

Christchurch Infant School

Addiscombe Road, Christchurch Road, BH23 2AE

Inspection dates 8–9 May 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- As a result of the inspiring leadership of the headteacher, the whole staff team and the governors share a fierce ambition for continual improvement.
- Pupils' learning and development is strongly enhanced by the high-quality leadership, monitoring, management and governance. These ensure excellent teamwork and consistent approaches to teaching and the care practised by all staff. .
- Pupils consistently achieve extremely well, many of them reaching the highest levels by the end of Key Stage 1. Throughout the school, all pupils make excellent progress.
- The quality of teaching in all classes is outstanding. Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can do and achieve. Because they know their pupils so well, they consistently challenge them to do more.
- Children get very effective help in the Reception Year. They quickly learn early reading, writing and number skills.
- Pupils with speech and language difficulties in the resource base make particularly good progress because they are taught extremely well.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. They have excellent attitudes to learning. They are 100% determined to be 'good learners'.
- Parents and carers are confident that the school works very hard to keep their children safe and takes good care of them.
- Every opportunity is taken to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to widen their view of the world. They enjoy all that school has to offer them; there is a vibrant atmosphere for learning.
- The day-to-day organisation, and all procedures, are superb; they ensure that pupils' learning is always the highest priority in this outstanding school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, four of which were joint observations with school leaders.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils; many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and break times.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors. A telephone conversation was held with the school's 'Evaluation Partner' who works closely with the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, and staff including teachers with responsibility for key areas.
- Inspectors heard children read and also observed morning playtime and lunch breaks. They attended two assemblies. They scrutinised pupils' work.
- Note was taken of the 32 responses to the staff questionnaire, the 80 responses made to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to the school's own survey of parents' views. Inspectors met some parents and carers informally at the beginning of the school day.
- A range of documents was looked at including the school's data on pupils' progress, planning, and school self-evaluation and monitoring, as well as records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Anne Wesley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Victor Chaffey	Additional Inspector
Alan Jones	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a much-larger-than-average-sized infant school.
- It has 12 single-age classes; four in the Reception Year, four in Year 1 and four in Year 2.
- The school is currently hosting an extra Reception class because of a lack of school places in its catchment area. This will be repeated for one more year so in September 2014 there will be five Reception classes and five Year 1 classes
- Most pupils are of White British heritage; there are an increasing number of pupils from a variety other White heritage groups.
- A much-lower-than-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for looked after children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- A breakfast and after-school club is managed privately.
- The school has a special educational needs resource base provision for 16 pupils with speech and language difficulties.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure children in the Reception Year explore, ask questions and investigate answers for themselves as often as possible, both indoors and outdoors.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Currently children enter the Reception with skills and understanding in line with those expected for their age, in previous years they have been slightly lower. As a result of excellent teaching and activities closely matched to their needs, all children make rapid progress and move into Key Stage 1 very well equipped for the next stage in their learning. The story maps the children made of their recent trip to Furzey Gardens, illustrate well how keen the children are to tell stories in their writing.
- This very positive start is built on by extremely skilled teachers and assistants in Years 1 and 2 so that pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics flourish. Standards in Key Stage 1 have continued to rise each year and are all well above the national average. Furthermore, the latest results show that well-above-average numbers of pupils achieve at the highest levels. Half of the pupils achieved Level 3 in reading (a level higher than expected). This is partly because the school promotes a love of reading from the earliest years.
- Excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics is assured throughout the school because of the good match of tasks to ability groups. For example, in a mathematics lesson where pupils were being introduced to the concept of 'rounding up and down', one group who were finding the idea difficult were using practical apparatus, while the next group were drawing the problems to help find the answers. Those who quickly grasped the concept were working theoretically with three-digit numbers. All made excellent progress.
- The school's accurate tracking system means that extra support is targeted promptly so that all groups of pupils, particularly disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make equally outstanding progress. The personalised programmes devised for the pupils' particular needs in the speech and language resource base are very effective and well considered. They ensure that these pupils maintain the school's very high expectations of progress.
- Pupils in receipt of additional funding support benefit from extra adult assistance. The funds are used effectively to include these pupils fully in the range of school activities. As a result, they make similar progress to other pupils. The very small numbers of the pupils involved means that it is not possible to compare attainment levels.
- Outstanding achievement is made possible because of the emphasis the school places on teaching pupils how to learn. For example, to persevere, ask questions and always try to do your best. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding and enables all children to learn most effectively. Teachers are relentless in ensuring every child succeeds and have extremely high expectations for all pupils, who respond very positively.
- The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development and helping them to want to learn. This begins in Reception Year where children quickly learn the 'signs of success' in being good learners. As one child explained, 'I want to do my best, so I listened really carefully and now I know how to get it right.'
- Rigorous assessment systems ensure that lessons are planned to meet the needs of different groups. As a result, all pupils can start learning quickly. In a particularly successful session in Year 1 on letters and the sounds they make (phonics), pupils moved from a variety of formal activities to games, to working in pairs and to trying things out for themselves. The result was that all the pupils learnt how to spell and use a new set of words aimed precisely at the right levels for them.
- Writing is taught extremely well. This begins in Reception where children quickly master simple writing skills in a structured way. The excellent progress is very clear in the children's books which show that many of them can write whole sentences accurately. Children are not always confident enough to write freely during their own activities. In Key Stage 1, pupils use their

excellent writing in all subjects. Pupils know very well what makes a good story and they regularly put this into practice. However, importantly, pupils apply their literacy skills in other subjects, from thoughtful accounts of the Easter story and descriptions of the day London caught fire to instructions on how to make a healthy sandwich in science.

