

Parley First School

Glenmoor Road, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 8QE

Inspection dates 9–10 February 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has made significant improvements to all aspects of the school since the previous inspection, and has provided inspirational leadership.
- Leaders are fully supported by all staff, an improved governing body and the vast majority of parents in the continuous drive for further improvement.
- Pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1, attain standards well above the national average.
- All groups of pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Significant numbers of pupils make better than expected progress, especially in reading and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching has improved considerably. Senior leaders now check the quality of teaching and learning regularly, systematically and rigorously.
- Children in the early years are taught well and make good progress, so that they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils throughout the school feel very safe and behave well.
- The curriculum provides a range of subjects and enrichment opportunities, which pupils appreciate greatly, for example in music and sport.
- All pupils, including the vulnerable and disadvantaged, feel very well cared for.
- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is above average.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the most-able pupils achieve well over time, sometimes in lessons they are not challenged to produce the best work of which they are capable.
- Middle leaders, including subject leaders, are still at an early stage of effectively checking the quality of teaching and learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching, so that more of it becomes outstanding, by ensuring that the most-able pupils are given suitably challenging work early enough in lessons to enable them to reach their full potential.
- Develop the roles of subject leaders and other middle leaders so that they can complement the work of the senior leadership team in checking teaching and learning closely as a means of further raising standards and improving pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders have improved the school significantly since the previous inspection. They have successfully addressed all the key issues, so that pupils' achievement, behaviour, attendance and the quality of teaching are much improved and are all of good quality.
- The headteacher's personal contribution towards driving the school forwards has been outstanding. All staff and almost all parents describe his leadership as inspirational. There is resolute commitment to drive the school forwards towards excellence, and it is shared by governors and staff, most of whom have joined the school during the past two years. The successes already achieved and the shared determination are evidence of the capacity for continued improvement.
- Staff willingly accept their increased accountability. Senior leaders check the quality of teaching regularly and resolutely. Staff welcome their accountability for pupils' progress. Pay and responsibilities are linked to pupils' progress. Staff get good opportunities to further their professional development.
- The local authority has supported the school well, for example in brokering staff development opportunities in areas such as mathematics teaching. While still offering some support, the local authority is confident that the improvements made are being embedded throughout the school.
- A major success has been in sustaining the existing strengths, particularly in Key Stage 1 attainment and progress, while improving areas which were less successful before, such as achievement in Key Stage 2. In addition, where there were gaps in the progress of different groups of pupils, particularly between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school, these have significantly narrowed. Pupil premium funding has enabled disadvantaged pupils to get additional support, which the leadership team deploys effectively.
- The school is now very successful in quickly identifying those pupils who would benefit from additional support in some or all aspects of their learning. Most of these pupils now make good progress, often supported by skilled teaching assistants. The school uses assessment data effectively to target pupils' learning needs.
- The school's planning for improvement is detailed and very relevant to the school's needs. The planning is based firmly on the leadership's accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The leadership team has worked hard to develop a curriculum which enables pupils to develop their core skills such as literacy and numeracy effectively, and also provides interesting possibilities for enrichment, for example in outdoor learning, music and sport.
- Leaders use the school's additional sports funding to provide specialist coaching in activities such as football, golf and gymnastics, to improve equipment and to provide more opportunities for inter-school competition. Pupils greatly appreciate this and participation rates in sport have increased.
- Other opportunities which pupils enjoy include 'music for all' in Year 3, which has involved learning Samba, and the visits to school by individuals such as artists, authors and explorers. The school works hard to teach British values and the benefits of diversity, tolerance and responsibility. For example, pupils raise funds, there is an eco-council and older pupils are trained as sports leaders.
- The school successfully promotes equal opportunities, particularly now that all pupils have the opportunity to do well.
- There is a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils celebrate the impact of achievers in various walks of life and they participate actively in improving their environment. The school has been awarded Green Flag status for this work.
- Parents praise the school's efforts to involve them in their children's learning. They come into school to celebrate their children's achievements and even learn alongside them. There is good attendance at parental sessions designed to promote awareness of developments in mathematics and initiatives such as the outdoor curriculum. Large numbers of parents contacted the inspection team to express their gratitude for the efforts of the leadership and staff to go the extra mile for their children. Parents are impressed both by classroom activities and outside activities which engage pupils and prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- Although the senior leadership team ensures that the school is aspirational and heading in the right direction, both the headteacher and governors recognise that a lot depends upon the headteacher personally. There are several relatively new staff in positions of responsibility. Although they are committed and enthusiastic, these middle leaders have a more limited role in checking the quality of

teaching and learning and driving up achievement in individual subjects. Raising their profile is recognised as an area for continued development.

