

Inspection of St John's Church of England Primary School

Coombe Avenue, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 7TP

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Amanda Aze. 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 (CEO), Mark Lacey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Rosemary Tong.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St John's Church of England Primary School 'grow and learn together'. They describe the school as a welcoming and friendly place. The school has developed a nurturing and inclusive environment. Relationships are strong between adults and pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school.

Children in the early years have an exceptional start to their education. Children settle well and learn to become independent. The learning designed for the children matches their abilities and interests. This means that children remain focused and show resilience. Children develop confidence from an early age.

The school has high expectations for how pupils behave. Pupils meet these expectations and understand, appreciate and respect difference. They state, 'No one can tell you what you have to do or be. We are what we are.' Pupils are polite and respectful. There is a calm and purposeful environment in classrooms and around the school.

The school has designed a curriculum that teaches pupils how to stay safe. As a result, pupils feel safe in school. They learn how to stay safe online and in the wider community. Pupils feel confident to share any worries with trusted adults in school.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum from Nursery through to Year 6. It focuses on the important knowledge that pupils need to learn over time. The curriculum is sequenced well to ensure that pupils build on their prior learning. This enables pupils to develop a deeper understanding. Where this is successful, pupils can discuss their learning in depth. For example, Year 6 pupils can discuss their learning about electrical circuits in science. They show a good understanding of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. However, some pupils do not make links between their current and previous learning. As a result, these pupils do not build their knowledge as well. The school recognises that the curriculum needs further embedding. The implementation of the curriculum is not as effective in all classes and subjects.

A love of reading is visible across the school. In Nursery, children develop good listening skills, for example on 'listening walks' around the school grounds. Children learn routines quickly and start learning phonics straight away. They understand how to blend sounds together to read simple words. Staff have the expertise to deliver phonics effectively. They ensure that the books pupils read match the sounds they are learning. They check for any gaps in pupils' reading knowledge. If pupils fall behind, they receive the support they need to help them catch up quickly.

Pupils' enthusiasm for reading continues as they move through the school. As they gain confidence, pupils read books to improve their fluency. Texts become longer and more complex as pupils get older. Teachers read and discuss high-quality texts

with their classes. As a result, pupils build their reading knowledge and develop a passion for reading. Texts are selected carefully to develop pupils' understanding of diversity. The school states that 'every child will see themselves' in the books from the school's reading curriculum.

In the early years, adults know the needs of the children well. They use this knowledge to tailor learning. Children develop excellent learning behaviours, high levels of concentration and resilience. They concentrate on tasks for sustained periods of time. Staff support children to develop a rich vocabulary. Ongoing assessment ensures all pupils are supported to build their knowledge well. Adults support children in the early years to think for themselves and share their own ideas.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Learning is adapted to meet the needs of these pupils. This means that pupils with SEND learn and progress through the curriculum as well as their peers. Pupils with SEND participate in all aspects of school life.

The school's vision and values underpin pupils' personal development. Pupils have compassion and respect for others. They learn about protected characteristics and how to respect all people in their community. Pupils talk confidently about what British values mean and how they relate to their own lives. They understand about healthy relationships and know what it means to be a good friend. Pupils know how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.

Trustees and local governors understand their roles well. They provide effective support and challenge to the school. They manage resources well and hold the school to account to bring about improvement. The trust prioritises developing staff expertise. This is valued by staff, who are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the intended curriculum is not yet fully effective across all subjects and classes. As a result, pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they could. The trust needs to ensure that the curriculum is fully embedded and implemented effectively to ensure pupils learn well over time and progress as well as possible through the curriculum.
- In some subjects, pupils are not consistently able to recall their prior learning. When this is the case, they are not routinely able to connect what they are currently learning with what they have learned previously. The trust should ensure that pupils are consistently able to recall prior learning in all their subjects

so that they can deepen their understanding of what they study across the full breadth of the curriculum.

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	144550
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10298057
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	233
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rosemary Tong
CEO of trust	Mark Lacey
Headteacher	Amanda Aze
Website	www.stjohns.dsat.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St John's Church of England Primary School is a sponsored academy school. It is part of the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust.
- Its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in May 2016, where it was judged to be good.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has provision for two-, three- and four-year-olds in its nursery.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.

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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator and early years leader for the school. Inspectors also met with trust leaders and a range of teaching and support staff from the school.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the CEO for the trust and representatives from the board of trustees.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the local governing board.
- 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 inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Year 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspectors gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and by talking to parents before and after school. The inspectors also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Matt Fletcher, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Debbie Tregellas

Ofsted Inspector

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