- In all years, there is a strong emphasis on the development of pupils' reading, from very well-planned work on early reading continuing into Years 1 and 2. Here, pupils are effectively encouraged to look deeper into understanding the books they read. Consequently, they consistently achieve at the higher levels. They also really enjoy reading.
- Teachers are extremely skilled in using different types of questions to probe pupils' understanding and develop their knowledge. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher skilfully and steadily built up the pupils' understanding of how to tackle mathematical problems. Not only could they solve the problems in the lesson, they also learnt a method that would help them in the future.
- High-quality marking provides a careful balance between praise and suggesting how pupils could improve their work. The result is that these children, particularly in Year 2, have already learnt to evaluate their own work and to think about how they might improve it.
- Additional adults in the classroom provide excellent support to all pupils. Their skilled and highly effective approach ensures all groups of pupils, including those eligible for additional funding, make very good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. There is an exceptionally warm, welcoming atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils are always very friendly and extremely polite. They get on very well with each other and with adults. They enjoy school and are keen to learn. They are expected to behave extremely well, and they do.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour extremely well and pupils respond very positively. The outstanding progress they make is only possible because of their positive behaviour and enthusiasm to learn.
- Pupils are taught about the characteristics of a 'good learner' so,, as one Year 2 pupil said, 'We know all about being good learners and we all want to be one!'
- Children in the Reception Year learn the rules of good behaviour quickly. They show maturity as they concentrate and persevere with activities.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the different forms bullying can take. They say it is extremely rare but that any problems 'are very quickly sorted out'.
- The pupils would know how to react if something seemed dangerous and they are secure in the knowledge that help is on hand should they need it. They feel very safe.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school's ability to keep their children safe and to deal with any problems quickly.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and contributing to the life of the school. They are proud to be on the school council where they say their views are listened to. They described how they have much more to do in the playground because the school provided many of the extra resources the council asked for. The Year 2 pupils enjoy the responsibility of being a playground buddy and making sure everyone is happy and having fun.
- The pupils' good attendance reflects their enjoyment of school and the excellent partnership with parents and carers. This was expressed in a typical comment, 'If he cannot come to school, he cries.'

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, supported by effective middle leaders and members of the governing body,

has a passionate determination for continuing improvement. There is a relentless pursuit for excellence and consequently, an outstanding capacity for continuing improvement. This drive is shared by all staff.

- The school knows its strengths and points for development extremely well through school leaders' very systematic and rigorous checking of pupils' progress and monitoring of the quality of the teaching.
- The headteacher's exemplary leadership is underpinned by her knowledge of the school. Self-evaluation is securely based on first-hand observation of all learning activities. She shares this information fully with the governors who regularly keep themselves informed by visits to school which are always focused on an improvement issue.
- Very effective performance management provides support, constructive criticism and relevant training for the teachers' work in the classroom. Actions to bring about improvement are always followed through to see if they are successful. As a result, teaching is always at least good, with much that is outstanding. Teachers and governors are aware of the relationship between performance management, promotion and salaries, and have linked them together effectively.
- Additional funding is used effectively. There are only a very small number of pupils eligible for this funding. They have diverse needs so their progress is checked individually. The use of this funding is discussed by governors.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity, positive relationships and tackles discrimination rigorously. Staff ensure all children are given the chance to succeed, and children are taught to accept and celebrate differences. Some pupils from the main classes are taught in the speech and language base, illustrating well the school's view on equality.
- The breadth and richness of the curriculum helps to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness outstandingly well. There are numerous ways pupils gain a wider view of the world and raise their aspirations. For example, visitors to school, a wide variety of trips, many extra-curricular activities in sport and music, and the chance of performing to audiences.
- The school has established an excellent relationship with parents and carers, who are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Every one of the many responses to the Ofsted questionnaire said that they would recommend the school to other parents and carers.
- The local authority, which has confidence in the strong leadership, provides a light-touch support to this outstanding school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides effective support and challenge. These are based on its clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development within the context of the community the school serves. Governors understand the school's performance data very well and ask searching questions. As a result, they know well that the pupils' progress compares very favourably with other schools and that all groups achieve equally well. They know that teachers' salary progression is linked to pupils' progress and achievement.
 - The governing body has taken an audit of members' skills and produced a plan of how best these can be used to the benefit of the school.
 - Governors take part in many training courses to ensure they are fully up to date with all their areas of responsibility. They make sure that additional funds, including the sports grant, are used effectively. They have been involved in the decisions to increase the number of pupils participating in activities like outdoor games and dance. They have made sure that the additional coaching in gymnastics is also training the teachers to deliver these lessons in the future. They also make sure that their statutory responsibilities, such as safeguarding requirements, are fully in place and effective.

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	113734
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	439626

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	392
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Parker
Headteacher	Jane Ashenden
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2009
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