

SUMMARY OF THE INSPECTION REPORT

CAMERTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Camerton, Bath

Headteacher: Mrs C Griffin-Felton

Date of inspection: 28 – 30 January 2002

The school was inspected by three inspectors, led by Mr T Richardson. This is a summary of the inspection report, which is available from the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Camerton Primary is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school for boys and girls aged four to eleven. At the time of the inspection, 60 pupils were on roll with 33 boys and 27 girls being taught in three classes. Six of these children are of reception age and being taught in a mixed age class with pupils in Year 1. Other classes in the school also contain mixed ages with pupils in Years 2 and 3 in one class and pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 in the other. Part of the catchment area for Camerton Primary is within a local education authority area of deprivation and most children enter the reception class with attainment below the expected level for their age in all areas of learning. Thirty per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals (above the national average) and the school has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs (mainly moderate learning difficulty) than most other schools. The majority of pupils are of white European background and the three pupils who have English as an additional language are at an advanced stage of English acquisition. An inspection by the Diocese of the school's provision for collective worship and spiritual development is scheduled for March 2002. The school has a stable teaching staff and a new headteacher has been in post since September 2001.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pupils achieve well, and generally attain the expected standards in English, mathematics and science over their time in school. There have been steady improvements in the quality of teaching and learning that are now accelerating as a direct result of the clear vision and very good leadership provided by the headteacher. Children are given a good start to their education in the reception class and Year 1 and the school is now in a position to improve further. There is still much to do, but the school is effective (except in its provision to prepare pupils for life in multi-cultural Britain) and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Has very good leadership from the headteacher that is very effective in improving the school.
- Provides effective professional guidance that is successfully promoting better teaching. As a result:
 - the school now provides a good start for children in the reception class and Year 1; and
 - provides effective specialist teaching of literacy so that pupils do well in learning the basic skills of reading and writing over their time in school.
- Teachers are supported by learning support assistants (LSAs) of good quality. They also enhance the good provision for special educational needs by the support given to individuals and groups of children.
- Provides a happy and secure community with very good relationships between children and adults. This is effective in helping pupils to show initiative, take responsibility, and gain confidence in their personal development.
- The good links with the community, and extra-curricular activities provided, help pupils with their learning.
- The school's administration officer provides high quality financial control and administration procedures, including the monitoring of attendance.