■ **The governance of the school**

- Governance has improved considerably since the previous inspection. By their own admission, governors used to concentrate mostly on their statutory responsibilities and not enough on what was happening in the classroom. They are now very aware of strengths and areas for development in the teaching. They know how well pupils are achieving in relation to pupils elsewhere, and they understand the progress of different groups and the positive impact of initiatives such as the pupil premium.
 - Governors go on learning walks, look at pupils' books, talk to pupils and get reports from staff. They make sure that the school's programme for performance management operates as it should.
 - They have up-to-date training in child protection and safeguarding issues.
 - Governors are now confident enough to challenge leaders to explain school policies. They ensure that the many school policies and procedures are kept updated. They support the leadership team very effectively, and also ensure that there is no complacency in the school; while celebrating successes, they also want to build on them further.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All adults in the school are committed to keeping pupils safe and well cared for. The school involves parents in the process, for example informing them about internet safety. Staff have a full understanding of safeguarding and child protection issues. There is good training and an awareness of how to recognise and act quickly on any potential issues. The school also makes sure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- There has been a significant change in teaching personnel since the previous inspection. About three quarters of the teaching staff have been appointed since then. Staff have benefited from extensive professional development and strong leadership. The quality of teaching has improved. The school's records of teaching observed by senior staff confirm this improvement.
- Teachers now meet the learning needs of various groups of pupils more effectively. They have a better understanding of progress and how to assess pupils' achievement. Staff have benefited from working alongside their counterparts in other local schools. Teachers now expect to be accountable for their pupils' progress.
- Most teachers mark pupils' work extensively in line with the school policy. Mostly, they get pupils to respond to their feedback, although this is not always done consistently. Pupils told inspectors that they were confident about knowing the quality of their work and how they could improve it.
- There has been very good training for teaching assistants, who have a key role in supporting teaching staff in making sure that particular groups of pupils learn well.
- Teachers have improved their teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make), as is evident in the improved results shown in the Year 1 phonics check.
- Teachers teach reading very effectively, so that it is one of the strengths of the school.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved considerably. Teachers have been well trained in the new scheme of mathematics teaching and their confidence is evident.
- Writing is now taught more effectively. Teachers give most pupils a pride in the presentation of their work and teach a good range of writing about different topics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability now get better support inside and outside lessons, and have made increased progress as a result. This is also true of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding.
- Teachers meet the needs of the most-able pupils most of the time, as reflected in their good results. It is evident, for example, in some of the writing at length done by pupils both in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, sometimes in lessons the most-able pupils do work which is not particularly challenging for them, only getting on to more demanding tasks later in the lesson. Although pupils say that they like their lessons, this means that the most-able pupils do not always make progress as quickly as they could.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils develop well as responsible young citizens. They take part in fundraising. They get on well and collaborate well in lessons, and this helps their progress in learning. Pupils want to learn, and respond well to good teaching.
- Pupils like taking on responsibility in the school council or the eco-council. Older pupils help younger children.
- Pupils enjoy the good range of activities inside and outside school. They enjoy the residential visits and other trips, such as birdwatching in Poole harbour. They love activities such as gymnastics. Several pupils benefit each day from the well-managed breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Both parents and pupils confirm that pupils feel very safe and well cared for in school. Attendance has risen and is above average, partly due to the efforts of the Pastoral Support Officer working with hard-to-reach families.
- The school makes good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about aspects of life in modern Britain and they find out in lessons about different faiths.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The great majority of pupils have a very positive attitude towards learning.
- Behaviour is also very good outside lessons, for example at lunchtimes and breaktimes. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils are able to talk about the various types of bullying which could take place. However, they are quite sure that bullying is not an issue in the school. They feel very safe, while confident that they could express any concerns to staff if the need arose. They are taught to acknowledge and celebrate diversity both inside and outside of school.
- School records confirm that the school is a supportive environment, with no recent exclusions and few untoward incidents.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 has been consistently strong, being above average or significantly above average for several years. This strength has been maintained. Although writing has sometimes been less of a strength than reading and mathematics, pupils in Key Stage 2 often produce very mature written work.
- Phonics skills have improved as teachers have become more confident and skilled in teaching them.
- Pupils now attain at a level above expectations by the end of Year 4, and are well prepared for the transition to middle school.
- Pupils of all abilities make good progress in all year groups in the school. There are few disadvantaged pupils or pupils with special educational needs in all classes, so statistically their results are not very significant set against those of other pupils, or when comparing their performance in national assessments with pupils elsewhere. Nevertheless, a success of the school has been to reduce the gap in the progress made by some of this small number of pupils compared to others.
- Where there was a gap between the progress of boys and girls, this has also narrowed.
- The progress of all groups of pupils in Years 3 and 4 is slightly slower than many pupils in Key Stage 1. Staff instability affected some of the learning of older pupils in the recent past.
- The most-able pupils share in the good progress, although occasionally they could achieve more in individual lessons.
- Standards and progress in reading are good. Inspectors heard pupils reading. They read with an interest, accuracy and fluency often above the expectations for their age. There is a good range of reading resources.
- Standards and progress in mathematics are good, and have risen as teachers and pupils have got to grips with their new mathematics curriculum.

