

Pamphill Voluntary Controlled Church of England First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113764
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	357414
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Stephen Lake

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frank Miller
Headteacher	Trevor Davies
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. 10 lessons or parts of lessons were seen and short visits made to a further three. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the most recent school self-evaluation form, the school development plan, minutes of meetings held by the governing body, the school's assessments of pupils' attainment and progress, the records held on pupils needing additional support and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, school policies and reports from the School Improvement Partner. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff as well as 29 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

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

- The achievement of gifted and talented pupils in mathematics at both key stages to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging.
- The effectiveness of the school's strategies to improve attendance.
- The impact of school strategies to promote community cohesion.
- The impact of the review of strategies for assessing children on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Pamphill is a much smaller-than-average school situated near Wimborne. A large majority of the pupils travel in from surrounding villages and towns. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and the number from other ethnic groups is below average. Far fewer pupils than average are known to be entitled to free school meals. An independent pre-school uses the school hall every morning.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. The pupils achieve well because of good teaching and a stimulating curriculum. The good quality care, guidance and support ensure a caring, family atmosphere in which the pupils develop into confident and effective learners. The pupils' understanding of how to stay fit and healthy is good and they know how to stay safe. The pupils' behaviour is good and the school is a harmonious place.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, assessments of children starting school have improved as a result of recent reviews and give a clear starting point for children. This confirms that the children make good progress to start Year 1 with above average skills levels. The pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 4 because of good teaching and by the time they leave the school at age nine, attainment is above average overall. The teachers are assessing pupils well and setting very challenging targets for them. As a result, the achievement of more-able pupils in mathematics is well above average at age seven. It is too early to see the full impact of the improved assessment arrangements at age nine, but achievement in mathematics in Years 3 and 4 is good and improving rapidly. The school is extremely good at teaching reading. The pupils make outstanding progress in this area and attainment at age nine is exceptionally high. This is partly because of the good engagement with parents and carers who work effectively with the school to improve the pupils' reading skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the support of capable teaching assistants.

The good quality curriculum makes a strong contribution to the pupils' personal development. The programme to develop a 'Rights Respecting School' is particularly effective. The impact of this can be seen in pupils' outstanding social and moral development. The pupils clearly enjoy school, but despite this, attendance is an ongoing problem, partly because too many parents and carers take their children on holiday during term time. Strenuous efforts by the school have improved attendance considerably, but it still remains below 95%. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures in their own area and in other parts of the world is good, but their understanding of cultures in other parts of the United Kingdom, although satisfactory, is a relative weakness.

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. The strong leadership and management of the headteacher have enabled all the teachers to develop into an effective team working together to improve the quality of education. The governing body has improved since the last inspection and is monitoring and challenging the school well. Nevertheless, at present, it does not have a clear enough view on how well the school promotes community cohesion. Attainment and progress have improved steadily since the last inspection, especially in mathematics. The quality of teaching, the quality of the curriculum, the quality of care, support and guidance and the leadership and management

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have all improved since the last inspection. Action has already started on most of the areas for development. The school has a good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Seek ways to improve attendance by at least 0.5% by the end of the 2010/2011 academic year, in partnership with the local authority and parents and carers.
- Improve pupils' cultural development by providing better opportunities within the curriculum for developing pupils' understanding of cultures within other parts of the United Kingdom.
- Strengthen the strategies for promoting community cohesion by:
 - building upon and extending the good work of the 'Rights Respecting School' programme
 - ensuring that the effectiveness of the school's strategies is monitored systematically and rigorously.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The children start school with skills levels similar to those typically expected at this age. They make good progress in the Reception Year and enter Year 1 with skills levels above those normally expected. Progress in Years 1 to 4 is consistently good and occasionally outstanding, notably in reading and more recently in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. The pupils respond well to the good attention given to improving mathematics and the challenges set for them. For example, in a mathematics lesson on calculation and place value, the pupils responded extremely well to the very good questioning by the teacher. They were eager to achieve their targets and keen to attempt more difficult problems that demonstrated their understanding of what they had learnt. The pupils at all levels are making excellent progress in their reading because of the emphasis placed on fluency and expression whenever any text is read. This was seen very clearly in a lesson when the pupils were encouraged to read poetry with great attention to the rhythm and meaning of the words. It was further demonstrated extremely well when the pupils were dramatising a story and acting out the characters, using vocal expression very well to illustrate the characteristics of the person speaking.

The pupils are very attentive in lessons and have a respect for themselves and others. The clear impact of work to develop a Rights Respecting School can be seen in the very strong social skills of the pupils and in their excellent understanding of moral issues. This has a very positive impact upon learning, for example the pupils speak very knowledgeably about the issues raised in their study of the book 'Journey to Jo'burg'. The pupils behave well and have a good understanding of how to stay safe because of the good guidance they receive. The pupils say there is a little bullying, but this appears to relate to incidents that occurred last year and were dealt with well by the adults. Many pupils participate in the wide range of opportunities for sport in lessons and after-school clubs. The pupils make a good contribution to their school community, for example when older pupils look after younger ones on the playground. The pupils contribute well to the local community through activities such as taking part in country dancing at the Wimborne folk festival or singing at a local Christmas market. The pupils' above-average attainment and good information and communication technology (ICT) skills ensure that they are well prepared

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for the next stage in their education, with strong skills to support their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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 teachers work hard to make lessons stimulating and motivating and make very good use of ICT to support this. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of activities that ensure all pupils are motivated to learn. Questioning often challenges the pupils well and extends their learning while assessing what they know already. The pupils who are deemed gifted and talented are challenged very well. For example, in a mathematics lesson on calculation, more-able pupils were reminded of the need to work in thousands, hundreds, tens and units when cooking. A wide variety of activities make the lessons interesting, for example the regular drama productions. Nevertheless, these and some elements of physical education are limited a little because the new school hall is not available to the school during the mornings. Improved assessment procedures are used effectively to inform the planning of work that challenges the pupils well. Marking is of good quality and regularly gives the pupils high-quality advice on what they need to do in order to improve their work. Visits to local places of interest and visitors, such as an African drumming band, make a strong contribution that enhances the pupils' learning. Good partnerships with other local schools support curriculum development and enable extra support for those deemed gifted and talented. The school is aware that more needs

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to be done to extend these links and visits to include experiences that will promote the pupils' understanding of community cohesion and of different cultures within the United Kingdom more effectively.

