

Emmanuel Middle CofE Voluntary Aided School

Howe Lane, Verwood, Dorset, BH31 6JF

Inspection dates 12–13 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school because:

- Pupils are excited about learning. They make good progress in most subjects and enjoy the wide range of experiences available to them.
- Teaching is good overall, with some that is outstanding. Generally, teachers plan and deliver lessons that motivate pupils and meet their needs.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are well developed. Where necessary, pupils receive carefully tailored effective support that tackles any shortcomings in their acquisition of these skills.
- Pupils are extremely well cared for. They feel secure and appreciated as individuals. The values of mutual respect and consideration are ingrained in a supportive learning environment where most flourish. Pupils' behaviour is typically good and sometimes outstanding.
- The headteacher gives strong direction to the work of the school. Leaders and managers across the school want the very best for pupils. Senior leaders work cohesively to lift the quality of teaching to outstanding. They are moving towards this goal systematically and with determination.
- Governors know the school well. They work closely with senior leaders and use their complementary mix of skills well to both support and hold the school to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- There is variation in the quality of teaching and some lessons where teachers do not challenge pupils appropriately.
- Subject leaders are not equally adept at, or focused on, improving teaching practice and pupils' rate of progress in lessons.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 32 lessons, of which four were joint observations with senior and middle leaders.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, staff, including senior and middle managers, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 50 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and to 36 questionnaires completed by staff.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including information about safeguarding, the school’s own data on pupils’ current progress and parents’ views, its self-evaluation and records of monitoring in relation to teaching, pupils’ behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jacqueline White, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Sheila Crew	Additional inspector
David Howley	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is of an average size for a middle school. Most pupils are from a White British background with small numbers of pupils from a range of other ethnic heritages.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average, as is the number supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the current government floor standard for pupil achievement at the end of Key Stage 2.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding overall by:
 - ensuring all teachers are rigorous in using assessment information to plan lessons that challenge pupils appropriately
 - clarifying and sharing success criteria in lessons to check pupils' understanding and drive their progress
 - maximising progress in lessons by moving learning forward at a pace that is responsive to pupils' ability
 - extending opportunities for pupils to gain independence through applying and evaluating their learning
 - refining the skills of subject leaders so they are equally expert in developing teaching methods and accelerating pupils' progress in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils **is good**

- Pupils enter the school with attainment that ranges from broadly average to above average. They make good progress in their time at the school to secure high attainment that is consistently above average at the end of Year 8.
- In 2011, as a result of staffing difficulties, there was a dip in achievement in mathematics. This has been recovered very quickly through effective leadership, a rapid improvement in teaching and precisely targeted support for some pupils.
- As a result of robust moderation, the school's assessment information is reliable. The progress of individuals and groups of pupils is monitored closely and any evidence of underperformance is picked up. Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs are making good progress as are those who are eligible for the pupil premium. The school takes care to match additional support to pupils' needs well and to evaluate its impact thoroughly.
- The school is helping pupils develop good basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Most pupils read widely and routinely carry a reading book with them. There are regular opportunities for pupils to read simply for pleasure in the school day. In discussions, pupils who had received some extra help with reading were very positive about how their reading was improving and were confident about reading aloud. The school has a well-stocked library that is well used by staff and pupils.
- The role of heads of year has been reviewed and adjusted to ensure they monitor pupils' achievement as closely as their well-being. Their perspective of pupils' achievement across the curriculum is valuable in ensuring targets for improvement are challenging and meaningful to individual pupils and parents.
- Evidence, including Parent View and the school's analysis of their own parental questionnaires, indicates that most parents are pleased with the progress that their children are making.