- Progress in writing is now good, although not as rapid for some pupils as in other subjects. Most pupils show a good level of accuracy and a range of vocabulary in their writing. Literacy is linked well with other subjects such as history.
- There is a good standard in other subjects. For example, pupils do good investigative work in science, on subjects such as surfaces and plant life, and they write up the results well.

Early years provision

is good

- Children join Reception with various levels of attainment. Some already show levels of knowledge, skill and personal development well above those expected for their age.
- Children are taught well, and make good progress. The proportion reaching a good level of development is above national expectations by the end of Reception, so the children are well prepared for Year 1. The school measures children's progress effectively in their 'learning journals'.
- The children are often confident when joining the school, partly because the school maintains good links with local pre-schools. The early years leader organises evening sessions for prospective parents. Children quickly learn routines and what is expected of them. They clearly feel safe in school, and talk confidently to adults.
- Children behave well. They get on well together, and were observed happily sharing books or engaged in other social and learning activities. They want to learn, as seen in class when eagerly responding to the teacher's questioning.
- Teaching assistants support the teaching staff well, and the good teaching ensures good progress, whether in whole-class sessions or when the children are doing activities by themselves or in small groups. Children enjoy using the 'COOL' board, which allows them to choose activities which interest them.
- Leadership of the early years is good. The environment is organised well. There are regular and varied assessments of the children's progress, and staff have benefited from support from the local authority. There is good liaison with the Year 1 teachers. The early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development within Reception.
- Although staff usually have high expectations of what the children can achieve, occasionally there are opportunities missed to extend the learning of the most-able children more quickly. Some of these children have levels of knowledge, speaking and writing skills which are well above expectations for their age. An inspector saw this in a lesson when children were considering a map of Britain and the world and how some countries might be 'different'. These children can talk clearly, confidently and accurately, with a very good range of vocabulary.

School details

Unique reference number	113682
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10002435

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Charles Booth
Headteacher	John Bagwell
Telephone number	01202 874400
Website	www.parley.dorset.sch.uk
Email address	office@parley.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 October 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after) is well below average.
- The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- Children in early years attend full time and are taught in two Reception classes.
- The school operates a breakfast club and after-school club.
- There have been major changes in the teaching staff during the past two years.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 16 lessons. Inspectors carried out four of these observations jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work across a range of subjects and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors talked with parents and pupils around the school and with a group of pupils at lunchtime. Inspectors had discussions with senior leaders, other staff and four members of the governing body. An inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's planning for improvement, minutes of the governing body, school policies, assessment data on pupils' current progress and a range of documents relating to safeguarding and child protection. Inspectors also looked at information on the school's website.
- Inspectors considered the 135 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire (Parent View). They also looked at 42 questionnaires completed by staff. The inspection team received many written responses from parents.

Inspection team

John Laver, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Horsnell	Ofsted Inspector
Adam Matthews	Ofsted Inspector

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