

Inspection of Parley First School

Glenmoor Road, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 8QE

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Parley First School are kind and respectful. They are happy at school and feel safe. They learn how to overcome challenges and resolve their differences. Pupils develop independence. They learn how to be responsible citizens, both in the classroom and during playtimes. Relationships between adults and pupils, including in the early years, are warm and caring. Adults at the school are united in their vision to put 'children first, always'. All pupils, and their families, are treated as individuals.

Pupils follow an ambitious and inclusive curriculum. There are clear routines in place in classrooms, which ensures that pupils learn in a calm and purposeful environment. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from the sharp focus on early reading and mathematics.

There are many clubs and activities on offer, including in sports and art. Pupils talk enthusiastically about trips and visits and enjoy the times when speakers come into school. Pupils are confident talking to adults. They describe their school and their learning with pride and enthusiasm.

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

Leaders have planned subject curriculums carefully, from the early years to key stage 2. Recent changes are starting to ensure that pupils know and remember more over time. Some of this work is in the early stages and is being refined.

The early reading and mathematics curriculums are strong. Pupils learn to read as soon they start in the early years. They are closely monitored. Teachers know precisely what each pupil needs to practise. When they fall behind, pupils are supported well to catch up. Pupils read every day and use the library regularly. Leaders have created a culture of reading. Pupils enjoy talking about books. Children in the early years remember stories they have read and link these to their other learning.

Pupils, including those in the early years, become fluent in number facts. They talk about mathematical concepts confidently. Pupils can explain their reasoning and apply their knowledge to problem-solving activities. They understand the importance of mathematics in the wider world.

In some subjects, leaders have not yet established precisely what pupils need to learn. The work pupils complete does not always ensure they retain the most important knowledge. In the early years, a few activities children undertake during 'continuous provision' do not match leaders' intentions. When this occurs, children do not learn well. In some subjects, teachers do not check accurately what pupils know and remember. As a result, they do not always know how well pupils are following the curriculum.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND and ensure that pupils learn the full curriculum. Adults understand the individual needs of each child. This includes pupils attached to 'The Pod'. The specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND is an asset to the school. Pupils and staff benefit from the expertise of the professionals who work at the provision. Leaders are quick to identify when pupils need additional support and are tenacious in ensuring that they put this in place.

Pupils behave well in lessons and report that low-level disruption is rare. There is plenty to do at playtimes, and fall outs are uncommon. Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare.

Pupils' wider development is prioritised. They remember important messages about how to keep themselves safe, physically and when online. They learn about different types of families and talk about these in a respectful way. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. In the early years, children learn to regulate their behaviour, take turns and listen to one another. Pastoral care is a strength of the school.

Many pupils take part in the clubs and activities on offer. These include a variety of sports and a school choir. Pupils enjoy visiting places in the local community, such as a local care home. Trips, such as the Year 4 residential, are highly regarded. Leaders ensure that all children take part, including those who are disadvantaged and those who may need additional adult support.

Parley First School is rooted in its community. Since joining Castleman Academy Trust, the school has benefitted from additional expertise and capacity. The school prides itself on knowing each child and working closely with their families. Local governors know the school well. They are supporting leaders to improve the school further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Reporting and record-keeping are robust. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to notice the signs that a child may be at risk. Staff are confident in how to report and record concerns.

Leaders work particularly well with families and external agencies to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils are given the help they need.

Leaders complete the necessary checks on adults who apply to work at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of the curriculum, the activities that pupils complete, including in the early years, do not match what leaders intend pupils to learn. As a result, pupils do not always remember important information, and they are unable to deepen their knowledge or demonstrate independent thinking. Leaders should ensure that teachers are supported to sequence learning to match their intended outcomes.
- Assessment is not always used effectively. As a result, pupils' misconceptions are not always picked up, and teachers do not always have an accurate view of what pupils know and are able to do. Leaders should ensure that teachers are supported to use assessment effectively so it informs their teaching.

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	148162
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10246814
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	316
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Grigsby
Headteacher	John Bagwell
Website	www.parley.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to an academy and joined Castleman Academy Trust in January 2021. When its predecessor school, Parley First School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was done so under section 8 of the Education Act. This was in March 2020. The lead inspector had concerns that one or more areas may have been declining.
- The school operates a before- and after-school club each day. It offers wraparound care for pupils who attend the school.
- The school currently uses three unregistered alternative providers.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND called 'The Pod'. This is a provision for 10 pupils with a specific learning difficulty and autism spectrum disorder. There are currently nine pupils attending this provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- On the first day, inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work and held discussions with teachers and pupils.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- An inspector also met with the curriculum leader for computing.
- Inspectors spent time in the playground and met with pupil groups, both formally and informally, throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors analysed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and online pupil and staff surveys.
- The lead inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator and reviewed plans in support of pupils with SEND.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed documentation related to safeguarding and referrals to the local authority. Inspectors also spoke to staff about how they keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors also met with leaders who oversee behaviour, personal development and the curriculum.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the local school standards board and trustees from Castleman Academy Trust.

Inspection team

Victoria Griffin, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Laura Bennett	Ofsted Inspector
Carl Thornton	Ofsted Inspector

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