

Inspection of Shaftesbury Church of England Primary School

Wincombe Lane, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 8PZ

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 February 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy learning. The school's Christian ethos to make sure that pupils are 'safe, loved, inspired and ready' is at the heart of leaders' work. Pupils are committed to living out the school's values. For example, pupils talk about the importance of aiming high and being respectful to others.

Adults expect pupils to behave well and work hard. Behaviour is good. In the early years, children develop good attitudes to learning. All classes enjoy earning 'INSPIRE' rewards for doing their best. Bullying is rare. Pupils have confidence that staff will resolve their problems and keep them safe.

Leaders develop pupils' personal development well. Enrichment activities ignite pupils' interests and develop their character. Leaders involve pupils in making decisions. For example, pupils worked with leaders to improve playtimes by running a quiet 'hub'. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the wide range of school visits and clubs they have taken part in. They are excited that these opportunities are starting up again following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions.

Leaders have improved the curriculum. They have raised expectations of pupils' learning. Most parents are very positive about the school. They feel welcomed and included in the school's 'family' atmosphere.

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

Leaders recognise that pupils have not achieved well enough in the past. Prior to the pandemic, leaders established an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum for English, mathematics and science is carefully organised from Reception to Year 6. Leaders ensure that key knowledge is planned sequentially. Consequently, pupils know and remember more in these subjects. They are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. Children in the early years get off to a good start in mathematics. They learn number facts and regularly practise counting. Adults use assessment carefully to plan extra practice when children need it.

Leaders have revised the wider curriculum to include ambitious goals. In most subjects, selected content and teaching support pupils to progress well. However, crucial content that pupils must learn is not clear enough in a few subjects. As a result, pupils do not build their understanding of some important concepts well enough.

Teachers present new information in interesting ways. Engaging topics motivate pupils. Most teachers check pupils' learning carefully. They use this information to decide next steps, so that all pupils learn well. For example, teachers' checks help pupils to improve the accuracy of their writing. However, some teachers do not

always check pupils' understanding precisely enough across the curriculum. This leads to gaps in some pupils' knowledge.

The reading curriculum is implemented effectively. Children learn phonics well in the early years. They learn a rich range of rhymes, stories and new vocabulary through their learning. This prepares children to be keen and skilled readers. Staff are well trained in the school's phonics programme. Pupils who need help with their reading, including some with SEND, receive effective support to help them catch up. Staff nurture a love of reading. They read high-quality texts aloud to pupils. Pupils enjoy visiting the well-stocked library. The reading curriculum develops pupils' knowledge and enjoyment well.

Pupils with SEND take part in learning the full curriculum alongside their peers. Their needs are carefully identified. Staff break down new learning for pupils and guide them well. SEND leaders liaise effectively with other agencies to support this provision.

Leaders make sure that personal development is integral to the curriculum. Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and respect for others. Leaders have maintained their focus on pupils' well-being in their online assemblies during the COVID-19 pandemic. A rich range of visits, both locally and further afield, bring the curriculum to life. Staff offer a plentiful range of clubs, including Spanish and mindfulness. Pupils speak maturely about how they learn to value differences. They appreciate learning where they can discuss important issues and give their views.

Pupils respond well to adults' high expectations of their behaviour. Classrooms are calm and well ordered. Around the school, pupils conduct themselves well. Pupils with social and emotional needs get the right support from skilled adults. Pupils attend well, reflecting their positive attitudes to learning.

Trustees and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately. Almost all staff feel well supported. Staff value leaders' consideration of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The members of the school's designated safeguarding team are vigilant and proactive. There is a strong safeguarding culture because staff are well trained and understand their responsibilities. Staff know families well and understand risks in the local area. Leaders act swiftly and with tenacity when alerted to a concern. They ensure that records are accurate and detailed. The trust makes sure that safeguarding is given the utmost priority. Procedures, including checks on adults who work in school, are rigorously implemented.

Pupils benefit from learning which helps them to understand risks. They understand healthy relationships and how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects in the wider curriculum, the content that pupils must learn and the order for teaching it are not explicit enough. This means that pupils do not build and deepen their understanding of important concepts over time. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum clearly identifies the knowledge pupils need to learn and when.
- Some teachers do not always use assessment well enough to swiftly address pupils' misconceptions. Learning does not always build on what pupils know, to help them remember what they have learned. Consequently, there are gaps in some pupils' knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that assessment is used consistently well across all subjects.

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

Unique reference number	141810
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10200978
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	345
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Rees
Headteacher	Paul Lavis
Website	www.shaftesburyprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 and 8 February 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is designated as having a religious character and received its section 48 inspection in April 2016, when this aspect of the school's work was graded good.
- The school joined the Sherborne Area Schools' Trust in July 2020.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There have been a number of staff changes since the previous inspection. The deputy headteacher took up her post in September 2020.

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.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders and groups of staff. The lead inspector met with

representatives from the governing body, including the chair, and with a representative of the Sherborne Area Schools' Trust.

- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the first day of the inspection.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, Spanish and history. Inspectors talked to teachers who lead these subjects, visited a sample of lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. Additionally, inspectors reviewed pupils' writing and design technology work, and spoke with pupils. The lead inspector met with the subject leaders for design technology and computing.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors spoke with pupils to gain their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered 52 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including 33 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered 25 responses to the staff survey and one letter from a member of staff.

Inspection team

Claire Mirams, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gareth Simons	Ofsted Inspector
Wendy D'Arcy	Ofsted Inspector

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