

Stower Provost Community School

Woodville Stour Provost, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 5LX

Inspection dates

26–27 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

- Leaders have not acted swiftly enough to ensure that teaching and learning are consistently strong across the school.
- Middle leaders do not have the skills necessary to support high-quality teaching, learning and assessment. They have not received the training they need.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan activities that are well matched to pupils' needs.
- Over time, pupils, particularly the most able pupils and children in the early years, have not made the progress they should.
- Teaching in the early years does not provide some children with the challenge they need. Few children exceed the early learning goals by the time they leave the early years.
- Teaching in key stage 1 does not develop pupils' writing skills sufficiently well. Weak spelling and poor punctuation mar pupils' writing.
- In key stage 1, teaching does not develop pupils' reading skills well enough. Pupils do not have the skills required to enable them to understand texts. This is hampering pupils' attainment.
- In the early years, the teaching of mathematics and the outdoor learning area are not supporting children's development well enough.
- Pupils are not yet able to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and reason well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They are polite, show respect and interact well with each other and with adults.
- Leaders are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe and well cared for. Pupils feel safe at school.
- Phonics skills are taught well in the early years and key stage 1.
- Attendance is high and pupils enjoy coming to school. They are ready to learn and generally have positive learning attitudes, especially in upper key stage 2.
- Pupils, staff, governors and parents are proud of the school and supportive of the headteacher who has built a strong sense of community in the school after a period of turbulence.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management so that teaching, learning and assessment is consistently strong across the school by:
 - evaluating the quality of teaching and learning effectively and acting swiftly to tackle weaknesses
 - providing middle leaders with the training they need so they can use what they know about the quality of teaching and learning to support improvements
 - making sure teachers have good subject knowledge, high expectations and use their assessments of what pupils know and can do effectively to support all pupils to make good progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and assessment across the school so that all pupils make good progress, by:
 - ensuring that teachers build on what pupils already know, understand and can do to plan learning which sufficiently challenges pupils to make the progress they are capable of
 - developing pupils' use of inference and deduction in reading, particularly in key stage 1
 - making sure that pupils in key stage 1 learn to use correct grammar, spelling and punctuation in their writing
 - supporting pupils to solve problems and reason in mathematics.
- Improve provision and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years so that:
 - children get off to an equally good start in mathematics as they do in phonics
 - children who enter the school with skills above the national average are supported and challenged to achieve their potential
 - the outdoor learning area supports the development of children's physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection there have been several changes of headteachers and teaching staff. This has stalled the school's improvement journey. However, the headteacher and governors are ambitious for the school and there are encouraging signs that their plans to improve the school's effectiveness are paying off.
- Over time, leaders have not acted rapidly enough to ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are consistently strong across the whole school. Consequently, pupils' attainment and progress have suffered.
- Senior leaders are acutely aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and their self-evaluation is accurate. However, the new systems leaders have implemented to improve the quality of teaching and learning are not fully established across the school. Some changes are too recent to secure consistently good outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment are now accurate. Despite this accuracy, not all teachers make effective use of what they know pupils can do and understand to plan learning that meets the needs of the pupils. As a result, pupils are not achieving as well as they should be, particularly the most able pupils.
- Middle leaders are aware of the school's priorities for improvement and the need to raise standards. They have action plans to address the areas for development. However, these leaders are either new to their roles or still developing the leadership skills they need to be effective. A lack of training has hampered their ability to provide the precise support that some teachers require to help them to improve.
- Leaders' support for disadvantaged pupils is largely effective. Leaders have a secure understanding of the actions that have and have not been successful. Consequently, where necessary, leaders make changes to ensure that disadvantaged pupils' progress is consistently good.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the needs of individual pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and ensure that teachers provide appropriate support for these pupils. Interventions provided for pupils with SEND are specifically matched to individual needs. However, the success of the interventions is reliant on the quality of teaching. Pupils with physical and emotional needs make better progress than those who struggle with writing or mathematics.
- Leaders evaluate the impact of the sport premium to ensure that it is used effectively to engage pupils in physical activities. Pupils report that there has been an increase in the range of activities on offer for them to develop their physical skills and abilities. Pupils' participation in extra-curricular activities and competitions is high and has improved. Pupils are proud to represent their school at these events.
- Leaders have provided some staff with appropriate training to improve their skills. For example, teaching assistants within school have benefited from tailored training provided by the leader of special educational needs. This training has enabled teaching assistants to provide high-quality interventions for pupils' physical and emotional development. However, staff new to the school have not had the same quality of

training. Some staff do not have strong subject knowledge for the curriculum expectations of the year groups they teach. This is hampering their ability to develop pupils' learning well.

