

West Moors, St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113780
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	357419
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2011
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 controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Dixon
Headteacher	Jeremy Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 2007
School address	Station Road West Moors Ferndown BH22 0JF
Telephone number	01202 874838
Fax number	01202 861826
Email address	office@stmaryswestmoors.dorset.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and observed five teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, parents and carers, teaching staff and 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 62 Ofsted questionnaires returned.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Attainment and progress, especially in mathematics, and what this signifies in terms of the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Provision for cultural education and its effect on building up pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures and communities other than their own.
- The quality of leadership and management at all levels, especially the impact of the governing body.
- The quality of teaching and learning, in particular teachers' subject knowledge of mathematics.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school. Pupils are taught in five classes. Almost all are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The needs of this group of pupils include emotional needs, although most have moderate learning difficulties. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the school's Reception Year class. The school has gone through a period of changes in leadership and management since the previous inspection. The present headteacher took up his position in September 2009. The school holds several awards, including Healthy School accreditation.

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 which provides a very supportive environment for all its pupils and prepares them effectively for the next stage of their education. The school has recovered well 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 an outstanding and well-respected headteacher.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive in their support for what they correctly believe is a good and improving school. They appreciate the effective way the school safeguards and protects pupils and ensures the quality of care and support it provides is of a consistently high order. 'My son has progressed in leaps and bounds both socially and academically since starting here' and 'The present headteacher has made a significant difference to our school, improving communication and the standard of education' were typical of comments in the returned parents' and carers' questionnaires. These reflect the school's outstanding engagement with parents and carers. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and makes a strong contribution to their learning.

Since his appointment, the headteacher has worked well with his senior leadership team and governing body to ensure that the school has rigorously and accurately evaluated its performance. This has been a key factor in raising pupils' attainment in writing and reading, which had dipped slightly since the last inspection. It is also an indication of the school's good capacity for future sustained improvement. The school has worked hard to improve the teaching of mathematics and this has helped to raise attainment in this subject.

The level of care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding. Health and well-being are securely safeguarded and child protection procedures are good. Effective systems for tracking and recording pupils' pastoral and academic progress are used effectively to provide pupils with the guidance and support they need to become confident and independent learners. Staff are enthusiastic and work well as a team to ensure the school reaches the challenging targets it sets itself. Informative marking helps pupils to know what they have to do to improve their work. However, even the older pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 are unsure about how to assess their own progress. Even so, achievement is good throughout the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more able, make good progress so that, by Year 4, attainment is above average overall. Although the school has successfully implemented measures to raise attainment in mathematics, pupils' ability to solve mathematical problems successfully is still in need of development.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By March 2012, ensure that pupils are able to use basic mathematic skills successfully when solving mathematical problems.
- By September 2011, ensure pupils, especially those in Year 3 and Year 4, have the confidence and ability to assess their own progress in learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children generally join the school's Early Years Foundation Stage with many of the skill levels expected for their age, although this can vary from year to year. Even though pupils make good progress and achieve well in all year groups, it is noticeable that, by Year 4, pupils, including those with learning difficulties and also the more able, often find it difficult to use their basic mathematical skills successfully when solving mathematical problems.

Pupils are very positive about school and this is reflected in their good attendance rates. They say that they really enjoy learning, especially when lessons involve the use of computers and when teachers use interactive whiteboards to make learning interesting. Their very good attitudes enable teachers to concentrate on helping those pupils who are experiencing difficulties in completing tasks in lessons. This was the case in a literacy session for Year 3 pupils when the class teacher and teaching assistant had the time to help individual pupils successfully complete their written work because all the other pupils were working well either independently or in small groups.

Pupils say they feel safe and secure and are confident that adults will always deal with any rare instances of unsocial behaviour quickly and fairly. They are aware of the importance of exercising regularly and eating healthy foods. Older pupils look forward to taking on responsibility for looking after the younger ones and also take pleasure in talking about what they like most about school. They confidently describe how they enjoy taking part in sporting activities and local community events. The quality of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, with particular strengths in their moral, social and spiritual development and this is reflected in their outstanding behaviour and high regard and respect for others.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about the role of their school council in giving them a voice in school affairs and believe they make a good contribution to the school and the wider community. Examples include their work in raising money for a range of local and international charities such as 'Children in Need' and also supporting Shelter Aid for victims of the recent Japanese earthquake. Their good skills in literacy and developing skills in numeracy as well as their very good attitudes to learning and their good collaborative and independent skills are preparing them well for their future economic well-being.

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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	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	2
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 curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of imaginative experiences in order to help build up their understanding of the world in which they live. It has been designed to make learning more meaningful whilst focusing on promoting the effective development of skills in numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology. Pupils say that they like the way lessons link different subjects together and that this makes learning more enjoyable. The quality of their work on display is of a good standard and provides clear evidence that the curriculum is broadly based and that the improvements in the school's effectiveness since the previous inspection are not just restricted to work in mathematics and English. Classrooms are welcoming and colourful and teachers make good use of the available resources to enhance learning.

