

Loders CofE Primary Academy

Loders, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3SA

Inspection dates

26–27 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The chief executive officer (CEO) of the multi-academy trust (MAT) and the head of school work well together. They are making rapid improvements to teaching. As a result, pupils' progress is improving across the school.
- The MAT has added capacity to leadership at every level. Governors have a greater understanding of their role. They are more thorough in the way they are holding the head of school to account.
- The curriculum provides pupils with an appropriate range of subjects to study. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum is underpinned by the Christian ethos that pervades the school. Pupils understand tolerance and diversity. They respect each other and staff.
- Pupils behave well when learning and at social times. They are polite and courteous.
- Pupils understand about healthy living. Leaders use the sport premium wisely and there are more opportunities for pupils to engage in a rich variety of sports as a result. The day starts with morning exercises for some pupils. Every pupil runs a daily mile and the health benefits are tangible.
- Leaders are scrutinising the spending of the pupil premium more diligently. As a result, most disadvantaged pupils are achieving in line with other pupils nationally and some are doing better.
- The focus on the funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has not been as stringent. Consequently, some pupils with SEND are not making enough progress.
- Some teachers are not planning effective challenge into the learning of the most able pupils and those of middle ability. There are too few pupils reaching the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Equally, some teachers are not planning writing across a range of subjects to improve pupils' accuracy.
- In a few cases, pupils are over-reliant on teachers and do not have adequate opportunities to develop their own learning proficiently.
- Some older pupils are not showing pride in the presentation of work.
- Pupils attend school regularly. Very few are absent.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - pupils have more opportunities to find out new information to develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills
 - teachers' planning enables more pupils to write accurately across a range of subjects and genres
 - the most able and middle-ability pupils achieve their full potential and more gain results at a high standard in writing and mathematics
 - the presentation of pupils' work is of a consistently high standard
 - pupils with SEND make strong progress with support that stretches their learning further so that they achieve their potential.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The MAT sponsored the school in 2016. Trustees have supported the addition of an extra teacher so that only two year groups are mixed at any one time. This has eased the teaching expectations and enabled pupils to make better progress.
- In 2017, the head of school took up his role. He has worked quickly to evaluate the improvements necessary following the decline of the school in 2014. Alongside the CEO and other trust leaders, he has established a motivated team. There is a momentum and desire for establishing strong teaching.
- Leaders at every level have high expectations and are strong role models for pupils.
- Leaders have engaged with the community successfully. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and the benefits that it provides to the community.
- Teachers value the training they receive with others from the MAT. They can find out about and visit the other five schools to share good practice and maintain the improvement journey.
- The curriculum offers wide-ranging topics that pupils enjoy. The head of school is aware that better sequencing of skills would be an advantage for pupils. He is developing subject plans that build on pupils' prior attainment of skills and knowledge in a more systematic way.
- Pupils benefit from the many extra-curricular opportunities that are available. These include sports, music, technical and environmental activities. Leaders have ensured that disadvantaged pupils can benefit from sporting and musical activities, but this has not been extended to other activities yet.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum is a strength of the school and the Christian values intertwine within it. Pupils learn about citizenship through the school council and other supportive roles.
- Leaders have supported the progress of disadvantaged pupils well in 2019. These pupils are making better progress this year because the head of school has ensured that they are a constant focus of staff.
- Leaders use the sport premium wisely. Pupils benefit from a vast range of sporting opportunities, including basketball, tag rugby and badminton.
- Some pupils with SEND are not supported effectively and this impedes their progress.
- Staff are aware of how to protect pupils from the influences of radicalisation.
- Staff and pupils have a moral commitment to equality. There is no tolerance of derogatory language or attitudes.

Governance of the school

- Governors are enthusiastic and have an improved awareness of their roles. Minutes of their meetings show that they are aware of critical groups in the school. Governors challenge leaders and ask insightful questions.
- Governors are active members of the community and work hard to represent the school effectively. They have a distributive skill set that enables them to plan considerably.
- MAT leaders have provided effective training for governors. As a result, governors monitor and evaluate the school's development plan well. School leaders' actions are having a good impact and are helping pupils to make strong progress.
- Governors' oversight of pupil premium and special educational needs funding is not yet secure. They are not evaluating the impact of spending on pupils' progress thoroughly.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The head of school ensures that pupils are safe and secure in the school at all times. There is a culture of safety with suitable risk assessments undertaken. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and child-protection records are detailed and of high quality. The safeguarding policy is up to date. Staff have been suitably trained in the most recent changes to safeguarding procedures. Staff work sensitively with parents and external agencies to monitor and support the more vulnerable pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils focus well on their learning in most lessons because teachers have high expectations for conduct.
- Pupils are making better progress in mathematics following an intensive period of training for staff. Pupils use resources well to help them convert abstract concepts into practical ones. For example, they understand placement of numbers when using decimals.
- Most teachers question skilfully to deepen pupils' thinking. They use questioning well to tackle misconceptions. However, this is more evident in the teaching of younger pupils than those further up the school.
- Teachers follow the school policy for feedback and marking. Pupils respond well to this and, from a very young age, are redrafting their work.
- Pupils have a positive attitude to learning and are keen to find out about new ideas. Some teachers' planning does not consider extending the thinking of the most able pupils well enough. Equally, there are times when pupils are overdependent on teachers for answers because informative resources are lacking.
- Pupils do homework in literacy and mathematics that improves their retention of basic facts. In addition, they have a choice of creative topics that prepare them well as responsible citizens. Pupils enjoy their homework.

