

# Inspection of The Priory Church of England Primary School

Wick Lane, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1HX

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Inspection dates: 2 and 3 February 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils live out the school's values of aspiration, forgiveness, love and respect with pride. They say that learning is fun, and that Priory is a happy and safe place to be. Pupils cooperate well. They enjoy the myriad of activities on offer at lunchtimes. Pupils say that if bullying happens, adults sort it out swiftly.

Pupils form great friendships with each other right from Reception. Strong, nurturing support builds pupils' confidence. Consequently, the oldest pupils demonstrate a striking maturity and a drive to learn everything on offer. Nonetheless, in previous years, the curriculum did not include everything that pupils needed to know and remember in every subject. Leaders are having a positive impact on putting this right. Pupils recognise that they are learning much more in many subjects now.

Staff prioritise pupils' mental and physical fitness. Pupils debate the importance of diversity and human rights. A wealth of activities enrich the curriculum. These include water safety, astronomy, curling and visits to a local science centre. Many pupils gain strong leadership skills through sports competitions or through being prayer buddies, prefects and play leaders.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Determined senior leaders are continually improving the school. It now sits at the centre of the local community and serves its pupils increasingly well. Leaders and governors have a strong understanding of the school's many strengths and areas that need more work. Governors use their expertise to hold leaders to account for the quality of the core curriculum. However, this is not as effective across the wider curriculum. Governors ensure that leaders are transparent in sharing the current key priorities for development with parents, who feel well informed.

Almost every parent or carer would recommend the school to another parent. Staff know pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) very well. Strong, caring support enables most of these pupils to learn well across the curriculum.

Pupils thrive in mathematics. Effective, consistent approaches to the teaching of mathematics right from the start ensure that pupils keep up. Very many pupils deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts exceptionally well.

Leaders are addressing the shortfall in pupils' early language and reading ability caused by the pandemic. Children in Reception are gaining a love of stories. Staff use their detailed knowledge of what every child can do, to shape the curriculum. For example, extra early language support to get children talking is making a positive difference. The reshaping of the Year 1 reading curriculum to address gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge is beginning to pay off. There are more opportunities for reading aloud to adults. Pupils who need to catch up get a lot of extra support. As a result, many of these pupils are making strong progress. Most pupils in Year 2 are

fluent readers. Further up the school, the reading curriculum has a sharp focus on making sure that pupils understand what they read. Most pupils, including those with SEND, are keeping up well and enjoying reading more and more. Pupils in Year 6 show high levels of respect to one another when they read aloud in class. Pupils relish reading together, learning ambitious vocabulary and unpicking complex themes across chapters.

The science curriculum is well sequenced. Pupils know and remember a lot in science. However, some of leaders' work to revamp the wider curriculum has stalled due to COVID-19. Therefore, the content and sequencing of some of the curriculum is not as well thought out as it could be.

Most teaching is based on strong subject knowledge and an understanding of how the curriculum progresses year by year. However, teaching of some sequences of work is not adjusted precisely enough. Leaders do not have enough oversight of this. As a result, sometimes misconceptions in pupils' learning are not picked up swiftly. In addition, a minority of teaching does not go into the depth that leaders expect.

Leaders monitor pupils' attendance stringently. Most pupils attend well and enjoy school. Pupils have a strong voice here. For example, their work to ratify the school's new behaviour policy saw school leaders and governors agreeing to additional improvements. The curriculum teaches pupils about equality and the democratic society in which they live. Staff help pupils to be compassionate, to learn about their inner self and to reflect on their own beliefs and other faiths and cultures.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors assure themselves that the culture of safeguarding is strong. They check that leaders act on any development points promptly. Staff apply their safeguarding training well. They raise any concerns about pupils' welfare quickly. Leaders act on these concerns promptly and work with external agencies in a timely way.

The curriculum teaches pupils about healthy relationships and how to keep safe, including online.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about. Leaders need to complete the process of reviewing the curriculum in all subjects within their identified timescale. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

- At times, teaching is not adjusted precisely enough. Pupils' misconceptions are not picked up swiftly. Some teaching sequences miss important steps. This all contributes to some pupils not achieving as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that staff use their checks on what pupils know and can do consistently well, so that all sequences of work include all the necessary steps for pupils to achieve well.
- Leaders, including governors, do not have complete oversight of how the wider curriculum is implemented. As a result, some pupils do not gain all the necessary knowledge they need to be successful across the curriculum. Leaders must ensure that they check the impact of the curriculum in every subject.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113847
<b>Local authority</b>	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211729
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Susan Solly
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Ruffle
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.prioryschool.dorset.sch.uk">www.prioryschool.dorset.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection in 2018, there have been widespread staffing changes. The leadership structure has changed to include a full-time headteacher and a full-time deputy headteacher.
- Almost all governors have been appointed in the last two years.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was in June 2018.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other school staff.

- An inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, science, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and considered samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors also looked more widely at the wider curriculum and pupils' work. Inspectors talked to the computing, physical education and music subject leaders to review their roles and responsibilities and their current work. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and talked to pupils about their work and school life.
- An inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator to consider the quality of provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted staff survey and pupil survey alongside responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses from parents and carers.

### **Inspection team**

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David New

Ofsted Inspector

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