Teachers and teaching assistants work together enthusiastically to make a positive contribution to pupils' progress. Good, and occasionally outstanding, teaching enables pupils to learn well, especially when teachers present activities in interesting and challenging ways. The teaching of mathematics has improved as teachers' expertise in this subject has risen. However, there are rare occasions when lesson introductions continue for a little too long and this can lead to some pupils losing interest for a short time.

The exemplary care, guidance and support provided helps pupils make the best of opportunities provided by the school and is the basis for their good personal development. Parents and carers value the way the school looks after their children. 'The support my

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son receives is outstanding' and 'The fantastic staff are friendly and caring' represent typical comments. Pupils say they are confident they will always be very well looked after. Very effective induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle into new routines.

Links with external agencies and partnerships with other bodies are used effectively to support pupils' learning and well-being, especially those of vulnerable pupils, who receive excellent levels of well-targeted care and support. This helps them take a meaningful and active part in school life. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils look forward to visits to places of interest and also to meeting interesting visitors to the school. They appreciate the diverse programme of enrichment activities provided for them. These include a range of popular after-school and lunchtime clubs featuring, for example, gardening, film club and tag rugby.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The good quality of leadership and management is evident in all aspects of the school's work and is reflected in the thoroughness of the school's self-evaluation and quality of its development planning. The headteacher, senior leadership team and staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and they work hard to ensure all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed and that none are discriminated against. They are well supported by the governing body, which takes its duties very seriously and offers the school a good level of challenge and support.

The school's engagement with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents and carers are encouraged to become involved with the school and with their child's learning. They feel that they are well informed and that their views have an influence on school decision-making. They are also confident that they have many opportunities to discuss any concerns with the teaching staff, who are always on hand to meet them both before and after school each day.

Safeguarding procedures are good and meet all requirements. This is reflected in the precision of the staff recruitment and vetting checks and the way in which the school regularly monitors and evaluates its policies and practices. Safeguarding training for all staff and governors is ongoing and they are well aware of the importance of their role in protecting pupils.

The school's work in promoting community cohesion is good. It has not only built up effective links with the local community and also the international community but has also built up links with an inner city school, which older pupils visit. This has succeeded in

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making pupils appreciate that there are a range of cultures and beliefs in the United Kingdom which are quite different from their own.

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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers value the good quality of education provided for their children during their first year at school. They comment about the friendliness of the Early Years Foundation Stage staff and about how they encourage children to do well. One particular comment from a parent and carer summed up the good quality of provision in the Reception class: 'My child always looks forward to coming to school. The staff are so caring and he is making really good progress.'

The Reception class teacher and his effective teaching assistants work well together to make sure children enjoy their first experiences of school. Although the school is still developing the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor facilities, the Reception Year classroom is very large, colourful and well equipped and provides children with a stimulating and safe learning environment. Lessons effectively blend opportunities for children to learn both independently and with adult direction. Good leadership and management ensure that a close check is kept on how well individual pupils are progressing in order to ensure lessons are planned effectively. As a result, children make good progress because teaching caters well for their individual needs.

Progress in children's personal, social and emotional development is good and parents and carers appreciate the excellent level of the care and support their children receive. Children join in lesson activities with enthusiasm and are happy to share and take turns. Regular visits to interesting places within the community are used effectively to build up children's understanding of the world in which they live.

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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

There was an average rate of response to the parents' and carers' questionnaire. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires or who were spoken to by inspectors were happy with their children's experiences at the school. They believed that their children enjoyed school and that the school kept children very safe and looked after them well. They also believed that the quality of teaching was good and that the school met their children's needs well. A very small minority of parents and carers felt their children were not making sufficient progress and that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour.

Inspectors considered these comments and judged that pupils made good progress and that the school dealt well with rare instances of unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 133 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	74	14	23	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	74	14	23	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	65	20	32	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	65	18	29	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	47	76	13	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	65	19	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	77	11	18	1	2	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)	39	63	15	24	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	61	23	37	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	61	17	27	5	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	65	18	29	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	47	76	11	17	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	73	16	26	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



24 March 2011

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of West Moors, St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School, Ferndown, BH22 0JF

Thank you for welcoming me and the other inspector to your school. You were all very friendly and helpful and we soon realised why you enjoy coming to school so much. We found it very interesting reading your questionnaire replies and talking to you about what you like the most about your school. We agree with you when you say that you attend a good school.

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

- You get off to a good start during your first year at school in the Reception class.
- You then achieve well throughout the rest of your time at school.
- Your school takes really good care of you and makes sure that you are all safe and secure.
- Your teachers try to make lessons interesting to ensure you make good progress.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you are caring and polite.
- You have a good understanding of the importance of making sure you have a healthy lifestyle.
- You really enjoy school and you all say that you like your teachers.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors lead and manage the school well.

We believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to:

- improve your ability to solve mathematical problems
- help you to work out for yourselves how well you are making progress.

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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