What could be improved

- There is insufficient assessment of the knowledge and skills that pupils attain. Pupils do not always build on their prior learning and those pupils with the potential for higher attainment are not always sufficiently challenged. As a result, standards in information and communication technology and art and design are not as high as they could be.
- The quality of teaching can improve further so that school policies and procedures are consistently applied in every class. Teachers' expectations for what pupils can achieve are still too low.
- The school still does not have sufficient indoor space so that it can meet the statutory requirements for the teaching of physical education.
- Despite the recommendations of two previous inspections, the accommodation is still poor and teachers and pupils are having to 'make do' for too long with inappropriate buildings.
- Pupils are insufficiently prepared for day-to-day life in our multi-cultural society.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 2000. At that time, the school had serious weaknesses. Since then, satisfactory improvement to summer 2001 is evident. Following the appointment of the new headteacher in September 2001, the rate of school improvement is accelerating and good progress is now being made. As a result, most of the key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed effectively and there has been significant and sustained improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. The school no longer has serious weaknesses and is now in a position to consolidate these recent good improvements and continue to move forward.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	A	C	A
mathematics	A	A	E	E
science	A	A	C	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The small number of pupils in each year group means that any comparison of school performance with other schools must be treated with caution. A significant minority of pupils was absent for the national tests in 2001 and this also affects the results. When the attainment of the Year 6 pupils in July 2001 is compared with their attainment in Year 2, a number of pupils show underachievement. However, this is against the general trend of improvement in school results over the last five years. Also, recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning are already being successful and most of the current pupils are demonstrating good achievement over their time in school. Good progress is now taking place in reception and Year 1 and children are catching up and attaining the national expectation in most subjects by the time they begin Year 2. The children currently in reception are now functioning in the upper areas of the 'stepping stones' used for assessment, and are likely to meet the national early learning goals in all the areas of learning by the time they begin Year 1. Inspection shows that pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are generally doing as well as expected in their reading, writing, mathematics and science. However, some pupils (particularly those with the potential for higher attainment) could still be doing better in these subjects. Most pupils are now doing well in developing their literacy skills and are showing satisfactory development in numeracy. There are weaknesses in art and design and information and communication technology where the legacy of a weak curriculum and lack of assessment leads to pupils doing less well than expected in Year 6. Standards in physical education are also lower than expected. This is entirely due to the lack of sufficient indoor space for pupils to learn gymnastics and dance. The school has recently introduced demanding personal targets for pupils in literacy and numeracy and these are now being routinely met. However, overall targets for school performance are insufficiently challenging at present and reflect previous expectations that have been too low.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are positive, enthusiastic, and come to school ready to work well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are courteous to others and are responding well to new procedures for celebrating and rewarding good behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The school is a 'family' community. Pupils are known very well and this leads them to feel secure and gain confidence.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. There is too much authorised absence, mainly due to parents taking holidays in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	good	satisfactory	satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching and learning is improving. Children and pupils in the reception class and Year 1 benefit from good teaching, make good progress and achieve well as a result. Specialist teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective. This satisfactorily promotes pupils' numeracy skills and ensuring good teaching and learning of literacy skills throughout the school. In all classes, pupils receive valuable and good quality support from LSAs and this is particularly beneficial in helping teachers to meet the needs of the pupils in mixed year classes. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and also gain benefit from the work they do with LSAs. Examples of good teaching were noted in two thirds of lessons observed by inspectors, and this is a significant improvement on the previous inspection. This is leading to pupils showing further motivation, concentrating hard and increasing their productivity in these lessons. However, there is still more to do. For example, expectations are still too low for what pupils can attain and more can be done to provide challenge for higher attaining pupils. Also, assessment practice and procedures are unsatisfactory and pupils may repeat unnecessarily topics and skills they already know and can do. There are inconsistencies between classes in the teaching methods used, behaviour management, the quality of lesson planning and displays, and the procedures for setting homework and marking. Discussion with pupils confirms they are motivated by their personal targets but are unaware of how these targets relate to National Curriculum levels of attainment and do not know, for example, what they should do to raise their attainment in writing from Level 4 to Level 5.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Recent improvements ensure that pupils now receive sufficient breadth and balance in their learning in most subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils have individual education plans of good quality and are supported effectively in their learning by teachers and assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made overall for pupils' personal development and for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Cultural development is satisfactory. There are good features, such as the school's links with an Indian school, but pupils are insufficiently prepared to appreciate the diversity of multi-cultural Britain should they visit, or move to, towns outside the area.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. There are very good procedures for monitoring attendance and eliminating oppressive behaviour. However, procedures for assessment of pupils' attainments and for monitoring their progress are still unsatisfactory in most subjects.

The school has a good partnership with parents. Good quality information for parents is now provided and the daily reading activities involving the parents of pupils in reception and Years 1, 2 and 3 are already proving beneficial. The statutory requirements for physical education are not met because of the lack of suitable internal space for pupils to develop their skills.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher is setting a clear vision and taking positive and effective action to bring about change and improve the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body is very well led and beginning to act as 'critical friend' to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher monitors and evaluates the work of the school very well and chooses the priorities for improvement that will have the most impact on raising the pupils' achievements.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses resources and applies the principles of best value well. Financial control and school administration are of high quality.

The school has a good range of teaching and non-teaching staff and satisfactory resources for learning. However, this is the third inspection to judge the accommodation as poor, and parents voiced their frustration to inspectors at the lack of substantial improvement. The school buildings are mainly within the responsibility of the local education authority.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teachers value each individual and the school has a happy, caring and family atmosphere children like school; are taught well in small, mixed-age classes; and make good progress children are helped to become mature, confident and responsible. They are prepared well for secondary school the school is well led and managed and provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school buildings provide a poor environment for their children and there is no hall for physical education the behaviour of pupils in school

Inspectors agree with the positive opinions expressed by parents. They also agree that the buildings are poor. However, good behaviour was observed in class and around the school, and the school council commented that the behaviour of most pupils is generally good.

OTHER INFORMATION

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

The contractor appointed by OFSTED for this inspection was Serco QAA Ltd, Herringston Barn, Herringston, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 9PU

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