

# Inspection of Dilton Marsh CofE Primary School

High Street, Dilton Marsh, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 4DY

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Inspection dates: 17–18 December 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Not previously inspected

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils attend school regularly and are polite to each other. They feel safe in the school.

Most teaching in English and mathematics helps pupils gain knowledge and understanding that they can remember. However, pupils are not learning well in other subjects. Equally, pupils do not receive effective personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils debate and speak about topics well from an early age but they do not remember enough over time.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are keen to find out new things and they listen attentively. For some pupils, however, teaching does not pay enough attention to what they need, so they are not making as much progress as they should.

Because of the respectful nature of pupils, the school is a happy place. Pupils play well together in sports and at playtime. There is very little bullying and staff deal with it effectively when it happens.

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

Trustees worked hard to stabilise the school during several turbulent years of changing leadership that were beyond their control. The current headteacher has helped the staff to work as a team for the benefit of the pupils. Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and their plans focus on the right things. There is still a lot to do, however. Many of the academy councillors, including the co-chairs, are new, so they are still learning how to hold the school leaders to account. This lack of effective monitoring by academy councillors and school leaders has contributed to the decline in standards in the recent past. Leaders are working more effectively now but it is early days. Leaders' work is not yet bringing about the improvements needed to help pupils achieve well.

Leaders have planned the curriculum from Reception to Year 6 in every subject. Teachers are implementing it and curriculum leaders are starting to check whether pupils are learning what they need to know. The checking is sporadic, however, and leaders' systems are not stringent. As a result, there is too much variation in pupils' experiences from one year group to another. This is true even in subjects where extensive training has taken place, such as mathematics.

Children arrive at school ready to learn. However, from Reception onwards, teachers' expectations vary. Where teachers' expectations are high, pupils are learning well in a range of subjects. Teaching provides challenge for the most able and the right support for those with lower ability. This is not the case in all teaching, however.

From the moment children start Reception, they learn phonics. Pupils read books that match their knowledge of phonics. Those pupils who are struggling read often at school and most are catching up. However, some pupils, especially older pupils,

are not reading regularly to adults or receiving guidance in their choice of books. Consequently, these pupils' reading skills are hampered.

Until this year, pupil premium funding was not used precisely, so disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as they should. This has changed, and leaders monitor disadvantaged pupils' progress more carefully. As a result, teaching and other support are helping pupils to know and remember more. For pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), those with highly complex needs receive strong support from skilled teaching assistants. However, some pupils with less severe needs are not achieving well. These pupils are not learning what they need to know.

Leaders provide a range of after-school clubs that many pupils attend. Most pupils are gaining experiences beyond those offered in school subjects. Other aspects of pupils' development are not taught effectively or deeply. Older pupils have some understanding of fundamental British values but it is superficial. The school's programme to prepare pupils for their next steps is weak. Leaders have not given enough thought to what pupils need to learn about the influence of extremism and the wider issues of life in modern Britain.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that recruitment processes are fit for purpose and all aspects are up to date.

Staff use the latest government guidance on keeping pupils safe and understand what they need to do if they have any concerns. Staff provide effective nurture and support to pupils who need it.

Leaders have made sure that the school is secure and have undertaken suitable risk assessments when necessary.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Academy councillors are keen to provide the necessary challenge and support to the school. New members, including the chairs, have not completed training on how to hold school leaders to account. Trustees need to ensure that this happens with some urgency.
- The implementation of the curriculum is too variable. Where it is weak, teachers do not consider the needs of individual pupils. As a result, too many pupils, including some pupils with SEND, are not learning and remembering knowledge well. Leaders need to monitor teaching more stringently and guide staff so that every pupil reaches their potential.

- Leaders have focused on reading this term. The English leader has updated books and considered which texts each year group should read together. He has implemented a new policy. Despite this, some pupils in key stage 2 are not reading regularly or choosing books wisely. Leaders must monitor reading for every pupil more carefully and hold to account teachers who are not complying with school policy.
- Planning and implementation of the wider curriculum are in their infancy for some subjects. Curriculum leaders must take responsibility for ensuring that pupils are learning the most critical components in subjects, such as religious education (RE), geography and history, in a suitable sequence so that pupils can learn and remember more.
- Pupils are not prepared well for life in modern Britain, nor is the work to enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding of a high quality. Pupils learn knowledge as disconnected facts and not as a sequential programme of study that develops and deepens as they grow older. Leaders need to rectify this promptly so that they prepare pupils better for life in the modern world.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141148
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111647
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Middleton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jill Hibbs
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.diltonmarsh.wilts.sch.uk">www.diltonmarsh.wilts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in January 2019. The executive headteacher was appointed in October 2019.
- The school is part of the multi-academy trust (MAT) called Acorn Education Trust. The school joined in 2014.
- The school does not use any alternative provision that is not part of the MAT.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We visited lessons with the headteacher and the executive headteacher.
- We scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- We talked with groups of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6, as well as with other pupils informally across the school.
- We held meetings with the headteacher, executive headteacher, curriculum leaders, teachers, members of the academy council and trustees.

- Documentary and other types of information were evaluated, including evidence relating to safeguarding.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and RE. This involved talking to leaders, teachers and pupils. We also visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

### **Inspection team**

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Shears

Ofsted Inspector

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