- Younger pupils engage well with phonics teaching. They use their understanding to decode words in their reading books accurately and to apply their knowledge of graphemes in their writing.
- Teachers are focusing on disadvantaged pupils in a better way this year and these pupils are making better progress as a result.
- Pupils with complex needs are well supported and make progress in line with others in school and nationally. Staff require further training in how to support pupils with less complex SEND because these pupils are not making enough progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and articulate. They are proud of their school and share many aspects of their learning with enthusiasm. They enjoy the opportunities provided and make the most of them.
- Pupils appreciate being in a small school and knowing each other well. They enjoy joint activities, such as each creating the unique mosaic in the Chinese dragon display and sharing a thought on the Christian trinity symbol in the hall.
- Every pupil participates in the daily mile. Their stamina is increasing, and pupils understand the benefits of being healthy. Many pupils participate in the sports clubs before and after school and every age group from Year 1 to 6 joins in.
- The school's open culture promotes all aspects of pupils' welfare. Pupils understand how to stay safe. There are safety days when pupils become aware of the dangers of the internet. Pupils understand about online bullying.
- Pupils receive workshops from the NSPCC and the RNLI. The latter is relevant because pupils live close to the coast.
- There is very little bullying and when it happens, staff deal with it quickly. Pupils learn to understand different types of bullying in personal, health, social and economic education.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are punctual and prepared for lessons. They are ready to learn.
- Pupils value their education. Few pupils, including the disadvantaged, are absent or persistently absent.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day, including at lunchtimes.
- The school is an orderly environment. Pupils respond quickly to instructions and requests from staff, allowing lessons to flow smoothly and without interruption. Low-level disruption is rare.

- Pupils' good conduct reflects the school's efforts to promote high standards.
- Parents, staff and pupils have no well-founded concerns about personal development, behaviour and welfare.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- There is strong improvement in the outcomes of younger pupils. Those in key stage 1 are making better progress in writing and reading.
- The teacher for key stage 1 is the mathematics lead and pupils benefit from his experience.
- A new library was opened in February 2019. Although the central library has replaced reading corners in classrooms, pupils still have access to books in class. Teachers have selected specific books that support reading within classes. As a result, pupils are reading more often and with greater proficiency.
- Pupils in Year 1 achieved greater success in the phonics screening test this year and outcomes are more in line with average.
- From different starting points, pupils' progress in English and mathematics is close to average because of better teaching.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making better progress than others in school and nationally in reading and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils' progress is in line with others in school and nationally in writing.
- Pupils with SEND are not making as strong progress as others. Those with more complex needs are making progress which is closer to average.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader is a newly qualified teacher and she is well supported by the multi-academy trust leader for early years.
- In 2017, leaders introduced Nursery provision to the school. Children from the age of two join the school. This is highly successful. Leaders have given careful thought to how the Nursery children can involve themselves in joint activities as well as giving them discrete areas where they can play alone.
- Both leaders have an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the Nursery and Reception children. Consequently, children from two years old to five are making strong progress.
- Children enjoy activities that encourage reading, writing and number work alongside creative role play.
- Children in Reception are learning phonics well. Every child in Reception is on target to achieve a good level of development because of effective planning and proficient teaching.

- Children are safe. Adults have paediatric first aid qualifications to help them meet the children's medical needs. There is suitable provision for nappy-changing and other intimate care.
- The early years teacher worked closely with parents so she had a reliable understanding of what children could do already when starting in Nursery or Reception. Since then, she has been continually assessing children so that their needs are well met, and they continue to make strong progress. She is ably assisted by a well-qualified and experienced early years practitioner.
- There are good home school links through online and face-to-face communication. Parents welcome this and they provide useful information of what their children can achieve at home.
- Children behave well. They know how to share and take turns with each other with a minimum of fuss.
- Children explore their physicality through their environment. Adults support them carefully to take managed risks in a safe and secure way.
- Children, including those with SEND, are ready for Year 1 because of thoughtful teaching.
- Children learn about the wider world through exploring religious festivals from across the world. This enables children to reflect on who they are and to consider their connections and differences.

School details

Unique reference number	142046
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10058291

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	75
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ian Gowrie
Head of school	Peter Beare
Telephone number	01308 423418
Website	loders.acornacademy.org
Email address	lodersoffice@acornacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	19–20 November 2014

Information about this school

- Loders Church of England Primary Academy joined the Acorn multi-academy trust in 2016. There are six primary schools in the trust.
- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average, as is the proportion of those who have an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons jointly with the head of school, the early years leader for the multi-academy trust and the CEO.
- A wide sample of pupils' work was scrutinised.
- Inspectors talked with pupils from key stage 2, as well as with pupils informally across the site.
- Meetings were held with the head of school, middle leaders, members of the governing body, the MAT lead for early years, the MAT SENCo and the CEO.
- Documentary and other types of information were evaluated, including evidence relating to safeguarding, assessment and school evaluation.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 responses and 10 comments on the online survey, Parent View, the 12 responses to the staff online survey and 20 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tonya Hill

Ofsted Inspector

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