

Shillingstone Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113813
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	357429
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susie Poe
Headteacher	Jane Whitehouse-Sharpe
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2007
School address	Shillingstone Blandford Forum DT11 0RA
Telephone number	01258 860446
Fax number	01258 860446
Email address	office@shillingstone.dorset.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and observed five teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers and also groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school development planning, minutes of governors' meetings, school policies, including those associated with safeguarding procedures, assessment and tracking documentation, pupil records and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed the views of parents and carers in the 42 Ofsted questionnaires returned.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How are the attainment and progress of Year 6 affected by the quality of teaching.?
- Have the school's strategies to raise attainment and accelerate progress, particularly for the more able pupils, been effective?
- How strong is the provision for cultural education and its effect on building pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures and communities other than their own?
- What is the impact of recent changes to the leadership and management of the school in improving the school's overall effectiveness?

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average rural primary school with four classes. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the school's Reception Year class. All other classes contain pupils from two year groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The majority have learning difficulties and a few have social and emotional needs. The school is due to move from its present site into a new purpose-built building in October 2010. The newly appointed headteacher took up her position at the beginning of this term. The school holds several awards including the Financial Management Standards in Schools Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school which provides a caring environment for pupils and prepares them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education. The school is now beginning to show effective signs of improvement after a period of turbulence and changes to leadership and management since its last inspection. At the heart of this recovery is the enthusiastic and visionary leadership of the headteacher, who has provided a clear focus for school improvement since her recent appointment. Working well with staff and governors she has already ensured that the school has evaluated its performance effectively and implemented strategies aimed at improving its practice. This has already led to improvements in pupils' progress and achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school now has a clear overview of its strengths and areas for development and this is an indication of the school's satisfactory capacity to improve in the future.

Pupils enjoy school. They say they feel safe and well looked after and know there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. They have good attitudes to learning and their behaviour both in and out of the classroom is outstanding. Parents and carers value the effective way the school safeguards and protects pupils. One family commented that they were 'extremely pleased with the pastoral care in the school' while several other parents and carers commented positively about the school's inclusive approach to learning.

Children make good progress in their Reception Year because teaching is consistently good and caters for their needs effectively. However, pupils' progress varies throughout the rest of the school and this reflects differences in the quality of teaching and learning. Progress from Year 1 to Year 4 is satisfactory and teaching in these year groups sometimes lacks pace. In addition, work given to pupils to complete is not always sufficiently challenging because teachers do not have high enough expectations of how well pupils are able to perform, especially those who are more able. As a result, pupils do not always make as fast progress as they should. Although pupils make good progress in Year 5 and Year 6 there are gaps in their learning that have to be addressed and this is the main reason why pupils' achievement and attainment are satisfactory, rather than good, by the end of Year 6.

A regular range of visits to places of interest and visitors to the school are helping pupils to increase their knowledge of the world around them. However, pupils' knowledge and awareness of the multicultural nature of the United Kingdom, especially the wide range of cultures and beliefs of people living in this country who are from different backgrounds than themselves, are limited.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by raising teachers' expectations of how well pupils can perform and regularly sharing good teaching practice with all staff. (Timescale: end of spring term 2011)
- Ensure all pupils, including the more able pupils, make consistently good progress in all classes by ensuring that they are always provided with work which is well matched to their different abilities. (Timescale: end of spring term 2011)
- Increase pupils' awareness of the multicultural nature of the United Kingdom by improving opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the ethnic diversity found in modern society. (Timescale: end of spring term 2011)

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils respond well to the caring approach taken by the school. This adds to their enjoyment of learning and is reflected in their good attendance. They say that they feel 'part of one big family' and believe they make a good contribution to the school community. They take their responsibilities seriously, for example serving on the school council, and older pupils explain with pride how they often look after the younger ones. Their spiritual, moral and social development is strong and this is reflected in pupils' outstanding behaviour. They are confident that any rare instances of anti-social behaviour by others will be dealt with quickly by adults.

Children enter the school at the age of four with skills and understanding expected for their age, although this varies from year to year. However, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also the more able pupils, make uneven progress in learning in different year groups because of variations in the quality of teaching, which varies from satisfactory to good in different classes. When teaching is good pupils achieve well. This was evident during a numeracy lesson in a mixed Year 5 and Year 6 class when all pupils, including the more able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, made good progress in developing their understanding of measuring the perimeters of different shapes because the tasks were well matched to their abilities. Additionally, pupils needing extra help with learning received the support they required to succeed. Similarly, in a Reception class lesson, children achieved well and made good progress in developing their understanding of the names of different shapes because the teacher and teaching assistant made learning fun and ensured all children worked at tasks which offered them the correct level of challenge.

Pupils display a good grasp of the importance of exercising regularly and eating healthily. Their satisfactory skills in literacy and numeracy, coupled with their good attitudes to learning, are preparing them adequately for their future economic well-being. Pupils take pleasure in talking about what they like most about school and confidently describe how they enjoy taking part in sporting activities and local community events. They are far less confident when involved in discussions about the multicultural nature of modern society in the United Kingdom. This represents a gap in their learning.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The school has recently developed a curriculum which links subjects together effectively and provides a satisfactory range of experiences for pupils. As a consequence, they have good attitudes to school and are keen to learn. Pupils are able to work well independently in lessons and teachers and teaching assistants therefore have the time to support those experiencing difficulties in learning. This is an important factor in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to all other pupils. Teachers usually make good use of interactive whiteboards to enhance learning. However, even though teachers and teaching assistants work well together to make a positive contribution to pupils' learning the quality of teaching varies throughout the school. Some is of good quality and caters for the needs of all pupils effectively but teachers do not presently have regular opportunities to share this good practice with their colleagues. As a result, there are times in less successful lessons when pupils say that the work they are given to complete is either too hard or too easy and this adversely affects their progress.

