

Powerstock Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113812
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	357428
Inspection dates	30 June 2011–1 July 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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Bunney
Headteacher	Jean-Paul Draper
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and observed four teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, members of the governing body, teaching staff, parents and carers 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, pupils' records and samples of their work. Inspectors also analysed the views of parents and carers in the 40 questionnaires returned.

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

- Pupils' attainment, especially the impact of the school's initiatives to raise attainment in mathematics in Year 1 and Year 2.
- The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils, especially for those requiring extra help, and their impact on pupils' academic and pastoral development.
- Provision for cultural education and its impact on building up pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures and communities other than their own.

Information about the school

This is a very small primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average. The needs include moderate learning needs and speech, language and communication needs. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the school's Reception Year. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The school has gained several awards, including Healthy School status. There have been several changes to the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection. The present headteacher took up his appointment in November 2010 following a period in which the school was led and managed by two successive acting headteachers.

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 with a caring ethos. It has recovered well following a period of turbulence and changes to its leadership and management since the last inspection. The school is providing a good education for pupils and preparing them effectively for the next stage of their education. It has built up very effective links with parents and carers, who are overwhelmingly positive in their support for the school. They appreciate the effective way the school safeguards and protects pupils and ensures the quality of care it provides is of a consistently high order, 'the staff are always approachable and genuinely care about the individual needs of each child' being a typical comment in the returned parents' and carers' questionnaires.

A key factor in the improvement in the school's effectiveness is the dedication and enthusiasm of an able and well-respected headteacher. He has worked well with the staff and governors to ensure the school has rigorously and accurately evaluated its performance and implemented strategies aimed at improving its practice. As a result, the quality of education has improved since his appointment. One specific example of this is the improvement in pupils' progress in mathematics in Year 1 and Year 2. It is also an indication of the school's good capacity for future sustained improvement.

Pupils are keen to learn and they behave well. Teaching staff are enthusiastic and work effectively as a team to ensure that all pupils are included in learning. The level of care, guidance and support pupils receive is excellent. Health and well-being are securely safeguarded and child-protection procedures are good. However, the quality of teachers' marking varies throughout the school and does not always give pupils ideas about how to improve their work, and this sometimes affects their progress. Even so, achievement is good in every year group and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more able, make good progress. As a result, pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 6.

Pupils enjoy discussing what they like most about school, especially the very good range of popular extra-curricular activities. They list art and literacy among their favourite subjects and are proud of, and committed to, their school community. They have developed an excellent understanding of the need to stay safe and the importance of having a healthy lifestyle. However, they have little knowledge of the multicultural nature of modern society in the United Kingdom. Through a lack of understanding, pupils find it difficult to talk about the lives of people from different backgrounds from themselves, and this remains a gap in their learning.

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

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of the autumn term 2011, improve pupils' understanding of how to raise their attainment by ensuring that teachers' marking consistently provides them with clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of the United Kingdom by improving opportunities for them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the ethnic and cultural diversity found in modern society. Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of the United Kingdom by improving opportunities for them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the ethnic and cultural diversity found in modern society.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy school, and this is reflected in their above average rates of attendance. They get on well with each other and are confident that adults will always deal with the rare instances of unsociable behaviour quickly and fairly. Pupils are able to explain in some detail the significance of the school gaining Healthy School status. They have an excellent understanding of the need to exercise regularly and realise the benefit of eating healthy foods. Older pupils fully understand their responsibilities regarding safety matters, especially when they look after the younger ones. Whilst the quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, their spiritual, moral and social development is very robust and this is reflected in pupils' politeness and in their respect for others.

Children begin their Reception Year with many of the expected skills for their age, although this can vary from year to year because of the often small number of pupils entering the school. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress throughout the rest of the school because teaching caters well for their individual needs.

Pupils work hard in lessons at tasks which usually offer them just the correct amount of challenge and they often gain a real sense of achievement when they complete their work. This was the case in a numeracy lesson for Year 3 and Year 4 pupils. The class teacher and teaching assistants had the time to help pupils requiring support with their learning because all the others were working well independently. Tasks were very well matched to pupils' individual needs. As a result, pupils of all abilities, including the more able and those with special educational needs, made well above average progress because they enjoyed the challenge of trying to complete their work successfully.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the wider community. They talk excitedly about the role the school council plays in ensuring that their views and opinions are taken into account, especially at meetings of the Governing Body. Pupils also like talking about the school's strong links with the local church and village. They enjoy taking part in community events such as village fetes and Christmas celebrations and are proud to represent the school in a wide variety of local sporting and artistic events. Their developing skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), coupled with their good attitudes to learning, are preparing them effectively for their future economic well-being.

