

# Inspection of Manor Park Church of England First School

Mellstock Avenue, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 2BH

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Inspection dates: 9 and 10 February 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

There are widespread weaknesses in leadership. Staff are working to improve the curriculum pupils receive. As a result, many pupils, including some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are learning more now than in the past. However, the quality of education is not good. Pupils do not gain the detailed knowledge and skills they should across the curriculum.

Pupils with the most complex needs do not have beneficial educational experiences. Over time they have not received the support they need. A minority of pupils' poor behaviour continues to escalate. When this happens, it puts these pupils, other pupils and staff at risk.

Expectations of pupils' behaviour are far too low. Pupils do not have clear boundaries in place. Too many pupils do not show respect. Pupils do try hard to communicate their needs when things are proving difficult for them. For example, pupils talk openly about regular incidents of poor behaviour. Some pupils have come to accept that rough play happens. However, pupils say that when bullying happens they know staff will help.

Increasing pupils' physical fitness is a top priority for the school. Pupils like getting outside and keeping fit and healthy.

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

Leaders show limited capacity to improve the school. They have not identified the extent of the school's weaknesses. Fundamental problems are not challenged or dealt with adequately. Governors are undertaking work to improve staff well-being. However, this is not addressing the root causes of the weak leadership over time that have led to a sharp decline in the school's effectiveness.

When problems arise, leaders react and deal with them. However, leaders do not think important decisions through. This puts pupils and staff in unsafe situations. Leaders ask staff to lead aspects of the school's work without sufficient training. Inexperienced staff try to make the best of it but are not having the impact required.

Leaders do not support staff to manage behaviour successfully. A minority of pupils behave dangerously. Some staff are unclear of expectations or do not uphold them. Transitions between lessons are slow. This wastes learning time in some classes.

Leaders are using extensive local authority support to improve the provision for pupils with SEND. However, it is early days. Some pupils, including those in Ark class, do not make the progress across the curriculum that they should.

While most pupils experience a wide range of subjects, a minority of the most vulnerable pupils do not have equal access to the curriculum. Over time leaders and governors have not promoted equality of opportunity. Pupils who attend Ark class do not receive a rich set of experiences to help them learn and thrive. Leaders and governors are receiving external support to bring about improvement, but this work is in its infancy. These pupils do not have access to the curriculum they need.

The consistent approach to teaching reading ensures that pupils at the early stages of reading have lots of opportunities to practise their sounds and read aloud to adults. Pupils' books match the sounds that they already know. This is helping many pupils to read with increased accuracy. Most pupils from Years 1 to 4 develop their vocabulary and application of phonics to spell well. In mathematics, the curriculum is improving. Increasingly, pupils are becoming fluent in number, including multiplication tables. However, some teaching does not consistently build on what pupils already know. This hinders some pupils' progress across the curriculum.

The curriculum in Nursery has improved. These children get off to a strong start. However, in Reception senior leaders do not set high expectations for staff, and the curriculum is weaker. Elsewhere in the school the wider curriculum is developing steadily. For example, in physical education (PE), the curriculum outlines what pupils will know and do. Pupils, however, have considerable gaps in their knowledge and skills. This subject was not a priority in the past. In some other subjects pupils are beginning to learn more.

Staff provide caring support, but this does not help some pupils develop their character and resilience. Pupils do not have sufficient knowledge of and respect for people's different faiths, feelings and values. This does not prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders carry out pre-employment checks on adults working within the school. Staff know how to recognise signs of abuse or neglect. Staff apply their training and raise concerns in a timely way. Staff make detailed records of any concerns. Leaders take action and work with external agencies appropriately.

However, governors have not ensured that some safeguarding procedures are in place or kept up to date. Leaders do not think through their decisions to support pupils' safety and well-being effectively. Weak leadership decisions have resulted in poor behaviour escalating. Poor behaviour is common. Pupils and staff are put at risk. Pupils do not have a clear enough understanding about keeping safe.

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

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

- Leaders do not understand or have full oversight of safeguarding arrangements. The culture of safeguarding is not secure. Fundamental checks that should be in place are not. This puts pupils and staff at risk. Governors must ensure that staff get the safeguarding training they need as a matter of urgency so that all safeguarding practices are compliant and understood.
- Over time, leaders have failed to ensure that a minority of pupils' pastoral and academic needs are met. Consequently, pupils demonstrate dangerous behaviours in school. Leaders have allowed pupils' poor behaviour to escalate over time. Staff are not appropriately trained. Governors must take urgent action to ensure that leaders protect pupils and staff from harm by managing any dangerous behaviour of pupils appropriately. Leaders must ensure that staff training is effective, and staff have strong subject knowledge so that pupils can gain equal access to an appropriate curriculum and the root causes of any dangerous behaviours are addressed.
- Leaders do not ensure that staff consistently model and expect high expectations. Staff accept pupils' lax behaviour at transition times. Governors must ensure that leaders communicate high expectations to all staff. They must hold staff to account to ensure that curriculum time is being maximised across the school day.
- Leaders are only part of the way through their work to develop the wider curriculum. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils, including those with SEND, do not learn enough in every subject. Governors need to hold leaders to account for ensuring that staff deliver all the essential curriculum content pupils need in order to gain the knowledge they should in every subject.
- Teaching is not adapted to meet pupils' needs sufficiently well. Some curriculum sequences are not demanding enough over time. Pupils' misconceptions are not addressed sufficiently well. Leaders need to assure themselves that staff use all the information they have about what pupils know already so that teaching meets pupils needs well, and pupils are well prepared for their next stage.
- There are weaknesses in the implementation of the curriculum in Reception. Some adult interactions with children do not support children's learning well enough. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum supports all children in the early years to learn well across all the curriculum so that they are well prepared for their onward education.
- The curriculum for pupils' personal development is not implemented well. Pupils lack the pastoral support they need. Pupils do not appreciate different religions and cultures and beliefs. Leaders must ensure that pupils receive rich experiences through which they can learn and thrive.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

## 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>	113791
<b>Local authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10201000
<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	407
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Patrick Myers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Melanie Pallister
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.manorpark.dorset.sch.uk">www.manorpark.dorset.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered and one registered alternative provider.
- There have been many changes to staffing, including leadership, since the previous inspection.
- There are 15 classes. One class called The Ark is for children from Years 1 to 4 who find it difficult to learn alongside their peers.
- The school has a pre-school that accepts two- and three-year-olds.
- The school is receiving external support through team around the school (TAS) meetings. School leaders, governors and members of the local authority are involved in these meetings.

## Information about this inspection

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

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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders and other school staff and examined a range of documents including the school's action plans.
- An inspector met with the chair of the governing body and two representatives of Dorset local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, science, mathematics, history and PE. 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 and 2 read to an adult.
- Inspectors also looked more widely at the curriculum. They examined pupils' work and talked to pupils about their work and school life.
- An inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator and deputy headteacher 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 and pupil surveys alongside responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses from parents and carers. Inspectors also met with parents during the inspection and reviewed additional correspondence from parents.

### **Inspection team**

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

Kathy Maddocks

Her Majesty's Inspector

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