

Inspection of Emmanuel Middle Church of England Middle School

Howe Lane, Verwood BH31 6JF

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and are happy at this welcoming school. They are proud to be part of the school and strive to represent it well. 'Do your best' is part of a bible passage that underpins the vision and values of the school. High expectations and an effective rewards system encourage pupils to do just that.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils are respectful in lessons and at social times. Bullying is rare. When it does happen, most pupils and parents say that staff deal with it well.

Pupils are keen to learn. They enjoy their lessons and the enthusiasm with which teachers share what they know. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm, caring and respectful. Pupils are well known by staff, who care about their well-being as well as their learning. One parent says, 'The nurturing environment and high expectations mean my children have thrived.' This encapsulates the views of many others.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their characters, interests and talents. Pupils appreciate these, and most take part in extra-curricular activities. Pupils aspire to the many leadership roles which are available to them.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. It builds on what pupils have learned before and prepares them for their next steps in education. The curriculum helps pupils to remember more over time. As much of the curriculum is new, leaders are continuing to work on the curriculum to make it even better. Pupils enjoy reading and know how important it is. Pupils who cannot read well enough get the support they need to catch up.

Teachers regularly check that pupils understand new learning and that subject content is suitably ambitious. They use the information they gather about pupils' progress to make decisions about future teaching. In subjects such as English and mathematics, teachers have good subject knowledge. In some curriculum areas, this is less secure. Where this is the case, teachers are less able to correct pupils' misconceptions. Teaching usually meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the support given does not always meet the individual needs of pupils precisely enough in all areas of the curriculum.

Staff expect pupils to behave well and they do. Both staff and pupils are clear about school routines, rewards and sanctions. Teachers use the school rewards system to reinforce the high standards they have. Low-level disruption is rare. When it does happen, staff refocus pupils on their learning quickly.

Most pupils have good attendance. However, a few do not attend often enough. As a result, they do not benefit fully from the curriculum or from opportunities for wider development.

The curriculum helps to develop pupils' characters. It teaches them about important issues, such as well-being, healthy relationships and equality. Collective worship, prayer trees and reflective journals support pupils' spiritual development. This is in line with the Christian ethos of the school. Pupils learn about other faiths and the importance of tolerance of those with different beliefs. Most pupils take part in school clubs. Many have leadership roles, such as house captains, anti-bullying ambassadors or sports leaders.

There is a comprehensive careers programme for all year groups. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Leaders know the strengths and areas for development of the school. Trustees and governors hold leaders to account and also provide effective support. Staff are well supported by leaders. Parents and staff say they have confidence in leaders to continue to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have the training they need to identify signs of harm and to know how to pass on concerns they may have. They are well informed about local and national risks. Leaders are tenacious in securing help for those pupils who need it. They make prompt referrals to other agencies when necessary.

All adults working or volunteering at the school have the relevant background checks to ensure their suitability.

The curriculum helps pupils to understand the potential risks they face and how to reduce these.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teaching is not supported by strong subject knowledge. This means that pupils' misconceptions sometimes persist. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the subject knowledge they need.
- A small number of pupils do not attend school regularly. This means they do not benefit from the full curriculum that the school provides. Leaders need to ensure that the attendance of the few who attend less well improves.

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	145405
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10227721
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Kingston
Headteacher	Rob Christopher
Website	www.emmanuelmiddle.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England school. There was a statutory inspection of denominational education and collective worship in July 2019.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

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 met with the headteacher, senior leaders, trustees, governors and staff from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and history. 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 looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the views of staff and pupils in Ofsted’s online surveys.
- Inspectors also spoke to the alternative provider used by the school, a representative from the local authority and a representative from the Diocese of Salisbury.

Inspection team

Sarah Favager-Dalton, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Tracy Harris	Ofsted Inspector
David New	Ofsted Inspector

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