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

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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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 is broad and balanced and links different subjects together well. It has been designed to make learning interesting for pupils whilst focusing on promoting the development of skills in numeracy, literacy and ICT. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and, in some classes, outstanding. Pupils' good attitudes to learning allow teachers and teaching assistants to concentrate on helping those pupils who are experiencing difficulties with their work or require additional challenge. Effective systems for tracking and recording pupils' progress are used well when planning further work. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards and other resources to enhance lessons, and pupils comment that they like this approach to learning. However, although pupils say that they really like their teachers, they are rightly concerned that when teachers mark their work in books, they do not always give them ideas about how to improve.

Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils look forward to regular school visits to places of interest, especially residential visits, and to meeting interesting visitors to the school. They appreciate the diverse programme of extra-curricular activities the school provides for them, including archery, cookery and chess clubs. The school's links with the local leisure centre offer pupils opportunities to take part in a range of indoor sporting activities which the school alone could not provide.

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Very well-targeted support for all pupils enables them to make the best of the opportunities provided by the school. Pupils are known as individuals and say they are confident they will always be very well looked after. Induction and transfer arrangements effectively help pupils settle into new routines quickly. The school works very effectively with a range of agencies to ensure that pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable receive very well-targeted care and support. As a result they play a full and active part in school life.

Pupils have developed a good understanding of different cultures and religions in other countries through their study of French culture and language and also the school's links with primary schools in Ghana and Peru. However, pupils do not have regular opportunities to develop their awareness of the cultural diversity found in the United Kingdom.

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 reflected in the thoroughness of the school's self-evaluation and in the attention to detail in its development planning, which is firmly aimed at driving improvement. The headteacher and his staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They have worked hard to ensure that pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed and that any very rare instances of discrimination are tackled effectively. They have been well supported by the Governing Body, which fulfils its statutory duties effectively and offers the school a good level of support and challenge. Governors play an active role in the life of the school and take their responsibilities seriously.

Parents and carers are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school and appreciate the way in which the school involves them in decision-making and keeps them very well informed about their children's progress and well-being. The overwhelming majority are confident that the school always takes account of their suggestions and concerns.

The school has developed effective relationships with a number of pre-school providers and with several outside agencies, including the county's behaviour support service, which it uses effectively to support pupils' learning and well-being. Safeguarding procedures are good and meet all requirements. This is reflected in the precision of vetting checks and the way in which the school regularly monitors and evaluates both its policies and practices. Staff and governors are well aware of the importance of their role in protecting pupils and receive regular training about safeguarding issues.

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

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The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. It has built up very good links with the local village and wider community, which it uses well to develop pupils' understanding of the immediate world around them. However, pupils have only a limited appreciation of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider national community.

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	1
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 words of one parent/carer aptly summed up the good provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage: 'My child has really enjoyed her first year at school. The staff are so caring and she is making really good progress.'

Children in their Reception Year share a large, colourful classroom with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. They get off to a good start during their first year at school because teaching caters well for their individual needs. Good leadership and management ensure priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development and to their welfare. As a result, children are happy and feel very safe. Their behaviour is good and they appear eager to learn. Even at this early age, they display the skills needed to interact well with older classmates and with adults. Teaching staff work effectively to ensure that learning is interesting and use ongoing records of children's progress effectively when planning further work. Lessons are well structured. They provide opportunities for children to build up their understanding of the world in which they live whilst at the same time helping them to improve their skills in all areas of learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage has a secure outside area. Although small, it is used effectively to promote children's learning. However, it does not include a covered area and this restricts opportunities for children to build up the skills associated with outdoor learning and play during inclement weather.

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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

There was an above average rate of response to the parents' and carers' questionnaire. An overwhelming majority of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaires or who were spoken to by inspectors held very positive views about the school. Very few expressed any concerns, although a very small minority felt that their children were not making enough progress. Inspectors considered these comments and judged that the pupils make good progress at the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Powerstock Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 57 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	75	10	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	70	11	27	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	70	11	27	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	58	15	38	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	36	15	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	68	13	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	75	9	23	0	0	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)	31	75	6	15	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	58	16	40	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	43	20	50	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	68	13	33	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	83	7	18	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	78	9	23	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	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).

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"> ■ 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.



2 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Powerstock Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Bridport DT6 3TB

Thank you for welcoming the other inspector and me to your school. We enjoyed talking to you about what you like the most about school and seeing you work hard in lessons. You were all very friendly and polite and we quickly realised why you like your school so much. We found it interesting reading your questionnaire replies and 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.

- Children get off to a good start in their Reception Year.
- You all then make good progress throughout the rest of the school because teachers make lessons interesting and give you work which is not too easy or too hard to complete.
- Your parents and carers are very happy with the school.
- All the adults who work in the school make sure you are always very well cared for, extremely safe and very well looked after.
- Your behaviour is good and you all get on well with each other.
- Your headteacher, governors and staff are working hard to improve the school.

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

- help all of you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country whose cultural backgrounds are different from yours
- improve the quality of teachers' marking so it always gives you clear ideas about how you can improve your work.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron Lead inspector

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