Pupils say that they like their teachers because they are 'helpful' and 'friendly'. They look forward to school visits to places of interest, especially residential trips, and include information and communication technology (ICT) and literacy among their favourite subjects. Pupils appreciate the well-attended programme of enrichment activities the school provides including after-school activities such as sports clubs. The school provides pupils with a good level of care, guidance and support. Good induction and transfer

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arrangements help pupils quickly settle into new routines, especially when they enter the school for the first time at the start of their Reception year. Vulnerable pupils receive a good level of well-targeted care and support and this enables them to take a full and active part in school life.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is committed to raising achievement and standards in the school. In the short time since her appointment she has ensured that the staff and governing body have developed a common commitment to school improvement and this is reflected in the good quality of recent school development planning. Governors are once more beginning to play an active and important role in the life of the school and presently provide an appropriate level of support and challenge. Parents and carers feel part of the school and say they are kept well informed about their children's progress. They fully appreciate the effective way in which the school tackles discrimination well and makes sure their children are given equal opportunities to succeed.

Links with external agencies and partnerships with other bodies are used effectively to support pupils' learning and well-being, especially the well-being of vulnerable pupils. Safeguarding procedures are good and the school has adopted recommended good practice across all areas of its work. All staff and governors receive regular safeguarding and child protection training and are well aware of the importance of their roles in keeping pupils safe and free from harm.

The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. Links with the local church and the village community are used effectively to develop pupils' understanding of the local world in which they live and share beliefs. However, pupils' appreciation of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider national community remains in need of development.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers talk positively about the friendliness of the Early Years Foundation Stage staff and about how they encourage children to do well. One comment from a parent and carer summed up the good quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage: 'My child only started school three weeks ago and seems very happy and settled. I am very impressed with the teaching in the Reception class.'

Leadership and management are good and this has been an important factor in improving provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the last inspection. Staff work well together to make sure children enjoy their first experiences of school. The classroom is colourful and well resourced and provides a stimulating learning environment for children. Lessons effectively blend opportunities for children to learn both independently and with adult direction. Recording of children's progress is ongoing and used well to plan future work. As a result, children get off to a good start and make good progress because teaching caters well for their individual needs.

Even at this early stage in the school year most children happily join in lesson activities with enthusiasm. They understand how to share and take turns. Regular visits to local places of interest help build up their understanding of the world in which they live. The school has improved the Early Years Foundation Stage secure outdoor provision since the last inspection and children now have regular opportunities to develop the skills associated with outdoor learning and play even during inclement weather. However, this area can only be accessed through a fire-door and this restricts the free flow of children to and from the classroom.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires or who were spoken to by inspectors held positive views about the school and felt that the school was led and managed effectively. Most parents and carers believed that their children enjoyed school and were happy with their children's experiences. They believed the standard of teaching was good and that the school kept their children safe and helped them to develop a healthy lifestyle.

Few parents and carers expressed any concerns although some felt the school did not take account of their suggestions and concerns or met their child's individual needs. A very small minority of parents and carers thought their children were not making enough progress while a few believed the school was not preparing children well enough for the future.

Inspectors considered these comments and judged that the school took account of parents' and carers' suggestions and concerns and that it met children's individual needs. Inspectors also judged that pupils made satisfactory progress and that the school prepared pupils satisfactorily for the future.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shillingstone Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 90 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	55	16	38	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	27	64	10	24	2	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	48	18	43	2	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	48	16	38	2	5	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	23	55	17	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	45	17	40	2	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	50	15	36	2	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	42	12	55	2	5	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	45	14	33	3	7	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	45	16	38	0	0	2	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	40	15	36	1	2	3	7
The school is led and managed effectively	21	50	13	31	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	55	16	38	2	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



1 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shillingstone Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Blandford Forum DT11 0RA

Thank you for welcoming me and the other inspector to your school. Everyone was really friendly and helpful and we soon realised why you all enjoy school. We enjoyed talking to you about what you like the most about school and seeing you all working hard in lessons. We agree with you when you say that pupils feel very safe and secure in the school. We both hope you enjoy moving into your new school building after half term.

Yours is a satisfactory school. This means that there are lots of things that it does well, but also there are some things that could be better.

Here are some of the main things we found out about your school.

- Children get off to a good start and make good progress in their Reception Year.
- You enjoy school and this is reflected in your good attendance.
- You all have good attitudes to work and your behaviour is outstanding.
- Your school takes good care of you and makes sure you are always very safe.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors lead and manage the school satisfactorily.

We believe your headteacher and teachers can improve your school so we have asked them to:

- make sure that teaching is of good quality in all classes and that you are always given work that is not too difficult or too easy and are expected to do your best so you can make better progress
- help you find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from cultural backgrounds which are different to your own.

Once again, thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school and remember you can help your school to improve by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron

Lead Inspector

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