to Fork' and the Vikings.
- The teaching of reading is good. The whole-school focus has helped improve pupils' confidence, as well as their awareness of how it can have an impact on their writing.
- Teachers create a positive climate for learning and are providing further opportunities for pupils to further develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills in different subject areas. This was seen in a Year 1 science lesson on plants, when pupils were explaining the conditions required to grow cress.
- Teachers take care to set work at the right level of difficulty for their pupils, including the most able. There are a few occasions, however, when these pupils quickly complete the tasks set and are not challenged to complete more demanding work.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly, but there is inconsistency in how it helps pupils to improve their work.

Teachers' feedback does not always give clear enough guidance and not all pupils are responding to the comments that are made on how they can improve their work and correct any mistakes.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Since the last inspection pupils' overall achievement has improved at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Children enter Reception with skills at levels below those typical for their age, especially in their communication and literacy. Progress ensures that the majority of children achieve a good level of development at the end of Reception and are well prepared to start the next stage of their education.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards in the Year 1 screening check on phonics (the sounds that letters make) is above national levels. Boys achieve better than girls in Year 1 but girls quickly catch up in their reading by the end of Year 2. The impact of this was evident when listening to pupils read as they used their phonics knowledge to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Pupils' standards by the end of Key Stage 1 in reading and writing have continued to steadily rise since the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected level by the end of Year 2 was above average in reading and writing, although progress has not been quite so rapid in mathematics.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 2. In 2014, pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics were above the national averages. The proportions of pupils achieving the highest levels in writing at the end of Year 6 are continuing to rise. Until recently, rates of progress in mathematics have not been as rapid in mathematics but this is beginning to improve.
- The outcomes for the English grammar, punctuation and spelling assessment were below average in 2014. The school is addressing this by having daily spelling and grammar lessons alongside reading before pupils start any writing activities. There is evidence in pupils' books that this is having a big impact on the quality of work produced, with greater accuracy in the use of grammar.
- There is only a small proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school who are in receipt of the additional pupil premium funding. The school's monitoring information and pupils' books show that pupils make good progress along with their peers. There were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to make any comparison between their achievement and that of other pupils, both nationally and within the school, without the risk of identifying individuals.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to that of their peers. Their progress is checked regularly and additional support is provided as required.
- The most able pupils are challenged and achieve well overall. Pupils spoke about the challenges and said that they would like more, especially when they quickly finish their work. Pupils in Year 5 could talk about their mathematical calculations and enjoyed explaining how they had achieved their answers by 'working it out in their heads'.
- Reading has improved; girls have made significant improvements and boys are in line with national averages. The school has placed a big focus on reading, with daily reading opportunities. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the new library and the opportunity they had to work with a local author and illustrator.

The early years provision

is good

- Early years provision is effectively led and well managed. The teacher and teaching assistant work together effectively to plan all activities and assess children's progress.
- Children settle quickly when they join Reception because staff have close links with parents, carers and local nursery schools. Through visits, staff are able to plan activities to meet the needs of the children.
- There is a wide range of interesting activities for children to engage with. For example, children enjoyed playing in their 'construction site' using tools, hard hats and fluorescent jackets'.
- Although the outdoor space is limited it is generally used well. For example, children used the space effectively when they were constructing a castle using foam blocks. They were able to talk to the inspector about the design including the shape, size, height and the function of the drawbridge.
- Children make good progress in their learning because they are taught well. Staff keep meticulous records of their achievement. Their progress is captured in children's journals which include both written comments and photographic evidence of the progress they are making. This is made available for both the children and their parents to see. One child spoke about the work on shapes and was able to identify

them accurately and match these to everyday objects with confidence.

- Children are well cared for and safe. Adults risk assess the activities organised for the children.
- Behaviour is good, and children quickly learn to play alongside each other. Activities are planned to encourage sharing and taking turns, for example in the role play area.
- Parents and carers are very pleased with how quickly children have settled into Reception. They appreciate the opportunity to talk to staff at either the start or the end of the school day. One parent or carer commented that they had no complaints as their child 'happily goes into school every day'.

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	113847
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	453698

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	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judy Jamieson
Headteacher	Claire King
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 February 2013
Telephone number	01202 484105
Fax number	01202 488702
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