

Inspection of Beechcroft St Paul’s CofE Primary School

Corporation Road, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 0LQ

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Cath Crossley. This school is part of the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mark Lacey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Rosemary Tong.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is determined for all pupils to succeed. Since the previous inspection, changes have been made to help pupils to be more successful. The school has prioritised the development of the curriculum to promote high expectations for all pupils. These actions are beginning to make a difference. However, it is still early days. The curriculum does not yet support pupils to build their knowledge well enough across all subjects.

Staff take time to build positive relationships with pupils. This helps pupils to learn in a nurturing and inclusive environment. Pupils know and understand the school's motto, 'Soaring with compassion'.

The school is working hard to improve attendance. Regular monitoring and support for families is starting to make a difference. This ensures that pupils attend regularly to be able to learn the curriculum.

Pupils' personal development is a strength. The school provides a range of opportunities to enrich pupils' experiences. These include a variety of clubs, trips and visitors. Pupils value participating in sporting competitions such as football, hockey and basketball. To widen pupils' understanding of culture and diversity, the school carefully considers the food pupils cook in design and technology and the artists they study.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has developed an ambitious curriculum. The essential knowledge pupils need to know and remember is now identified with precision. For example, key concepts have been identified in art for pupils to revisit and build their knowledge over time. While there are early signs of pupils progressing more successfully through the curriculum, some of the curriculum improvements are not yet fully embedded. This means pupils do not yet build their knowledge well enough across the curriculum, including when learning to read.

The school promotes a culture of reading. The reading curriculum includes a range of texts to build pupils' knowledge of different genres as well as their understanding of diversity. Pupils are taught how to read as soon as they start in Reception. Assessment is used to identify misconceptions. However, some pupils do not get all the support they need to grasp the basics of reading. Gaps in their phonic knowledge are not addressed quickly enough to develop their reading securely. In addition, some younger pupils who struggle with reading are not reading books that match the sounds they know. As a result, these pupils do not become confident, fluent readers quickly enough.

The school has prioritised developing teacher expertise to support the teaching of the curriculum. Teachers use a range of strategies to help pupils learn. Pupils are

given time to practise new learning and to revisit what they have learned before. This helps pupils to embed knowledge into their long-term memory. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from early identification. Learning is adapted to help these pupils learn alongside their peers.

Warm relationships mean children in early years settle well. They know the school routines, such as how to listen at story time. The school has identified the knowledge they want children to know and remember across the early years curriculum. Within adult-led activities, staff model new learning and help children to develop language. However, outcomes at the end of early years in 2023 were low. Some children still do not develop their knowledge and language well across all areas of the curriculum. Consequently, children in early years are less well prepared for key stage 1.

While learning, most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes. The school has developed 'SMART routines' to promote a consistent approach of high expectations. These are beginning to make a difference to pupils' behaviour in all aspects of the school. The school provides additional support for pupils who might struggle to manage their behaviour. However, some pupils and parents are concerned about behaviour, including bullying. The school takes action and keeps detailed records when these issues occur. However, for some pupils, bullying remains a concern for them for too long. Some parents are not clear on the steps taken by the school to address the concerns raised.

Pupils' wider development is supported well. They learn about relationships, well-being and living in the wider world. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They learn about enterprise through projects, such as Year 6 raising money for their leavers' jumpers. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy both physically and mentally. The school provides mental health support for pupils and their families through a range of events and workshops.

Staff feel well supported by leaders. They value the training and support they receive. Those responsible for governance fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They are ambitious for pupils to succeed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils at the early stages of learning to read are not supported well enough to grasp the basics in reading. Consequently, these pupils are not becoming confident, fluent readers quickly enough. The trust must ensure that all pupils get

the support they need to learn to read successfully, including reading books that match the sounds pupils know.

- Some concerns regarding behaviour are not resolved swiftly enough. As a result, a few pupils' concerns about behaviour persist for too long. The trust must work with the school to ensure that any remaining concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively and communicate this with parents.
- Children in the early years do not develop their learning well enough across all areas of the curriculum. As a result, some children do not deepen their understanding securely. The trust needs to ensure the early years curriculum provides opportunities for children to build their knowledge across all areas of the curriculum so that it prepares them well for key stage 1.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	144298
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10288223
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rosemary Tong
CEO of trust	Mark Lacey
Headteacher	Cath Crossley
Website	www.beechcroft.dsat.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Beechcroft St Paul's CofE Primary School is part of the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. The school is in the Diocese of Salisbury. At the most recent section 48 inspection of the school, carried out in October 2021, the school was judged to be good.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors spoke with school leaders, subject leaders, parents, pupils, governors and representatives from the trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. 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 pupils about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents. The inspectors considered comments made by parents online during the inspection and met with some parents at the start of the second day. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Esther Best, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Musty

Ofsted Inspector

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