

Bridport Primary School

St Andrew's Road, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3BJ

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils are not making enough progress because of inconsistent teaching.
- Disadvantaged pupils are not making enough progress, because the pupil premium is not being used specifically enough.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not as strong as in literacy because pupils are not challenged and supported well by some teachers.
- Middle leaders are new to their roles. They need training to help them develop their skills in holding teachers to account.
- Some teachers' expectations are too low, including in the early years. As a result, pupils' work is incomplete and poorly presented.
- Reception teachers are not assessing children's progress continuously. Consequently, some children's progress is too slow. Equally, too few children exceed in their early learning goals.
- Children in Reception are not given enough stimulating activities, inside and out, to develop their curiosity and learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Trustees have overseen a turbulent time in staffing. They have appointed an interim headteacher who has hit the ground running. She is making significant changes swiftly to improve school standards and pupils' progress.
- Since the headteacher's arrival, attendance has improved. No groups are persistently absent.
- The most vulnerable pupils are well supported. They learn within a very safe environment.
- The main school classrooms and corridors enhance learning with effective displays.
- Pupils study a rich and exciting curriculum. They are developing as reliable future citizens because of a strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum.
- Pupils behave well when learning and at social times. They are respectful of each other and adults.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders, including governors, must ensure that:
 - they maintain the improvement in mathematics so that pupils make better progress
 - the spending of the pupil premium is efficiently costed and evaluated
 - pupil premium strategies are implemented effectively, so that disadvantaged pupils make strong progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - middle leaders have the capacity and skills to monitor the work of teachers so that teaching is consistent
 - strategies for improving the progress of pupils continue to develop their knowledge and understanding
 - teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Strengthen the quality of teaching and learning in the early years, so that more children make good progress by:
 - ensuring that adults use assessment effectively to build on children's skills so that more children exceed in their early learning goals
 - making sure both indoor and outdoor learning environments are well-thought-out spaces where activities encourage children to learn rapidly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Trustees have managed very unsettled staffing well during the past 12 months. There are three new middle leaders and an interim headteacher in post. This is bringing stability to the school. The headteacher is very experienced and is making appropriate changes without unsettling staff. Much work has been done to engage with parents and communicate with them during this time of transition. A new substantive headteacher starts in September 2019.
- Leaders, middle and senior, have plans in place to improve pupils' progress overall and in mathematics in particular. It is too soon to see any measurable impact.
- Middle leaders have not yet received the leadership training that they need to do their job well and to hold teachers to account effectively. They are knowledgeable in their areas and keen to move standards higher.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress is weak. Leaders have introduced some new initiatives this year but there is a lack of consistency in their application. As a result, in some year groups, disadvantaged pupils are making reasonable progress but not so in others.
- Teachers and leaders benefit from being in the trust. They work with other schools on moderation of pupils' work and other initiatives.
- Newly qualified teachers receive strong support from mentors in the school. They appreciate the training they receive.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are putting actions in place to improve the school, but these are not yet embedded.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) spends the funding wisely. She understands the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The deputy headteacher provides useful assessment information for teachers and leaders. This is another new enterprise that supports the changes in curriculum better. As a result, some teachers use it to check that pupils are making progress and to provide support for those who are slipping behind. This practice is not yet consistent.
- Pupils study a broad curriculum with a suitable focus on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils understand British values, especially democracy when they vote for school councillors.
- Staff have received training on how to safeguard pupils from the influences of extremism.

Governance of the school

- Trustees have the overarching accountability for the school. There is a trust plan which supports key initiatives across the four schools of the trust. This school is benefiting from the focus on mathematics. Trustees are skilful and have tackled the turbulence in staffing well. For instance, the interim headteacher is an ex-headteacher from one of

the trust schools.

- Following the last inspection, governors had an external review and have taken on board the advice. They are more involved in the school and take their responsibility seriously. For example, when parents share any concerns, they take strategic action to check them.
- Governors have managed the oversight of the SEND budget and sports premium efficiently.
- Governors have been less effective in managing pupil premium. They have not evaluated costings and actions well enough. Consequently, some aspects of disadvantaged pupils' progress are less strong.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher's experience has been valuable in ensuring that the site is more secure. Pupils are safe in the school always. She has raised expectations of safeguarding practices and supported staff in having a better understanding of how to assess risks consistently. This has created a culture of safety. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and child protection records are detailed and of high quality. The safeguarding policy is up to date. Staff have been suitably trained in the most recent changes to safeguarding procedures. Staff work sensitively with parents and external agencies to monitor and support the more vulnerable pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Some teachers are not planning effectively. Too often, the same work is set regardless of ability. As a result, the most able pupils are not challenged and wait for others to catch up. Pupils with lower ability are not supported well enough.
- Some teachers' expectations are not high enough. When this is the case, pupils' work is incomplete and poorly presented.
- Some intervention work is happening for pupils who fall behind. The impact is not clear yet.
- In some instances, pupils do not have enough resources to support their learning. When this happens, and pupils get stuck, they are over-reliant on the teacher. Pupils sit with their hands up, waiting and losing valuable learning time.
- In the best mathematics learning, pupils are using sentences to help explain their numerical understanding. In addition, they are applying their calculations to reasoning and problem-solving.
- In Year 1, phonics teaching is variable. The teaching of pupils who did not meet the expected standard in the Year 1 screening check is better. Most Year 2 pupils are on track to be successful this summer.
- Teachers are working hard to provide feedback to pupils in line with the school policy. However, there are too few established routines for pupils to correct work, so progress slows. In addition, some pupils are not learning from their mistakes

readily and often.

