

# The Epiphany Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113849
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bournemouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	363812
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Juliet Jaggs

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	427
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kate Fry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dave Simpson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2007
<b>School address</b>	Shillingstone Drive Muscliffe Bournemouth BH9 3PE
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 27 part-lessons, seeing 17 teachers, and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at self-evaluation documents, monitoring and assessment information, school policies, curriculum planning and safeguarding procedures. Inspectors analysed questionnaires returned by 58 pupils, 34 members of staff and 172 parents and carers.

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

- The extent to which different groups of pupils, particularly the more able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making better than expected progress.
- The extent to which the quality of pupils' writing has improved since the previous inspection.

## Information about the school

The Epiphany Church of England Primary School is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The needs relate mainly to specific learning difficulties. The school has gained the Healthy Schools award, the Active Sportsmark and the Bike IT bronze award. The governing body provides and manages out-of-school care at the beginning and end of the school day.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Under the aspirational leadership of the headteacher, in partnership with the knowledgeable governing body, the school has established an effective system for setting demanding annual targets for all pupils in core subjects. As a result, attainment has continued to improve since the previous inspection and has been high for the last three years. A few pupils far-exceed their targets and, by the time they leave, all are very well prepared for the next stages in their education because they have developed a commitment to success. Parents and carers are extremely positive and comments such as 'It is an excellent school and I feel very lucky to be able to send my child here' were typical of those received.

The highly imaginative curriculum is central to the effectiveness of the school. It is an exceptionally well-designed model that combines a number of important learning experiences within memorable topics. It motivates pupils so they are keen to come to school and attendance is consistently high. Pupils are keen on athletic pursuits and enthusiastically take up sporting activities, reflecting both the school's national awards. Those going on to represent the school are increasingly competitive at county level and recently the tag rugby team qualified for the regional finals of the national schools' competition.

Pastoral care is excellent so pupils feel safe and valued within a very supportive community. The pupils can make significant contributions to improving the school themselves. The school council has a strong voice in decision making and the members managed a £20,000 budget successfully in order to re-design sections of the outdoor play area.

Self-evaluation is accurate and leaders have a good view of the strengths of the school. Areas for development are identified carefully and there are comprehensive plans to achieve them. The quality of teaching and the impact on learning are given a high priority within the plans, so there are arrangements for developing colleagues' expertise routinely. Much of the teaching throughout the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is securing good progress because lessons include a variety of activities that motivate the pupils. Teachers use a range of resources to enable pupils to work at their own level, but occasionally these tasks are not sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able. Relationships in lessons are positive and dialogue is lively, but teachers do not always reshape pupils' responses to develop their understanding. Pupils' books are marked frequently. Teachers are alert to an individual's targets, so they commend them when they are achieved. However, pupils have too few opportunities to assess their own and each other's work as another way of enhancing their learning.

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The introduction of such a distinctive curriculum demonstrates the school leaders' ability to make important changes. Phase leaders are creating strong teams and developing their work in monitoring teaching and learning in their areas. However, the continuous improvement in both attainment and attendance since the previous inspection means the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and especially the more able by:
  - encouraging pupils to devise realistic investigations to test their understanding and to apply their ideas creatively to add extra meaning to their learning
  - improving the consistency of teaching so that it always includes effective questioning that gives pupils opportunities to develop and explain their ideas fully.
- Increase pupils' understanding of their own learning by giving pupils opportunities to evaluate their own and each other's work so they develop a greater awareness of how they can improve.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

The quality of learning and progress in lessons is good. Pupils are keen to do well and they have animated discussions when tasks are introduced. They collaborate well with one another to share their ideas and then develop them progressively. Pupils in Year 2, for example, enjoyed studying the characteristics of Roald Dahl's 'Mr and Mrs Twit', so they moved on quickly to suggest vocabulary appropriate for their 'gruesome' descriptions. Pupils take pride in their work and practise skills diligently. Pupils in Year 4 were meticulous when they applied the principles of proportion and grid systems to reproducing intricate pictures of plants and interpreting map symbols. Some of the group wanted to develop their understanding by solving problems using six-figure grid references on an Ordnance Survey map.

