

Inspection of a good school: Dunbury Church of England Academy

Dolway Lane, Blandford Forum, Winterborne Whitechurch, Dorset DT11 0AW

Inspection date: 19 January 2023

Outcome

Dunbury Church of England Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Dunbury Church of England Academy. They are safe and happy at this friendly, welcoming school. The values of courage, friendship, respect and trust are evident in the way pupils behave.

Pupils strive to meet the high expectations that staff have of them. They are persistent with their learning and attentive to staff. In lessons, pupils are keen to learn and focus on their work. There is rarely any disruption to learning.

Playtimes are calm and harmonious. Pupils enjoy playing with their friends. They are considerate of each other and respond promptly to staff instructions. Pupils know what bullying is and how to report it. They are adamant that staff stop instances of bullying quickly on the rare occasions that they happen.

One parent encapsulates the view of many saying, 'Dunbury Academy is a wonderful school that nurtures and develops each pupil...'. Pupils develop their character in line with the Christian faith. Most are active citizens who take responsibility for themselves and others.

Dunbury is 'one school on two sites', united by a shared vision and values. Routines, rules and expectations are consistent at both sites. Consequently, pupils move seamlessly from key stage 1 into key stage 2.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is ambitious. It is clear what pupils will learn in each year and how this knowledge will build over time from Reception Year onwards. The order in which knowledge is acquired is carefully designed to enable good progress through the curriculum in the mixed-age classes. Pupils remember what they learn and achieve well. Leaders know that some areas of the curriculum are not yet fully developed.

They have begun work on those areas to ensure that they are sufficiently ambitious and well sequenced.

Teachers have very strong subject knowledge. They explain new knowledge clearly and adapt learning so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) complete the same tasks as their peers. However, when teachers check on what pupils are learning they do not always pick up errors and misunderstandings quickly enough.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Children in Reception Year start learning phonics at an early stage. They read books that match the sounds they know. Staff know exactly which sounds children are finding tricky. Rapid, precise help makes sure children do not fall behind. Children enjoy learning to write the letters for the sounds they are learning. They know how reading and writing connect. Older pupils who do not read fluently continue to get help to catch up. The way that staff read to pupils of all ages enthuses them. Many talk about loving the voices and accents their teachers use when reading to them. However, some pupils feel reading is 'not for me' and do not do so out of school.

All pupils, including the very youngest, know what it means to 'Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe'. Pupils follow these simple school rules and know why they are important. They are kind and considerate to each other and follow staff instructions. Children in Reception Year proudly show off stickers they receive for acting in accordance with the school values. They remind one another to share and to be kind.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum exposes pupils to a diverse range of cultures and beliefs. Reading books feature characters from a range of ethnic groups and backgrounds. Pupils learn about role models who reflect the diversity of modern British society. They know about the importance of tolerance and mutual respect.

Pupils' characters are developed through the curriculum, the Christian ethos and the values of the school. They are encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings. Leaders have ensured that pupils' opinions are taken into account when they make decisions about the school. Some pupils become leaders through roles such as sports ambassadors and reading monitors.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about clubs such as colouring, reading and chess. They enjoy taking part in sports tournaments. However, the range of clubs available does not provide opportunities for all pupils to develop their interests and talents. Leaders have begun work to ensure that all pupils have a rich set of experiences beyond the curriculum during their time at the school.

Staff feel well supported by leaders and have complete confidence in them. They appreciate the ways that leaders try to minimise their workloads.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils learn about how to stay safe, including online. All pupils have a trusted adult at school and know they will be listened to if they have any worries.

Leaders check the suitability of staff for working with children. Staff have the training they need so that they can identify signs of concern. There are clear processes for sharing concerns. Leaders act promptly on any concerns raised. They are tenacious in securing support from external agencies when necessary.

Leaders know which pupils and families are vulnerable. This enables them to provide the right help and support at an early stage.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' checks on pupils' learning do not always identify errors and misunderstandings. This means that these sometimes persist or that pupils are trying to build on learning which is not accurate. Leaders need to ensure that teachers know what pupils have and have not learned.
- Some pupils do not take part in activities beyond the curriculum or take on leadership roles. This means that they are not getting as many opportunities to fully develop their skills and interests. Leaders must ensure that that all pupils gain a rich set of experiences during their time at the school.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2017.

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.

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	140561
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10227182
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rosemary Tong
Headteacher	Holly Doswell
Website	www.dunbury.dsat.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Dunbury is a Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection was in March 2017. The next section 48 inspection is due before March 2025.
- Dunbury Church of England Academy is based on two sites. Reception and key stage 1 pupils are based on one site, key stage 2 pupils are based on another.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, trustees and staff from the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics 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, Parent View, and the views of staff and pupils in Ofsted's online survey.
- Both inspectors spent time at each of the two sites on which the school is located. They spoke to staff and pupils at both sites and visited lessons for all year groups.

Inspection team

Sarah Favager-Dalton, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Martin Greenwood

Ofsted Inspector

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