

Shaftesbury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113778
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	357418
Inspection dates	29–30 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Dennett

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Howard Parfitt
Headteacher	Richard Larter
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2009
School address	Wincombe Lane Shaftesbury SP7 8PZ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons and observed 15 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at: the most recent school self-evaluation form; the school development plan; minutes of governors' meetings; the school's assessments of pupils' attainment and progress; the records held on pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities; school policies; safeguarding documents; and, reports from the local authority. Inspectors analysed 100 questionnaires from pupils, 18 from staff as well as 66 completed by parents and carers.

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

- It looked at whether pupils in Key Stage 1 are making sufficient progress to enable them to attain the expected levels in reading and writing at the end of Year 2.
- It looked at whether standards in mathematics are high enough at the end of both key stages.
- It looked at whether pupils with special educational need and/or disabilities and more-able pupils are making sufficient progress in relation to their capabilities and starting points.
- It investigated how well the school is promoting community cohesion, especially in relation to the whole of the United Kingdom and the wider world.
- It looked at whether there is a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Shaftesbury CE (VC) Primary School is a larger-than-average primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and only very few come from families whose first language is not English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The number of pupils currently identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Pupils' special educational needs include speech and language difficulties, specific learning needs and behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. The governing body runs a breakfast club and this was included in the inspection. There is a children's centre and nursery run by the local authority on the site, which was inspected at the same time as the school by another inspection team. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision at the school includes children in the Reception Year only.

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

Shaftesbury Church of England Primary School provides a good quality education for all its pupils. It has improved considerably since its previous inspection, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be satisfactory. There have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils are now good because pupils make rapid progress from low starting points. Other aspects of provision have been improved and all but one of the issues raised by the previous inspection have been dealt with effectively. The exception is the school's contribution to community cohesion, which still needs to improve. The headteacher, senior managers and members of the governing body have a clear picture of the school's performance and its strengths and weaknesses. The actions taken to secure improvement have led to measurable success, especially in terms of pupils' achievement and enjoyment of learning. All these factors indicate the school has demonstrated good capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils make good progress through the school and attainment in English and mathematics is now broadly average by the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement from below average starting points. Progress has accelerated over the last year and pupils are now making very good progress in Key Stage 2. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is below average. Also, at the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 is below average in mathematics. Whilst the teaching is good, the highest-attaining pupils are not challenged consistently in these areas and some do not achieve as well as they might. There is very little difference in the progress made by various groups of pupils, although those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress in reading and numeracy, as do pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has taken some steps to improve its contribution to community cohesion. However, links with communities outside the immediate area and the wider world are too limited. Considerable improvements have been made to the Early Years Foundation Stage and this is now providing a balanced and coherent programme, which meets the needs of all children well. As a result, children are making good progress and enjoying learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment to above the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 by providing challenging work to more-able pupils consistently to:
 - increase the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2
 - increase the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in mathematics at the end of Year 6.

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- Improve the school's contribution to community cohesion by strengthening links with communities beyond the school's immediate area.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Over the past three years, attainment at the end of Year 6 has been broadly average in English and mathematics, but there is a rising trend. Pupils' attainment was significantly below average in 2010 at the end of Year 2, because the year group contained a significant number of pupils starting with low levels. This group, which is currently in Year 3, has made good progress in the last six months and their attainment is rising rapidly. Pupils' progress is accelerating and their attainment by the end of Year 6 is rising.

Pupils, clearly, enjoy learning and as a result they have positive attitudes to school and are keen to do well. In nearly all lessons, they apply themselves diligently to their work. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing, numeracy and information and communication technology. The relative progress made by boys and girls is not significantly different and any gaps in performance are closing rapidly. The small numbers of pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue make good progress because they are supported well in class and they are given additional support by the local authority ethnic minority achievement service. Pupils are now making good progress from their below-average starting points and their achievement is good.

Nearly all pupils say that they feel safe at school and parents and carers confirm this in their questionnaire responses. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and are confident that any concerns about safety will be dealt with quickly. Pupils' behaviour is good and contributes strongly to their rapid progress in learning in lessons. Pupils are courteous, welcoming and positive about their school. They have a good understanding and knowledge of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Most take advantage of the good opportunities provided by taking part enthusiastically. Nearly the whole school takes part in the daily 'Wake and Shake' session.

The school council makes a positive contribution to the school community. It represents the pupils' views successfully to the school's management, such as choosing which charities the school will support each year. Pupils think highly of their school and are very willing to contribute to its running. They share their concerns about the environment and organise events to raise funds for disasters, such as the earthquake in Haiti. Pupils apply their basic skills well in a broader context and have good problem-solving abilities, developed through their studies in science, for example. Pupils' attendance is above average and their punctuality is good. Pupils are respectful of one another and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils have shared values and recognise cultural differences, although their knowledge of cultures outside of the immediate locality is not as well developed as other aspects of their personal skills. In assemblies, pupils show a reverent attitude to prayer and empathise with those who are less fortunate than themselves.

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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	3
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	1
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	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?

A very large majority of teaching is securing good progress and learning. A small minority of teaching is outstanding and, in particular, builds very effectively on pupils' prior learning. Generally, teachers have strong subject knowledge and use a wide range of teaching methods to engage and challenge most pupils. Occasionally, the level of challenge is not high enough for the more-able pupils, however, and consequently their progress slows. Support assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning by providing very effective support for less-able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A strength of all lessons is the good relationships between staff and pupils which enable pupils to feel confident about learning. Teachers plan to meet the needs of most pupils well through well-constructed and detailed assessment procedures. Assessment information is used effectively to identify those pupils that are underachieving and who need extra support. Marking is used to give pupils detailed feedback on their performance and pupils' own ability to assess their work is developing well.