The capabilities of children joining the school in the Reception Year are broadly in line with those to be expected of children of a similar age. Good progress is sustained as learners move up the school, so that, by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, their results are well above the national average. The very few pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress also. School leaders are not complacent, however, and there is an emphasis on tackling any differences between groups of pupils or in key subjects. The recent introduction of a reading group for a few boys in Year 5 has been effective, for example. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good because of the quality of additional guidance they receive from learning support assistants in class. With the introduction of the new topic-based curriculum, pupils have more opportunities for extended writing in a wide range of formats and progress has been good.

Pupils behave positively. Some have become confident at managing class tasks independently and others respond quickly to instructions when they are asked to do so. There are very few incidents of boisterous behaviour and pupils are confident in the systems to deal with potential bullying and say that such instances are extremely rare.

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Younger pupils are responsible class monitors and the house captains are well-respected leaders amongst their peers. Pupils visit a local special school regularly, where they rehearse for musical concerts. They are considerate to one another, so they work effectively in teams, and they are creative fundraisers with motivational enterprise projects. For example, Year 4 converted their £1.00 investments into a £1000 donation for Water Aid. Pupils commit enthusiastically to sporting and artistic opportunities. The youngest children can identify the relevance of faith in their daily lives and pupils in Year 6 demonstrated their spiritual awareness when they described the emotions inspired by their memories.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Senior leaders have devised an exceptional curriculum where a well-planned mix of basic skills teaching and applied learning through the foundation subjects creates rich opportunities for pupils. Monitoring is robust to ensure pupils receive their entitlement at the same time as covering a diverse range of learning objectives. It is an extremely adaptable system, so teachers have the flexibility to customise their planning week by week. Highly effective use is made of the opportunities to extend learning with relevant visits to the local area and there is an exciting range of extra-curricular activities on site, including the 'crazy golf course' built by the school council.

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Teachers share the intended outcomes in lessons consistently, so that pupils are clear about their purpose. However, the information is often only referred to once, so pupils miss the chance to measure their individual progress against the criteria. The recent emphasis on collaborative learning means pupils work effectively together, but they are not always encouraged to develop their understanding by questioning and assessing one another. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well by teachers to complement other resources. There is often a range of materials appropriate for different learners, but opportunities are missed sometimes, particularly for able pupils, to make even better progress by thinking creatively to devise challenges and plan investigations themselves. Lessons are highly organised, so activities follow logically and progressively.

The school provides excellent care for its pupils. Procedures for identifying potentially irregular attendance patterns are thorough and issues are tackled early. They have been highly effective in recent years. Pastoral leaders are creative in meeting pupils' needs. For example, learning support assistants move with the children joining Year 1 from Reception Year so that they have the added security of a familiar adult in the classroom. Individual support for pupils whose circumstances may have made them vulnerable are comprehensive and the school engages effective assistance from outside agencies. The new community room is a valuable addition, where the breakfast club provides pupils with a positive start to the day.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's determination to secure ever-better outcomes for pupils has had an impressive impact on the development of the school. Improvement planning to achieve challenging academic targets is distinctive, with a double focus on introducing improvements in teaching and learning whilst maintaining the most effective elements of current practice. The scheme provides leaders and managers at all levels with a comprehensive system for routine monitoring. Phase leaders are creating strong teams and they are increasingly able to effect improvement in the quality of teaching. Pupils are involved in routine consultations about their progress and formal tests conducted in school are matched carefully to ensure that individual attainment levels are challenged.

The governing body complements the headteacher's drive for higher quality. There are careful arrangements for succession planning to ensure that all members develop their expertise and are able to hold the school to account effectively. The governing body is committed, proud of the school and fulfils its statutory duties efficiently. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and the school adopts recommended good practice. The school

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works closely with parents and carers to promote pupils' good progress and welfare. Members of staff are accessible for informal discussions and parents and carers are well informed through regular progress reports. A large number of families have taken up the 'Bike it' initiative and the Epiphany School Friends Association are supportive. The school is mindful of its important role in the church community and has conducted a careful analysis of its wider social and cultural context. The curriculum gives pupils a clear sense of their own identity in the town and other partnerships in Southampton and Malawi are encouraging pupils' awareness of diversity. Pupils' awareness of what it means to be a citizen in multicultural Britain, however, is underdeveloped.

