

Inspection of a good school: Parrett and Axe Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Fairoak Way, Mosterton, Beaminster, Dorset DT8 3JQ

Inspection date:

30 June 2022

Outcome

Parrett and Axe Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and well cared for in this community-minded, inclusive school. The values of 'courage, respect, kindness and equality' run through everything the school does. Pupils show high levels of respect toward each other and to staff. They say that adults notice if something is wrong and take the time to find out why.

Staff and governors want pupils to leave Parrett and Axe as confident and well-rounded individuals, ready for secondary school and beyond. They have been successful. Staff bring the curriculum to life through trips and inviting visitors to the school. This makes pupils curious to find things out.

Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They behave sensibly. Pupils know what adults expect of them. Whether in lessons or at play, they adhere to the 'good to be green' rules. Bullying is rare. Staff are quick to sort out any minor issues that arise.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development effectively. Staff offer bespoke support for any pupils experiencing worries. They use scenarios, such as responding to moral dilemmas, to help pupils make informed choices. Older pupils learn to be responsible by reading to younger pupils. They are also proud of being sports ambassadors and house captains.

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

Leaders and staff work as a dedicated and united team. They are proud to work at the school. Staff know that leaders, including governors, keep a close check on their workload and well-being. Staff value the support they receive to strengthen their expertise. Parents are equally positive about the school. They appreciate how the staff build children's

confidence and nurture their interests and talents. The vast majority of parents would recommend the school to others.

Reading is a prominent part of the school's work. Staff use every opportunity to talk about and celebrate the joys of books and reading. Right from the start, children learn the basics well. Most have a secure knowledge of phonics. Staff intervene quickly when pupils are not keeping up. They ensure that pupils read books suited to their needs. This improves their fluency and confidence. Recent initiatives, such as author workshops and 100 books to read in school, inspire pupils' own reading choices. These positive habits help them to develop a love of reading.

Teachers plan an engaging curriculum. They have mapped out the content pupils will learn in each subject. In physical education, for example, pupils build on their knowledge and skills from year to year. Regular practice and revisiting of skills help pupils to become proficient in sports, such as cricket and rugby. In mathematics, teachers break learning down into small, manageable steps. This ensures that pupils build their knowledge of different concepts well. However, in some subjects, the content that leaders want pupils to remember is too broad. This prevents pupils from making connections to what they already know.

In English and mathematics, staff use assessment well. They recap and repeat important knowledge to help learning stick in pupils' minds. Pupils say this helps them to become better readers, writers and mathematicians. Nevertheless, in some of the wider curriculum subjects, systems to check how well pupils learn the intended curriculum are not as well-developed. Teachers do not assess or revisit what pupils can and cannot do with enough precision. This means that pupils occasionally forget important concepts over time. Some do not develop a deep enough understanding of the subjects they study.

Pupils with special educational need and/or disabilities get the help they need. Staff know pupils' exact needs. They identify these early. Staff are well-trained. They provide effective support so that pupils can learn the same curriculum as their classmates. Specialist teaching, such as speech and language, helps pupils to overcome their challenges.

Staff take an interest in pupils' mental health and well-being. They intervene quickly to resolve any issues. Pupils use strategies, such as breathing techniques, to manage any anxiety. They feel well supported by knowledgeable staff. Consequently, lessons flow smoothly with minimal disruption.

Leaders encourage pupils to learn beyond the formal curriculum. Through assemblies and the house system, staff support pupils to cooperate with others. Pupils are rightly proud of their sporting achievements. They successfully compete in local festivals. Pupils understand about equality and diversity. They say that regardless of religion, beliefs or difference, 'everyone is accepted' at Parrett and Axe.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff, including governors, attend training. They know who to go to if they are worried about a child. Staff are confident that leaders will act upon concerns. Leaders work well with local partners to offer support to vulnerable pupils and families. Staff carry out statutory checks to ensure that adults are safe to work with pupils.

Pupils understand how to stay safe. They learn about the importance of online safety and healthy relationships. They know there are many adults in the school they could go to if they have an issue or a concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some wider curriculum subjects, leaders have not identified with sufficient precision the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember over time. This hampers pupils' ability to make connections with what they have already learned and can do. Leaders need to ensure that staff know the most essential knowledge that pupils need to learn across the curriculum.
- Leaders do not have effective systems to assess how well pupils learn the intended curriculum in some subjects. As a result, pupils recall of prior learning is patchy. Leaders need to strengthen existing systems, so they have a deeper understanding of impact the curriculum is having on pupils' learning over time.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2016.

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	113807
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10206168
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Susan Pakes
Headteacher	Simon Smith
Website	www.mosterton.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There has been a change in leadership since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up post in September 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Parrett and Axe is a voluntary-aided church school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in February 2016. The school was judged to be good.

Information about this inspection

- 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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other school staff, a representative from the local authority and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the 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 also spoke to leaders and teachers about the curriculum in other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. Inspectors talked to governors, staff and pupils about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Martin Greenwood

Ofsted Inspector

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