The curriculum is clearly mapped and well organised. There is a broad range of visits, outside speakers, links with the community and memorable experiences that contribute effectively to pupils' development and well-being. A strength of learning for pupils is the well-developed, cross-curricular themes work, such as the imaginary 'travelling abroad' to visit India. The school has well developed arrangements for the care, support and guidance of its pupils. These are effective in promoting and enhancing the pupils' well-

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being and academic and personal development. The well-targeted support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable has resulted in improved attitudes, behaviour and academic progress for this group. It is enabling pupils with special educational needs, in particular, to make outstanding progress. The well-run breakfast club provides a good start to the day for some pupils. Transition arrangements, between the children's centre and nursery on the same site and the Reception class, are good, enabling children to settle in quickly. Links with the secondary school are also good and pupils in Year 6 say they feel well prepared for the transition in September.

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?

The headteacher has had a very positive effect on the overall quality of leadership and management of the school. He has built around him a strong group of senior leaders and an effective governing body, all of whom demonstrate high levels of commitment to improvement. This is in the process of being embedded effectively at all levels and results in substantial improvements in provision and outcomes for pupils. There is a sharp focus on raising attainment that is having a positive effect on progress and raising attainment. This is a result of a concerted effort to improve the quality of teaching, overall provision and use challenging targets. The members of the governing body contribute strongly to the school's capacity for sustained improvement through the rigorous monitoring and effective support and challenge of the senior leadership team. All safeguarding procedures are in place and the school is a safe and secure environment.

Parents and carers are positive about the school and say that it has improved significantly over recent years. They say they are always welcomed into school to discuss their children's progress. The school asks parents and carers regularly for their opinions and there are weekly newsletters to keep them informed. The parents and carers of pupils who speak English as an additional language have been involved effectively and this has led to improvements in these pupils' progress. Other partnerships are effective in promoting learning, provision and pupils' well-being. There are a wide range of partnerships with local schools, the children's centre and nursery, churches and community projects. Visitors to the school and support from outside agencies have enriched the curriculum substantially and provided services the school could not otherwise provide. The school works hard and to good effect to ensure that no particular groups of pupils are disadvantaged or subject to discrimination. When incidents occur occasionally, they are dealt with effectively for all concerned.

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The school's contribution to community cohesion was identified as a shortcoming in the previous inspection and this aspect is still under-developed. Although it has good links in the local community and makes a substantial contribution in this area, links with different communities in the United Kingdom and the wider world are limited. Recently, the school has used visitors to challenge pupils to understand the plight of people in Haiti and the pupils' response was very positive. The school has limited financial resources, but these have been used effectively to provide a rich learning environment for pupils. The buildings and grounds, which are extensive, are used very effectively to promote learning.

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

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good start to children's education. Adults' good preparation, planning and knowledge promote effective learning for children, socially, physically and academically. The environment is stimulating and interesting. Adults are skilled at promoting positive attitudes to behaviour and learning. They take great care to ensure children are safe and well looked after. As a result, personal outcomes for children are good and they make good progress academically, from quite low starting points. There are no significant differences in the performance of different groups of children. They are all developing good personal, social and emotional skills, which enable them to respond well to learning opportunities. There is now a good balance between child-initiated learning and teacher-directed activities. The area is well led and managed, with a common sense of purpose. Systems are clear and children's needs are met well. There is a good range of opportunities for parents and carers to engage with staff about their children's learning. Although self-evaluation is not yet fully developed, there is strong planning for needs and good assessment systems.

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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

Around a quarter of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, which is quite low. Almost all are supportive of the school. All say that the school keeps their children safe, that they are well informed about their children's progress and that the school is well led and managed. A very small minority of parents and carers do not think the school provides sufficient challenge for the more-able pupils. Evidence from the inspection shows that further action could be taken to increase the level of challenge for more-able pupils, especially in mathematics.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shaftesbury Church of England 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 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 311 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	68	20	30	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	48	73	18	27	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	58	28	42	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	58	24	36	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	56	28	42	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	61	22	33	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	53	29	44	2	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)	34	52	26	39	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	50	28	42	4	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	41	33	50	4	6	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	50	27	41	2	3	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	42	64	23	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	65	21	32	2	3	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.



31 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shaftesbury Church of England Primary School, Shaftesbury SP7 8PZ

Thank you for making us welcome at your school. I want to thank all those children who spoke to us, especially the school council. You answered our questions well and I can see you enjoy your school.

I think your school has improved since the last time it was inspected and is now good. There are a number of things that I liked particularly.

- You are nearly all making good progress, especially those of you who find learning a bit difficult.
- You all said you feel safe in school and enjoy your lessons.
- You are cared for well and helped to do your best.
- Your headteacher and the governing body lead the school well to make sure that it gets better all the time.

These are the things we have asked the school to work on:

- to help you get higher levels in writing and mathematics by the time you leave Year 2
- to help pupils in Year 6 to get higher levels in mathematics
- to provide you with more opportunities to learn about what it is like in different places around Britain and the wider world.

All of you can help by trying hard to do your best in all lessons, but especially in literacy and numeracy. You can all try and understand what it is like in different places around the world. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Dennett
Lead inspector

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