- Leaders have ensured that the school offers a broad curriculum of subjects and experiences. Pupils are enthusiastic about the work and activities they undertake in a variety of subjects. Learning in the wider curriculum is celebrated through displays, which include high-quality artwork and examples of good-quality work in history and geography.
- The school is effective in promoting pupils' understanding of the need for tolerance, respect and caring for others. Pupils understand the school's motto of 'together we grow'. One pupil described it as, 'We can all work together to improve in our learning and grow in friendship.' Pupils are able to identify with and apply the school's values, both in and outside of school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well catered for.
- Parents are positive about the quality of care and guidance their children receive from school. They appreciate the headteacher's strong, consistent presence and support and teachers' work.

Governance of the school

- The majority of governors are new to post since the previous inspection. They are able, committed to the school and provide effective support and challenge for leaders. Governors undertake relevant training and have a good understanding of their own skills and expertise that will aid the school to move forward.
- Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders provide them with pertinent and relevant information to enable them to check progress on actions specified in the school's improvement plans.
- Governors hold leaders to account and ask challenging questions regarding the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes. They have an accurate picture of the current attainment and progress of all groups of pupils across the school, particularly those who are disadvantaged and pupils with SEND.
- Governors exercise effective oversight of the spending of pupil premium funding and additional funding for SEND provision. This enables governors to challenge leaders on the quality of provision and the outcomes for these groups of pupils.
- The governing body ensures that the school's work keeps children safe.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. The school's systems are well established and ensure that staff are vigilant in recognising risks to pupils. Leaders ensure that staff training for safeguarding is up to date. Consequently, staff are knowledgeable about and fulfil their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe from harm.
- Leaders make sure that the necessary recruitment checks are made when staff join the

school.

- Parents report that their children are safe and secure within school. Pupils also report that they feel safe and well cared for within school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching over time has not been strong enough to secure good progress for pupils, particularly in key stage 2. Over recent years, a high turnover of staff has meant that not all teachers are as familiar as they should be with the age range they teach.
- Leaders have been effective in ensuring that teachers assess pupils' abilities accurately. However, teachers do not make good enough use of their assessment information to provide activities that build on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. This is particularly the case in the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling and in mathematics. As a result, too few pupils reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The teaching of reading supports pupils in reading accurately. However, teaching is less effective in developing pupils' inference and deduction skills, particularly in key stage 1. The teaching of these skills is strongest in Years 5 and 6 where pupils gain a deep understanding of the texts they read.
- Teaching in mathematics supports pupils' good understanding of calculation methods. However, teaching is currently less adept at supporting pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills to solve problems and to reason. As a result, pupils' progress in mathematics is not consistently good across the school.
- In key stage 2, pupils' writing is developing well. Leaders have improved the opportunities for pupils to write at length and in different subjects. In key stage 1, teaching is not developing pupils' writing well enough. Teachers' expectations are too low. Pupils' work shows that they do not apply their phonics knowledge to spelling and their writing is sometimes poorly presented, with errors in punctuation and grammar.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. The majority of pupils are able to read fluently and accurately. Most pupils meet the expected standard in the phonics checks at the end of Year 1 and all do by the end of Year 2.
- The atmosphere, culture and environment in the classrooms and around the school help pupils to feel at ease and ready to learn. Adults are nurturing. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support learning. They ask probing questions and aid pupils to complete work successfully. As a result, the few disadvantaged pupils and pupils with social and emotional difficulties make good progress.

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 proud of their school. They speak highly of the care, guidance and support they receive from members of staff. The school prides itself on the nurturing and

caring ethos that it creates for all pupils. Parents comment positively on how well their children are cared for.

