

St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided School, Preston, Weymouth

Littlemoor Road, Weymouth, Dorset, DT3 6AA

Inspection dates 10–11 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Teaching is not consistently good, especially in Years 3 to 6. Lesson activities do not emphasise what pupils should learn and there are too few opportunities for them to work independently in ways that will consolidate their learning.
- The monitoring of teaching does not sufficiently focus on the quality of pupils' learning.
- Younger pupils do not acquire phonics skills quickly enough so that by Year 2 their attainment is not as high as it should be.
- In the recent past, expectations of what pupils in Years 3 to 6 should achieve in mathematics were too low and their progress in this subject was inadequate. It still requires improvement.
- School leaders' response to emerging weaknesses in mathematics and phonics teaching has been too slow.
- Staff and governors are still developing their skills at using information from the new system for tracking pupils' progress to identify weaknesses swiftly.

The school has the following strengths:

- Pupils achieve well in English, especially in writing. Their progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2 is good, including in reading, despite their slow start in phonics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a significant strength. They are exceptionally well prepared for life in a democratic Britain and the global society.
- Pupils enjoy school, have positive attitudes to learning, feel safe and behave well. Good relationships ensure bullying is rare.
- The strong governing body supports and challenges the school well. Governors were instrumental in helping staff to eradicate inadequate achievement in mathematics, and the school is improving.
- New changes in senior and subject leadership are helping to drive forward improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or parts of lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also heard a sample of pupils read and scrutinised a sample of pupils' written work.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff, including senior and middle managers. A representative of the local authority was also interviewed.
- Inspectors took account of the 77 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and had conversations with a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school.
- Responses from the 31 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents including the school's records of current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to planning and monitoring, and safeguarding were also looked at.

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Malcolm Davison

Additional Inspector

Hazel Callaghan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Andrews is a larger-than-average-sized primary school with two classes in each year group.
- The proportions of pupils with special educational needs supported by school action and school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, are above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, is low.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides funding at St Andrews for children from service families and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- More pupils than normal join or leave the school between Reception and Year 6.
- There have been a considerable number of staff changes and lengthy absences over the past two years.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils, which was inspected. A pre-school run by a private provider shares the site and was not inspected.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching consistently good or better by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan lesson activities that emphasise what different groups of pupils are expected to learn rather than the type of task they need to carry out, and consistently challenge pupils to extend their learning
 - capitalise more on pupils' enthusiasm for learning by encouraging them to become independent and aspirational learners and involving them fully in identifying and monitoring their improvement targets.
- Raise pupils' achievement in mathematics and phonics (reading letter sounds in words) by:
 - revising the teaching programmes for mathematics to place greater emphasis on swift and accurate calculation through mental mathematics and providing regular opportunities for problem solving and the use of mathematical skills in other subjects, such as science
 - adopting a system for marking pupils' work in mathematics similar to that used in English so that pupils are very clear about how well they are doing and how to improve
 - undertaking a thorough review of the phonics programmes in younger classes so that they closely meet the needs of pupils, and help more pupils to exceed the levels expected by the end of Year 2.
- Increase the effectiveness of the school's leaders, staff and governors in raising pupils' attainment by:
 - extending the use of information from the new systems for monitoring the effectiveness of the school's work and pupils' progress so that emerging weaknesses can be swiftly and successfully addressed
 - placing a greater emphasis when monitoring lessons on how well the teacher's input and the activities provided for pupils are supporting learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- On entry to Reception, children's skills and knowledge are broadly in line with those expected. Their progress, including in important literacy and numeracy skills, is good and by the end of Reception their attainment is above average. However, pupils' subsequent slower progress in mathematics from the end of Year 2 means that, despite the good progress made in English, their overall attainment is no more than broadly average by the end of Year 6.
- In 2011 and 2012, pupils' progress in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 was inadequate and their attainment was well below average. Their progress is now adequate, but their attainment remains below average because of past weaknesses. Pupils who have just started in Year 6 have made good progress, attaining the levels expected.
- Current Year 6 pupils' calculation skills are much better than previously; for example, they can accurately multiply or divide by two-digit numbers. They are less good at swift mental calculation because of fewer opportunities to practise this skill. Pupils' ability to apply their mathematical skills in problem solving activities and in a range of other subjects is underdeveloped.
- Years 1 and 2 pupils do well in mathematics, especially in their knowledge of place value and by the end of Year 2 pupils work confidently with three-digit numbers, and the more-able with four digits.
- Pupils' progress in phonics is too slow in Year 1 and results in the phonics screening in 2012 were below average. Although improved this year, results were still not as good as they should have been.
- Due to good teaching, Year 2 pupils read fluently and with understanding. Their attainment is above average because considerably more pupils than nationally reach the expected level in national assessments. However, because some pupils are catching up on slower progress made in phonics in Year 1 it limits their ability to reach the higher levels.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in reading, and their attainment is above average by Year 6. Pupils read enthusiastically in a range of genres and confidently refer to the text when describing the plot or characters.
- In the last two years pupils have made rapid progress in writing and their attainment is well above average. Year 2 pupils' use of vocabulary enlivens their work and Year 6 pupils write well in a variety of formats such as play scripts or letters, using features like metaphors or onomatopoeia to engage the reader.
- As the result of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve similarly to their classmates. They make good progress in English, but although better, their progress in mathematics still requires improvement.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium have closed the gap well in English where, when judged against average point scores, they are less than a term behind their peers. In mathematics however, although now closing the gap in St Andrew's, they are still two terms behind their peers nationally. This is the case for pupils both from military families and those eligible for free school meals.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good and too little is outstanding. There is a lack of consistency across classes so that pupils make better progress in some year groups than in others.
- Until recently, staff in Years 3 to 6 have had too low expectations of what pupils can achieve in mathematics and have provided insufficient challenge to help pupils do well.

