

St Osmund's Church of England Middle School

Barnes Way, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 2DZ

Inspection dates

13–14 November 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- School leaders, including governors, have not ensured that pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Progress in mathematics is particularly weak.
- School leaders and governors do not ensure that additional funding is used well. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and those who need to catch up in their literacy and numeracy in Year 7 are not receiving the help they need. Governors do not hold leaders to account for the way additional funding is used.
- Leaders' poor monitoring of the quality of teaching does not allow them to bring about the necessary improvements so that pupils achieve at the highest standard of which they are capable.
- Leaders do not hold teachers to account for the quality of their teaching. Therefore, teaching is too inconsistent and not good enough. Pupils do not experience consistently effective teaching as they move through the school.
- Leaders' expectations are too low. As a result, pupils make poor progress and their behaviour and attitudes to learning require improvement.
- Middle leaders lack training in how to plan, monitor and evaluate teaching so that pupils' progress improves.
- Too many teachers do not assess pupils' understanding effectively. As a result, teachers' planning does not build securely on pupils' prior learning.

The school has the following strengths

- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2018. She has brought a fresh pair of eyes to the school and has a clear understanding of what she needs to do.
- Pupils' emotional well-being is promoted sensitively by skilled staff.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of governance so that:
 - precise and realistic evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school takes place
 - appropriate strategic planning is in place and monitored effectively so the necessary improvements can be made rapidly
 - leaders are held to account when expectations are too low, and pupils fail to achieve well
 - the pupil premium is used effectively to improve disadvantaged pupils' attendance and academic and personal development
 - the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium is monitored and used effectively to ensure that pupils who are below age-related expectations in literacy and mathematics improve speedily.
- Improve the quality of leadership so that:
 - the monitoring of teaching leads to sustained improvements in its quality
 - middle leaders are trained in how to monitor, challenge and support colleagues, so teaching is consistently effective
 - high expectations are the norm and pupils display good behaviour, pride in their work and purposeful attitudes to learning consistently.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that:
 - learning is planned well to meet the needs of pupils, regardless of their ability
 - pupils' work is assessed effectively so that learning builds on prior attainment and pupils know how to improve.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Over time, governors and leaders have not had a realistic view of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. As a result, they have failed to plan strategically to secure the necessary improvements. Similarly, they failed to evaluate effectively any actions taken. In some subjects, such as mathematics, outcomes for the younger pupils have been too low.
- Leaders, including governors, have not held teachers to account for their performance. As a result, too much teaching is poorly planned and fails to challenge the most able or support those of lower ability effectively.
- Leaders do not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve so outcomes are far too low.
- Although many pupils behave well and apply themselves to their learning, there is a significant minority who do not. Leaders' expectations have not ensured that behaviour or attitudes to learning are consistently good.
- The curriculum is broad, and pupils have specialist teaching in Years 6 to 8. Nonetheless, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not good enough to deliver this curriculum effectively and rates of progress are too slow.
- Leaders track pupils' attainment, but the information is not used well on a school-wide basis. There are no systems for supporting pupils who fall behind or for stretching those who are underachieving.
- Leaders have not trained middle leaders in how to monitor teaching effectively. Consequently, many middle leaders do not have the confidence to challenge colleagues when teaching is ineffective. Equally, there are no structures to support middle leaders who want to provide additional training. As a result, teaching is inconsistent, and pupils' outcomes are poor.
- The new headteacher has a realistic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Her work is well focused, but she has not yet had time to make a meaningful impact. A new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) was appointed in September 2018. He arranges help and support that matches the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Pupils experience many extra-curricular activities that enrich their creative and sporting experience.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have an effective understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural ideals alongside some awareness of fundamental British values.
- It is recommended that school leaders do not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not carried out their role as strategic leaders of the school well. They have accepted information provided by leaders without challenge, which has led to poor outcomes for pupils.
- Governors have not ensured that additional funding is managed wisely. They have not spent the pupil premium on the disadvantaged pupils for whom it is intended. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' progress and attendance have been significantly below other pupils in the school, and the national level, for several years.
- Governors were unaware of the additional funding for pupils in Year 7 who need to catch up in their literacy and numeracy. Therefore, they have not established systems to monitor its use.
- Governors have failed to oversee the appraisal systems for teachers diligently. Consequently, teachers' targets for improvement are not challenging and have not improved pupils' progress.
- The governor who oversees the funding for pupils with SEND has worked with the SENCos, past and present, and ensured that pupils are making some progress in their studies.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Administrative staff have ensured that staff recruitment processes are fit for purpose and that records are compliant. Staff are trained well on how to keep pupils safe from abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of radicalisation and extremism. The designated safeguarding leader makes sure that the increasing numbers of pupils with complex needs are safe and secure in school. He works sensitively with pupils, parents and external agencies to monitor and support the most vulnerable pupils.
- Safeguarding arrangements for pupils are improving. The new headteacher makes appropriate referrals to children's services. She has undertaken urgent risk assessments. She and the site manager are assessing potential risks to the school community on a constant basis and acting accordingly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Too many teachers do not assess pupils' learning effectively. Therefore, teachers' planning does not build on pupils' prior learning consistently.
- Weak teaching leads to a lack of challenge for the most able pupils, especially in mathematics. Pupils of lower ability are not supported effectively.
- Disadvantaged pupils are not making effective progress. Teaching is not adapted to meet their specific learning needs.
- Too often pupils are not recording their learning, so they have no resources for revision. A few subject leaders provide pupils with worksheets. In some cases, pupils

have loose sheets, which get lost and do not provide a reliable record of past work.