- Pupils demonstrate respect for each other in the playground, in lessons and around the school. They are polite. Positive relationships between pupils and adults are a strong feature of the school.
- Leaders expect pupils to demonstrate the school values in their daily interactions. Pupils collaborate well, listen to each other and support their peers, younger and older pupils equally.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school. They are aware of bullying, but report that this rarely happens in their school.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe out of school. Pupils of all ages have a good understanding of the potential risks when using the internet and use it safely and with confidence. For example, they know the importance of protecting their personal information and how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of healthy lifestyles. They are able to explain the reasons for a balanced diet and regular exercise. The school provides a wide range of sporting and physical opportunities for pupils. As a result, pupils develop well-honed physical skills. They enjoy the benefits of their school and its grounds, such as the 'forest school' area, which they use frequently.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is calm and orderly. Pupils move around sensibly, following the guidance of their teachers. Pupils and parents understand, and believe in, the school's values and ethos.
- General behaviour and attitudes to learning are a strength of the school. Where teaching is stronger, pupils are attentive. They work hard and display exemplary attitudes towards their learning. They concentrate well, do not disturb others and settle well to their learning for the majority of the time. However, where teaching is weaker, a small minority of pupils do not concentrate well enough.
- Pupils play energetically and harmoniously in the playground. They say that other pupils are kind. Pupils are eager to support others; older pupils enjoy the responsibilities provided for them such as looking after younger pupils, being part of the school council and undertaking house captain roles.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils are very aware of leaders' high expectations. They say that teachers are fair and are consistent in giving praise and rewards or sanctions.
- Overall attendance is high and above the national average. Leaders are aware of the small minority of pupils who are persistently absent and are working closely with outside agencies to do all that is possible to support these pupils and their families so that they attend school more often.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over time, outcomes at the end of key stage 2 have not been good enough. Prior to 2018, less than half of Year 6 pupils reached the standards that are expected for their age. Progress, particularly for writing, has been well below that of all pupils nationally and has been weaker than that in reading and mathematics.
- The attainment of pupils in key stage 1 has been improving over the past few years. A greater proportion of pupils achieved standards expected of them. However, few pupils reach the higher standards in reading and mathematics and none in writing.
- Boys' attainment in recent years has been too low, particularly in writing. They have not made the progress they should. This lack of achievement has been seen at both key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Current teaching in upper key stage 2 is leading to pupils making strong progress in writing. Pupils apply the skills they have learned to construct well-formed sentences and paragraphs. Their wide reading supports their good vocabulary choices to engage the reader.
- Pupils make strong progress from an early stage to develop their reading skills. The proportion of pupils who reach the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has risen steadily since the last inspection. In 2017 and 2108, the proportions of pupils meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check were above the national average. In addition, effective support for the few pupils who do not reach the expected standard in Year 1 enables them to catch up in subsequent years.
- Pupils' progress in most year groups is improving. However, progress remains too inconsistent. Pupils in key stage 2 are now making stronger progress in writing, particularly those in Years 5 and 6. Conversely, pupils in key stage 1 do not make the progress they are capable of, particularly in writing.
- A greater proportion of pupils in key stage 2 are now working at the standards expected for their age across reading, writing and mathematics. The vast majority of current pupils with previously high starting points are making good progress.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding to ensure that the relatively low number of disadvantaged pupils are well supported. These pupils make at least good progress.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Leaders know the key strengths and areas for development within the Reception class and have produced an action plan to tackle weaknesses. However, current plans and leaders' actions have not done enough to improve the progress of the most able children.
- Teachers are not always providing the most able children with activities and tasks to challenge their thinking and learning. Over time, very few children exceed the expectations for their age.
- Children make weaker progress in number than they do in reading and writing. Teachers have not picked up children's misconceptions of mathematical signs and symbols. Consequently, children's progress in using and applying their number skills to

carry out simple calculations is weak.

- The early years leader has not had sufficient impact on improving the outdoor learning space. As a result, children's gross motor skills and knowledge of the world around them are not as well developed as they could be.
- Children entered the Reception class this year with knowledge and skills that are below those typically expected for their age. Children's skills in writing, space, shape and measure and communication were the weakest areas of development when they joined the school. Effective teaching has ensured that children have made good progress in these areas. Consequently, most children are catching up.
- Leaders have been effective in ensuring that teachers' assessment of children's writing is accurate. The teaching of phonics is effective. Consequently, children's early writing skills are developing well. They are beginning to apply some of the phonics taught in choosing the correct letters and sounds to spell simple words.
- Despite the lack of more challenging activities provided for the children, they sustain concentration on tasks of a creative nature and when writing. They are able to explain how they are constructing their models and why they are using different materials.
- Teaching assistants generally support children well. They ask questions that help to further children's understanding.
- Relationships between teaching staff and children are strong. Children behave well and they respond to the direction of adults positively. Children interact and play well together. They cooperate with and help each other during activities in this calm and orderly environment.
- Safeguarding is effective. Teaching staff ensure that the children are kept safe from harm and risks. The school meets the statutory welfare requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	113674
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10081349

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	72
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vanessa Lucas
Headteacher	James Stanford
Telephone number	01747 838 370
Website	www.stowerprovost.dorset.sch.uk
Email address	office@stowerprovost.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 December 2016

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average primary school.
- The majority of pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEND is below the national average. The number of pupils who have education, health and care plans is well below the national average.
- The current headteacher took up post in September 2018, after a period of acting headship. Three new teachers have started at the school since September 2018.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning across the school. The majority of observations were undertaken alongside the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at pupils' current work in books across the curriculum.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and spoke with them to find out about their attitudes to reading.
- Meetings were held with governors, middle leaders and pupils. The inspector talked with the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of 23 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and informal discussions with parents when they brought their children to school. The inspector also took account of online staff and pupil surveys. The inspector talked to pupils at break and lunchtime, as well as during lessons.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan, school policies, governors' minutes of meetings and the school's own assessment systems and monitoring records.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of safeguarding evidence, including the school's single central record and behaviour and incident logs.

Inspection team

Paul Smith, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019