The school gives all pupils equality of opportunity and there is a highly inclusive ethos. Different groups are monitored closely to ensure progress is sustained and a number of pupils already exceed expectations in terms of achievement, although a few higher-attaining pupils do not do as well as they should in all lessons. A range of partnership activities support pupils' achievement well and the school identifies appropriate organisations to develop individuals' talents still further, such as the South West Music School.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with a range of skills that are broadly expected for their age. Some areas of learning are less well developed, such as social and communication skills, but, by the time children move on to Key Stage 1, they have made good progress overall. They enjoy learning and are quick to ask other children to join in their activities. They can use early skills in letters and sounds to spell quite complex words. During an afternoon of 'free-flow' activities, in connection with a visit to the Oceanarium, children wrote their own books about jellyfish and sea horses. In connection with the same theme, children were



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able to show a growing awareness of the difficulties of moral decisions as they considered Jonah's dilemma. Children have trusting relationships with adults and they express their ideas about safety confidently. They understood that it would be necessary to take precautions feeding the sharks in the Oceanarium they had created outside.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is highly organised. There are well-practised routines that prioritise children's care and expectations about behaviour are clear. Planning for different activities is thorough and assessments are recorded systematically. There is a clear focus on intended learning outcomes and much on offer to sustain children's interest as the children make full use of the indoor and outside areas. The nature of the preparation can mean that some children do not have to take responsibility for organising their own investigations and opportunities to develop independent learning are, therefore, missed. Adults are deployed well and they allow the children to work independently. Occasionally, they wait too long to intervene with questions that challenge the children to extend their learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. There is a strong sense of purpose amongst the adults who are an effective team. Assessment information is analysed throughout the year and particular groups are monitored carefully to ensure that they make good progress. There is an inclusive approach so all adults are aware of the particular needs of individual children and they work hard to help them achieve.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

The proportion of parents and carers who returned inspection questionnaires is higher than is typically found for primary schools. Almost all respondents were extremely positive about The Epiphany Church of England Primary School, particularly of the care taken to keep their children safe. A very large proportion of returns indicated that parents and carers were pleased with the level of communication about their children's progress. A few concerns were raised. There were some comments about the standards of behaviour, especially when this included bullying. Inspectors examined records of bullying incidents and spoke with pupils from all age groups in the school, who reported that bullying is extremely rare. Inspectors judged that pupils feel exceptionally safe. They found also that pupils responded very quickly to teachers' instructions when asked to do so in class. A few parents and carers questioned the degree of challenge in some lessons. Inspectors found there was some evidence for that, notably with reference to more-able pupils. Moreover, in discussing that aspect of the school's work with senior leaders, inspectors were made

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aware that it has already been identified as an area for development. However, pupils achieve outstandingly well overall.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Epiphany 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 172 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 427 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	121	70	45	26	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	134	78	36	21	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	77	45	91	53	4	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	87	51	77	45	5	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	112	65	56	33	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	95	55	70	41	6	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	108	63	59	34	5	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)	81	47	81	47	8	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	92	53	75	44	4	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	30	95	55	21	12	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	70	41	91	53	8	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	112	65	57	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	126	73	40	23	4	2	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of The Epiphany Church of England Primary School, Bournemouth  
BH9 3PE**

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you about your learning while you were in lessons. It was helpful to hear your views in our meetings and to read your completed questionnaires. Here are some of the things we have found out about your school.

Yours is an outstanding school. The curriculum is very original and we were pleased to see how much variety there was in your timetable. The work you produce is of an excellent standard and your teachers take extremely good care of you. Your parents and carers told us that they are happy that you are safe at school and they think the school lets them know the progress you are making well. Like you, we decided that school keeps you very healthy and we were most impressed by all the jobs you do, especially building the 'crazy golf course'.

The staff and governing body at school are determined that you can improve even more. We agree, so we have asked them to do the following:

- give you more opportunities to invent ways of testing your learning and creating your own challenges
- ask you more challenging questions in lessons so you have to think hard and in different ways when you answer them
- let you assess each other's work more often so that you can work out how to improve yourself.

You can play your part by continuing to strive to achieve your targets and by becoming involved in all the opportunities available to you. We offer you our very best wishes for your continued success at Epiphany.

Yours sincerely

Juliet Jaggs

Lead inspector

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