

# Inspection of Shakespeare Primary School

400 Honicknowle Lane, Honicknowle, Plymouth, Devon PL5 3JU

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Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

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

Shakespeare Primary is a happy and welcoming school. Pupils are polite and get along well together. They behave well most of the time, in lessons and around the school. Pupils say that the occasional incidents of bullying are resolved swiftly by caring staff. Staff use the school behaviour system consistently. Therefore, pupils are treated with fairness and equity.

Pupils enjoy learning a full curriculum. However, leaders recognise that, until very recently, some subject curriculums were weak. Too many pupils did not learn as well as they could. When the current leaders started, in January 2022, they quickly raised expectations for all pupils and made some important curriculum improvements. However, this work is new, and, beyond the early years, it is too soon to know if it is having the impact leaders intend. Too many pupils' learning is also hampered by low rates of attendance.

Pupils enjoy the wider curriculum experiences that the school offers. They like the way that the school helps them to take part in sports and to learn about how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They particularly enjoy supporting their local community through organised events, such as litter picking.

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

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been low in recent years. Trust leaders have not ensured that the much-needed improvements to these curriculums were made swiftly. Consequently, too many pupils have not been prepared well enough for the next stage in their education. In January 2022, the new school leadership team identified the curriculum weaknesses and considered carefully how to tackle them. Together, they wasted no time in putting in place new strategies for the teaching of early reading and mathematics, while maintaining the strengths seen in other subjects, such as history and geography. Recently appointed governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have already made some changes to strengthen systems and processes of local governance, such as increasing accountability checks.

In the early years, children are immersed in a curriculum with reading at its heart. Staff read to children regularly and introduce them to new, ambitious language. Leaders have strengthened the reading curriculum recently by introducing a new phonics programme. However, in key stage 1 and beyond, staff do not ensure that pupils' reading books are matched to their reading ability. Some staff require additional training to gain the knowledge and skills they need to teach reading effectively. Some older pupils, who remain at the early stages of reading, do not benefit from a well organised curriculum that teaches them the knowledge they need to succeed. Consequently, they are not catching up quickly enough.

Recently, school leaders have begun to construct a well-sequenced mathematics curriculum. They are providing tailored support for staff to improve their subject knowledge and to think more carefully about how to approach their teaching of mathematics. However, these developments are very recent, and it is too soon to know if they are helping pupils to know more and remember over time.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified quickly and receive appropriate, additional support. Children with SEND in the early years benefit from small-group phonics sessions with extra support from adults. Consequently, they are achieving success. Leaders ensure that pupils who need to catch up with reading are prioritised. These pupils receive timely, precise support.

Leaders have ensured that most subject curriculums are sequenced well and identify the knowledge they want pupils to learn. However, leaders know that assessment is poor. In most subjects, teachers do not use assessment well enough. They do not ensure that activities are appropriate for pupils' needs or check what pupils know and remember from previous learning. For example, in mathematics, some stronger mathematicians do not have work that is sufficiently challenging. In religious education (RE), pupils cannot recall much about world religions, other than Christianity.

Pupils show positive attitudes to their work, and their learning is rarely disturbed by the behaviour of others. However, too many pupils, including vulnerable pupils, do not attend school regularly. In some cases, leaders have not challenged this. As a result, some pupils' repeated absence slows their learning.

Leaders have developed a well-considered curriculum for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about the importance of physical and mental health. They learn to be responsible, caring citizens. However, the curriculum is less successful in helping pupils to learn about cultural differences and similarities.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make suitable checks to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with pupils. Staff have received appropriate training and are vigilant in identifying potential signs of abuse. The recently formed pastoral team has strengthened existing systems and procedures to identify pupils' needs even more swiftly. Leaders work closely with families and other agencies to support vulnerable pupils. The computing curriculum is organised effectively so that pupils know how to stay safe online.

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

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

- Leaders have recently introduced a new scheme for teaching early reading. However, it is in the early stages of implementation. Beyond the early years, some staff lack the subject knowledge and pedagogy required to teach reading effectively. This results in some pupils not reading as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that staff are equipped with secure subject knowledge and a sound pedagogy.
- The reading curriculum for older pupils who remain at the early stages of reading does not include the knowledge that pupils need to be successful readers. Consequently, pupils do not catch up as quickly as they could. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum design is improved so that pupils are equipped with the essential reading knowledge they need to succeed.
- The use of assessment is not well-thought-out in most subjects. Too often, teachers give pupils activities that are not well matched to their abilities. This slows their learning. Leaders must ensure that assessment is improved swiftly, to ensure pupils' accurate starting points are identified in all subjects.
- Too many pupils do not attend school regularly. Some are repeatedly absent, and this slows their learning. Leaders need to tackle the high levels of persistent absence and ensure that pupils, including the most vulnerable, improve their attendance rapidly.

## 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>	145658
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10231291
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	433
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	John Butcher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cameron Lancaster
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.shakespeare.plymouth.sch.uk">www.shakespeare.plymouth.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- An executive headteacher took up post in January 2022. An existing school leader was promoted to the role of head of school at the same time.
- There have been significant changes to the local governing board recently. Many long-serving governors are no longer in post and there are several new members, including the chair and vice-chair.
- The predecessor school joined the Learning Academies Trust in April 2018.
- The school uses one 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors did deep dives in early reading, mathematics, RE and history. This included discussions with subject leaders, lesson visits, looking at examples of work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils and listening to pupils

read to an adult. They also considered evidence gathered about some other subject curriculums, such as geography and French.

- Inspectors held meetings with the head of school, executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the inclusion coordinator, staff and governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the local governing board.
- The lead inspector spoke with the trust's chief executive officer and the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation, minutes from a local governing body meeting, improvement plans, external support notes of visit, and documentation relating to behaviour.
- Inspectors examined safeguarding records, checked staff's safeguarding knowledge and spoke with pupils. Inspectors also met with the designated safeguarding lead and a trust safeguarding leader.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text comments. They also took into consideration responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Sue Costello, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Shirley

Ofsted Inspector

Craig Hayes

Ofsted Inspector

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