Pastoral care is strong. Child-protection procedures are detailed and well known to all of the staff. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out on all activities. The school works very closely with parents and carers to support their children's learning and improve attendance. This has brought about considerable improvement, although attendance levels remain below the average for similar schools. The additional needs of those pupils with special needs and/or disabilities are met well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

In this small school, all teachers share subject management responsibilities and work together effectively to bring about school improvement. The whole team, led well by the headteacher, shares a clear ambition and drive for continual improvement. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching and learning well to ensure equality of opportunity. The school is very good at ensuring that those with additional needs are fully included in all activities.

Community cohesion is well developed within the local community, but the school has identified in the development plan that this needs extending. The school has started to address this issue, but still needs to organise more in-depth visits and visitors to enable the pupils to gain a better understanding of multicultural Britain. Although a basic audit has been carried out to identify what needs to be done to improve community cohesion, this does not include rigorous enough methods of evaluating the impact of any strategies put in place.

The governing body is supportive and works well with the headteacher to improve the quality of teaching and plan building improvements. Well-chosen appointments to the governing body have strengthened the team significantly. It is rigorous in ensuring safeguarding requirements are met and the school's systems for safeguarding are effective. Procedures and strategies to obtain parental and carers' views are effective and many opportunities are provided for parents to keep in touch with the school. Parents and carers are consulted regularly, both formally and informally. For example, the vice-chair attends parents' and carers' evenings to be available to parents and carers who wish to speak about the school. Information letters are also placed on the school website to allow easy access by parents and carers.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers value the start that the children get to school. Strong links with the on-site playgroup ensure a smooth transition. Well-established routines and strong links with parents and carers help the children to feel very secure and cared for and ensure that they get a good start to their education. The strong teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistant ensures that the needs of the children are met very well and the provision for their welfare is exemplary.

The children achieve well from starting points that are in line with those expected for their age. They start Year 1 well prepared for learning. The adults are skilled at ensuring a good balance of direct teaching and opportunities for the children to learn through purposeful play. This balance enables all children to grow in confidence and build securely on their previous experience. The well-organised and attractive environment is used effectively to support a stimulating curriculum that provides a good degree of challenge to all children. The school has recognised that the limitations of the site, with a listed building, make providing a high quality outdoor area difficult, although suitable plans are in place to address this. Nevertheless, although the school is managing this situation well, it can, at times, limit the opportunities to allow children to move freely between indoor and outdoor activities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed effectively. The expertise and skill of the adults and the good systems for checking on children's progress ensure that all individuals are gently, but effectively, challenged to achieve well. However, the school wishes to improve further the accuracy of assessments when children start school and is working with pre-school providers on this matter. Strong links with external agencies provide good support for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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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:	2
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

The vast majority of parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Written comments were received from 15 parents and carers. Typical of the comments received were: 'We have three children and have experience of several schools in, we find Pamphill school to be by far the best in every respect'; 'Both my very difficult children love coming to school'; and 'Pamphill school has provided a happy, safe and fun environment into which he has settled fantastically well'. The inspectors found evidence to support the positive observations of the parents carers.

A very small minority of parents and carers made some negative comments, such as 'Little feedback is given regarding decisions made if you do not ask direct questions'; and 'Apart from the parents' evening, we are not fully aware of our child's progress, hence more informal feedback would be welcomed'. A small minority do not believe that the school is led and managed well and a very small minority do not believe that suggestions and concerns are taken account of.

The inspectors found little evidence to support the view that the school is not led and managed well. The inspection evidence shows that leadership and management are good. The inspectors also found evidence that the school had a good range of both formal and informal opportunities to consult parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pamphill Church of England Voluntary Controlled First 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 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 66 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	69	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	72	8	28	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	14	48	14	48	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	52	13	45	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	66	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	66	10	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	59	10	34	1	3	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)	15	52	13	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	66	10	34	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	55	12	41	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	41	13	45	3	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	41	11	38	2	7	3	10
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	69	9	31	0	0	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.



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22 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pamphill Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School, Wimbourne, BH21 4EE

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed talking with you and finding out about your school.

Yours is a good school. It looks after you well and makes sure that you are safe. Some of the other things that we liked about your school are:

- You achieve well and your attainment is above that reached in many other schools especially in reading.
- The teaching is good and your teachers make learning enjoyable for you.
- You all get on together very well in the school, looking after and helping each other. We were very impressed with the work to make your school a 'Rights Respecting School'.
- The school has good links with parents and carers and with agencies outside the school. These links help you learn much better, especially those of you who have additional learning needs.
- All of the teachers and the headteacher work well together and the school is led and managed well.

To help your school get even better we have asked the staff and governing body to do just a few things. We have asked them to:

- try to improve attendance so that you have more time in school to enjoy it and learn
- find better ways of helping you learn about different cultures in the United Kingdom
- build upon your 'Rights Respecting School' to help improve your understanding of community cohesion and to check on how well this is done.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lake

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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