The quality of teaching **is good**

- In most lessons, teaching is good. Where it is outstanding, teachers have high expectations. They use assessment information well to plan lessons that stretch pupils and build on their prior learning. Activities are well sequenced, imaginative and stimulate pupils' curiosity. There are clear success criteria and pupils have good opportunities to apply new understanding and evaluate their work. Pupils' progress in lessons is carefully monitored, usually through effective questioning, and weaknesses in understanding are remedied without slowing the pace of work for those who can reach higher levels.
- Some teachers are still honing these essential skills and, occasionally, there are lessons where pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Teachers talk too much and do not tune in to how well pupils are progressing, and the pace of learning is too slow.
- Most teachers cater effectively in lessons for any special needs that pupils may have. Teaching assistants are generally deployed well and support those with additional needs successfully.
- Teachers implement the planned curriculum well and take every opportunity to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The introduction of 'Wow Days', where pupils learn through cross-curricular topics, has extended creativity in the curriculum and helps pupils to see how subject knowledge can be applied in a range of contexts.
- Teachers benefit from opportunities for professional development that are mostly organised 'in house'. For example, on training days, teachers share good practice through presentations and workshops. Rightly, the school intends to use the highly effective training programme within mathematics as a model to escalate the improvement of teaching in

other areas.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and respectful. They enjoy school life. Their involvement in the wide range of extra-curricular activities contributes to their positive attitude to learning. Where learning in lessons is not well tailored to their ability, the engagement of a few sometimes falters but rarely to the point of disruption.
- Warm and trusting relationships are a hallmark of the school's ethos and the climate for learning is highly supportive. The consideration that pupils extend to each other is often exemplary.
- 'Wellbeing' lessons ensure pupils are aware of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and have a sensible attitude to risk and a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They say they feel very safe in school and are confident that any incidents of bullying will be quickly and firmly dealt with by staff.
- Most staff and parents are positive about pupils' behaviour. Behaviour management strategies have been reviewed and pupils have been involved in setting and refining a concise set of rules, rewards and sanctions that ensure that everyone knows what is expected of them.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and committed to its continuous improvement. The school council has been influential in decision making.
- Most pupils are conscientious young citizens with a genuine desire to help others less fortunate than themselves. They understand the value of relationships that are based on trust, honesty and respect and exemplify those qualities in daily school life.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides clear-sighted, resolute leadership. She is well supported by the senior leadership team. Together, they use their good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses to drive improvement.
- Management systems have been considerably strengthened over the last two years. The focus on increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching has been intensified. Staff are clear that they are accountable for pupils' progress and they are unified in their commitment to the success of every individual. Arrangements for line and performance management are well organised, supportive and appropriately demanding.
- Senior leaders have the capability to attain their goal of improving the overall effectiveness of the school to 'outstanding'. They are working to develop middle leadership. Some heads of subject are very skilful leaders successfully driving up standards through developing teaching practice. Others are not so confident about evaluating the work of their teams to pinpoint how performance could be improved. Heads of year operate as a resourceful, proactive team to sustain high quality care and guidance for pupils.
- The curriculum offers a wide choice of experiences which meet pupils' needs, deepen their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and develop basic skills.
- The school is outward looking and has a number of productive partnerships, particularly with first schools in the locality, that enhance provision and promote effective teaching and learning. Parents are regarded as key partners in the joint endeavour to fulfil pupils' potential. There are good channels of communication through pupils' school diaries, email, parent mail, the school's website and meetings with staff. Most parents are positive about their level of engagement with the school.
- Procedures for safeguarding are effective and meet all current statutory requirements.
- Close monitoring of pupils' progress, wellbeing and involvement in school life underpins the effective promotion of equal opportunities. Discrimination of any kind is challenged robustly.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support for this good school.

■ **The governance of the school is competent and efficient:**

- governors visit the school regularly to speak with staff and check progress with the school's priorities for improvement
- they ensure that pupils' well-being and achievement are central to the deployment of resources
- they question senior leaders about the quality and impact of their work.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	113894
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	395521

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	483
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev. Andrew Sinclair
Headteacher	Jill Watson
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 June 2009
Telephone number	01202 828100
Fax number	01202 828104
Email address	office@emmanuel.dorset.sch.uk

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