- Not enough older pupils check their work assiduously for basic errors.
- There are positive relationships between pupils and staff, so the climate for learning is a strength.
- The SENCo gives detailed guidance to teachers. When teachers apply the guidance, pupils achieve well. Pupils with education, health and care plans are particularly well supported by skilful teaching and learning assistants.
- Teachers have varying skills in questioning. The most accomplished teachers probe pupils to think deeply.
- Parents receive very detailed reports about their children which help them consider ways to support them at home.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and keen to engage in their learning. They speak willingly to visitors and express themselves well.
- Relationships are strong among pupils, as well as between teachers and pupils. Older pupils play with younger pupils at break and lunchtimes. They ensure that there are no situations where pupils fall out with one another.
- Pupils are healthy. They run a mile every day and speak confidently about the benefits. They enjoy healthy lunches.
- Staff manage pupils with emotional and mental-health issues successfully. The school has respite rooms for pupils to relieve stressful situations.
- There are plenty of after-school clubs. Parents join their children at engineering, art and homework clubs. These are very well attended.
- Pupils go on trips regularly to enhance their knowledge and understanding.
- On the very few occasions that bullying happens, teachers deal with it swiftly and effectively.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe, especially on social media sites and the internet.
- Pupils' personal development is underpinned by a supportive spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The positive ethos, modelled by leaders, pervades the school. Pupils are responsive and considerate as a result.

- Pupils make seamless transitions between learning activities because routines are well established.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in and around the school. There is no disruptive behaviour.
- Pupils have pride in their school and exhibit this constantly. They value the displays of their own work as well as that of others.
- The headteacher has improved attendance by educating parents effectively and explaining the importance of attendance to pupils. As a result, pupils attend school regularly and persistent absence has diminished. Likewise, the attendance of some groups, particularly the disadvantaged and those pupils with SEND, is in line with national averages because of the continual work of the headteacher to make a difference for pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Currently, leaders are using systems that are more helpful in securing better progress for pupils. Teachers are more aware which pupils are excelling and which are falling behind.
- Progress in mathematics in the end of key stage 2 tests was below average. The mathematics leader is benefiting from the trust's actions for improving mathematics across several schools. As yet, the impact is not measurable.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress is weaker than that of others in school and nationally. There are new initiatives to improve teachers' focus on these pupils and some disadvantaged pupils are making better progress as a result.
- Pupils with SEND do not make effective progress in comparison to other pupils in mathematics. Currently, too few teachers use the SEND profiles proficiently.
- Attainment in the end of key stage 1 tests is close to average and stronger in mathematics. Teachers have helped pupils make rapid progress to achieve this.
- The library is a central hub in the school. Pupils enjoy being there. Pupils' reading is confident. Teachers provide effective guidance on which books pupils should read. There are several volunteers who listen to pupils read daily. This additional help is very supportive to teachers and pupils. Reading is a strength of the school.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- With the arrival of the headteacher, who is an experienced early years practitioner, expectations of what children can achieve are improving. Previously, too few children exceeded in their early learning goals.
- Teachers are not assessing children regularly. They are not focusing well enough on individual children's progress. As a result, too few children make the progress they should in their early learning goals.
- Too few children are ready for Year 1 in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics. This means that teachers in Year 1 are having to play catch-up to ensure that there is

enough progress in phonics and in other work in key stage 1.

- The curriculum in Reception does not offer a broad range of experiences that challenge children. Children are not provided with a range of stimulating activities that enhance their learning.
- Teachers underuse the outdoor facilities. Children are not provided with enough opportunities to learn and explore there.
- There are too few opportunities for children to develop numeracy and measuring skills independently.
- Children are well behaved and keen to engage and learn. They can share well with others.
- Children communicate well with adults and are willing to try their best.
- Children with lower ability are not supported adequately or effectively so they are not making the progress they should.
- Children are safe and there are appropriate safeguarding procedures.
- Teachers engage with parents as necessary. The headteacher is investigating ways to enhance this aspect so that there is more involvement of parents.

School details

Unique reference number	142690
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10058282

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	380
Appropriate authority	Minerva Learning Trust
Chair	David Powell
Headteacher	Helen Farmer
Telephone number	01308 422846
Website	www.bridport.dorset.sch.uk
Email address	office@bridport.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 November 2014

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- The school converted to an academy in 2016 and is part of The Minerva Learning Trust. There are one secondary and three primary schools in the trust.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average, as is the proportion of those who have an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons, jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- A wide sample of pupils' work was scrutinised.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils from key stages 2, as well as with pupils informally across the site.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and trustees.
- Documentary and other types of information were evaluated, including evidence relating to safeguarding, assessment and school evaluation.
- Inspectors took account of the 95 responses and 94 comments on the online Parent View survey and the 31 responses to the staff online survey.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Tracy Hannon	Her Majesty's 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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