- Too often, lesson planning focuses on what pupils have to do rather than on the learning that is expected of them. Consequently, some of the tasks provided are too easy or pupils just reinforce what they can already do, limiting their progress. On a few occasions too much emphasis is placed on copying out work already completed.
- Staff direct learning too closely, particularly when telling pupils how a task should be completed rather than what they want them to learn. This prevents pupils from thinking for themselves and becoming independent learners.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, but they do not capitalise on pupils' positive attitudes and involve them more in taking on responsibility for their own learning. In particular, few staff involve pupils in helping to decide on, and monitor their progress towards, their improvement targets.
- Occasionally staff keep pupils sitting listening for too long. Pupils reported that they get bored during these times and said that they learn much better when they are actively involved in learning. Inspection evidence supports their views.
- Pupils' written work in English is marked especially well and pupils are given time to respond to comments and improve their work. This is a major reason why pupils are now making rapid progress in this subject. Marking in mathematics is not as good.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good, including now in mathematics. Staff are especially good at ensuring pupils use the correct subject vocabulary and technical language.
- Over the past two years the teaching and support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has improved, so that increasingly these pupils are reaching the levels expected for their age in English. For example, most of these pupils now reach the expected Level 2b in reading by Year 2.
- Pupil premium funding, partly used to provide extra teaching assistant support, has helped eligible pupils to close the gap on their classmates, especially in English.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- St Andrew's is a very happy school where pupils enjoy learning and want to do well. These positive attitudes have ensured that although achievement requires improvement it is not inadequate. From Reception, pupils work well collaboratively, for example on the mosaics Year 2. pupils were making of superheroes.
- Pupils concentrate well in lessons, exceptionally so when activities are practical, make them think hard or let them plan their own learning. Behaviour is not outstanding because, despite pupils being very keen to take on more responsibility for their own learning, in some lessons they have too few opportunities to do so.
- The school is strongly committed to fostering good relationships and discouraging discrimination, and pupils' awareness of their rights and responsibilities is excellent. Consequently, they are extremely well prepared in citizenship, are supportive of one another and have a very well-developed understanding of right and wrong.
- A small minority of parents and carers expressed concern about bullying, although pupils are adamant that little bullying in any form takes place. This view is validated by the school's behaviour and exclusion records. The behaviour of those pupils who find good behaviour difficult improves well over time. Most parents and carers agree that their children are happy in school.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school and are appreciative of the ways in which they are informed about how to keep themselves safe; for example, how to avoid cyber-bullying.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because neither teaching nor pupils' achievement are good. The school's response to weaknesses in mathematics and phonics has

been too slow and attainment in these aspects still requires improvement.

- Until the last academic year, systems for monitoring pupils' progress did not provide an accurate, or regular enough, picture for the school to respond swiftly to weaknesses. Although more regular assessments of pupils' progress and the electronic monitoring system now in place provide much better information, some staff and governors are still not entirely confident in the use of these systems.
- Enhanced monitoring of teaching has helped eradicate inadequacies and improve quality, but too often lesson observations and the scrutiny of teachers' planning do not focus enough on their effectiveness in promoting good learning. This limits the school's evidence of the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.
- The school's response to emerging weaknesses has been limited by significant staff changes and absences over the past two years. Much has been done to train new staff: an effective team of senior and subject leaders is now in place and the headteacher has created a staff team well focused on bringing about improvements in mathematics and phonics. This suggests that the school is securely placed to improve further.
- The wide range of extra-curricular activities, links with other schools, including some overseas, and activities provided by the Chesil Partnership, all benefit pupils. However, curriculum planning focuses too much on the activities to be covered rather than the learning that needs to take place. The programmes for teaching phonics and mathematics requirement improvement.
- Very strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural education has a major impact on the friendly and supportive ethos of the school and pupils' preparation for the future.
- The school strives hard to engage with parents and carers and work with them to facilitate their children's education, continuing to encourage their support for homework. A significant minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about leaders' management of teaching and learning in the older classes.
- Safeguarding requirements, including the vetting of staff and child protection procedures, fully meet requirements. Pupils are well cared for including in the effectively run breakfast club.
- The local authority provides effective challenge and support, especially in training and monitoring to help improve provision in mathematics, and is confident that a light touch approach will be appropriate in future.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has provided good support for the headteacher while new senior leaders and subject leaders developed the skills needed for their roles.
 - Governors play a leading role in driving forward improvement. For example, the mathematics governor has been involved in specific training in evaluation skills to help support the mathematics leader.
 - Governors know how well the school is doing in all aspects of its work and provide an effective link with parents and carers.
 - There is a commitment to training across a wide range of governance. Training in interpreting data, for example, means that governors can effectively compare St Andrew's performance with that of other schools and hold the school properly to account. Governors know that they must master the new tracking programme so that they can monitor pupils' progress for themselves.
 - Governors are regularly updated about teaching quality, and complement this with their own monitoring, ensuring they have a good understanding of teachers' performance and make well-informed decisions regarding salary increases.
 - Decisions about the allocation of pupil premium funding are fully discussed and agreed with governors. Governors monitor its effect on progress well.
 - Although government funding to promote physical education and sport in schools has not yet been received, effective discussion, including with pupils, has already taken place as to its allocation to support the school's already strong commitment to pupils' physical well-being.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	113835
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	426838

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	346
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Acting Chair	Fiona Vogt
Headteacher	Vanessa Lucas
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 September 2010
Telephone number	01305 832346
Fax number	01305 834317
Email address	office@standrews.dorset.sch.uk

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