- Teachers' expectations vary considerably, so pupils receive mixed messages about the standards they are expected to achieve. Consequently, too often, pupils' work is untidy and incomplete.
- Leaders have not established a standardised system for correcting literacy errors in the school. Frequently, pupils' punctuation and spelling mistakes remain without correction, so very little improvement in basic skills occurs.
- Too many pupils do not know how to use a dictionary, so they cannot work out how to correct spellings when directed to do so.
- Too frequently, teaching is not sequenced well to promote secure learning. Therefore, pupils are unaware of what and why they are learning and how this will help them in the future.
- Specialist teaching in key stage 3 is more effective in promoting pupils' progress. In Years 7 and 8, most teachers are aware of the curriculum requirements and plan accordingly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Too many pupils do not show a pride in their work. Teachers' low expectations lead to pupils not completing their work, poor presentation and untidy notes.
- Too often, pupils do not acquire better attitudes to learning because of inadequate teaching. Too few teachers provide them with activities that stretch and challenge their thinking.
- Pupils give up too easily when insecure in their understanding. They are over-reliant on advice from teachers and, too often, are not provided with resources that support their learning.
- There has been no careers education in the school even though this has been a statutory requirement since January 2018. A staff member started in the role to manage this area of work just two weeks ago. Therefore, pupils are not prepared well for their future steps in education or beyond.
- Staff promote pupils' emotional well-being and welfare effectively. They carry out their work sensitively and efficiently. This is greatly appreciated by parents and pupils alike.
- Pupils receive good advice on how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when using the internet.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying in ways that are suitable for their age. They know whom to turn to if they have any concerns.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is enhanced through creative and sporting opportunities beyond those covered in the school day. The

personal, social, health and economic education curriculum covers all necessary areas for pupils satisfactorily.

- Although there were no comments available for this inspection from Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, 93% of parents say that their children are happy at the school and 95% of parents say that their children feel safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- There is no school system for managing behaviour routinely. The new headteacher is working on a behaviour management policy with guidance from the local authority. However, currently teachers have no recourse to a consistent way of managing disruptive behaviour. Fortunately, most pupils conduct themselves well, especially in lessons, but for the few who do not there are no clear sanctions. As a result, poor behaviour by a minority of pupils disrupts the learning for others in some lessons.
- Too often, a few pupils show defiance to staff, especially at break and lunchtimes and between some lessons. This poor behaviour is not always challenged, which means that these pupils continue to misbehave.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is below that of other disadvantaged pupils nationally and has been for several years. This poor attendance hinders their progress.
- Pupils who have the most complex needs in managing their own behaviour are well supported. Leaders have been successful in providing effective education, health and care plans for them. This enables these pupils to continue learning, and to get ready for their next steps.
- Overall attendance is above the national average and persistent absence is below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils make poor progress across the school. This is a result of weak teaching and ineffective leadership.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils is significantly weaker than other pupils nationally with the same starting points and has been for several years. Assessment information provided by the school shows that this is a problem in every subject and year group. The pupil premium is not used to overcome barriers to disadvantaged pupils' learning and so they continue to achieve poorly.
- Attainment in English, especially writing, is too variable. Pupils do not make the progress that they should. A new leader for English at key stage 2 was appointed in September 2018. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, but her actions have not been able to have any measurable impact yet.
- Older pupils make better progress as they enter key stage 3 in many subjects. Town-wide moderation of learning for pupils in Years 7 and 8 has helped some middle leaders promote better progress in key stage 3. However, not all of the school's subject

leaders have attended this important forum, which has undermined efforts to improve the impact of teaching on pupils' outcomes.

- Pupils with SEND are starting to make better progress. Teaching assistants have received valuable training to make sure that they have the skills to support these pupils. Teachers have not received similar training, so some do not have the necessary repertoire of teaching strategies, which could help improve rates of pupil progress.
- Pupils read fluently and confidently. Most read widely.

School details

Unique reference number	138165
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10002598

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	701
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Canon Thomas Woodhouse
Headteacher	Saira Sawtell
Telephone number	01305 262 897
Website	www.stosmunds.dorset.sch.uk/
Email address	office@stosmunds.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 September 2012

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized middle deemed secondary school.
- It has fewer pupils eligible for the pupil premium than the national average. It has more pupils with SEND than other schools nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons, many of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- A wide sample of pupils' work, from a range of subjects, was scrutinised.
- Inspectors talked with pupils from Years 5, 6, 7 and 8, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND in formal meetings, as well as with pupils informally across the site.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the headteacher of the local upper school, senior and middle leaders and members of the governing body.
- Information and other documentary evidence was evaluated including that relating to safeguarding, assessment, school evaluation and external reviews.
- There were no online Ofsted surveys, but the lead inspector and a team inspector met with six parents. The lead inspector provided an opportunity for staff to speak with her during the inspection.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stuart Ingram	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Hummerstone	Ofsted Inspector
Dorian Lewis	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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