



Portishead Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109074
LEA North Somerset
Inspection number 278115
Inspection dates 16 March 2006 to 17 March 2006
Reporting inspector Hazel Callaghan AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Station Road
School category	Community		North Somerset
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		BS20 7DB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01275 843360
Number on roll	335	Fax number	01275 848071
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Michael Lockett
Date of previous inspection	3 April 2000	Headteacher	Mr M J H Scriven

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Portishead Primary is a rapidly growing school. Most pupils are of White British descent with a few from minority ethnic groups. Children enter the school with a range of abilities but the vast majority have at least average standards and many have higher. A small proportion of pupils through the school are identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities. The school moved to new accommodation in 2003 but the number of pupils is still growing with a high proportion joining the school in all year groups. This has created the need to employ a large number of new staff.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Portishead Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and gives sound value for money. The school has successfully steered its way through a period of many difficulties and challenges, including moving onto a new site, coping with staff changes and increased pupil numbers. Its very positive ethos has been maintained and pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Their personal development and care remain strong, but other aspects of school development have slowed. Pupils' achievement through Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Although standards are above average in Year 6, teaching and progress through the school have been inconsistent. Insufficient progress has been made in some subjects and in some year groups. Positive steps have been taken to address weaknesses identified in mathematics. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The school judges its effectiveness to be good as opposed to the satisfactory judgement made by inspectors. The monitoring procedures used by the school are not sufficiently rigorous to give a secure and accurate reflection of the provision. Managers are becoming more aware of weaknesses, and a good start has been made in analysing data. The strategies introduced to raise pupils' achievement are having a positive impact. Teachers help pupils to evaluate their own work, but these strategies are still developing. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Staff commitment to improvement is clear and the school has the capacity to improve further. The very good provision in the Foundation Stage is the result of such commitment and good teaching.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the good start already made to use assessment data to focus on the progress of different groups so that pupils make better progress through the school
- Develop more rigorous monitoring procedures so there is a greater consistency in the quality of teaching and develop strategies to support pupils' evaluation of their own work so they know how to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall, pupils' achievement throughout the school is satisfactory but it is not consistent across year groups or subjects.

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good and by the time children enter Year 1 most attain above average standards. Children's progress in their personal and social development is particularly strong and children develop very good levels of concentration, independence and self-organisation.

Achievement through Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall. Significant movement of pupils into the school over the last few years has had an impact on both teaching and learning. Standards have declined in Year 2 over the last four years to broadly average. This was mainly because teachers' assessments of pupils' work were not sufficiently

accurate and expectations of what pupils could achieve were not high enough. The boys in particular did not achieve as well as the girls. This is improving as better systems are developed. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average. Even so, the school has accurately identified that pupils' progress in mathematics through Years 3 to 5 has not been good enough and many pupils did not meet targets set for them. Strategies have now been put into place which are beginning to address these weaknesses. Analysis of information of pupils' progress is underpinning pupils' better progress and achievement, which is now satisfactory overall. Pupils of all capabilities and backgrounds make similar progress from their relative starting points.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The quality of pupils' personal development is good. They have positive attitudes to their learning because relationships are very good. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school. Instances of bullying are very rare and are dealt with effectively if they occur. As a result, pupils say they feel safe and they enjoy coming to school. Attendance is good.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with strengths in social and moral development, although they have not yet developed a secure understanding of life in a multicultural society. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community. Members of the school council, for example, discuss how to improve the general amenities of the school and are involved in staff appointments. Older pupils willingly and enthusiastically accept opportunities to take responsibility, for instance by becoming 'playground buddies'. As buddies, they help make playtimes happy and harmonious. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to keep safe and of the need to eat nutritious food. By the end of Year 6, pupils have the social development and good academic skills that prepare them well for their future learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is good. Thorough planning, a good understanding of children's needs and effective assessment ensure that activities in the reception classes are very well matched to children's needs so they make good progress.

Teaching through Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall but evidence from pupils' progress records shows that teaching has not been sufficiently effective in the recent past. Assessment of pupils' learning was not used adequately to set challenging targets and so activities did not always extend pupils' learning. Strategies have now been put into place which are beginning to address these weaknesses but there are still inconsistencies. More effective use of ongoing assessment and the implementation of more varied styles of teaching are now having a positive impact. The use of 'setting',

where pupils are taught in ability groups in mathematics, for example, is promoting pupils' better understanding. Teachers through the school are successful in engaging pupils' interest and enjoyment. There are now greater levels of challenge in many lessons and the successful deployment of teaching assistants ensures that pupils of all capabilities make better progress in their tasks. Various strategies are used to help pupils evaluate their own learning but these are still in the early stages of development.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's curriculum is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 6. In the reception class, there is a very good balance between tasks led by the teacher and activities which develop pupils' independent learning skills. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 meets national requirements and is enriched by a good range of additional activities, visits, visitors and clubs. It is matched satisfactorily to the needs of all learners, including those with learning difficulties. Recent changes in the way that some groups are taught in mathematics are beginning to improve pupils' achievement in the subject. Flexibility in the curriculum allows some invaluable opportunities to broaden pupils' understanding and interest, such as the project on saving and valuing the environment.

Since the previous inspection, significant improvements in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) have helped to improve pupils' skills. ICT is also used effectively to support learning in other subjects. For example, temperature sensors are used in science lessons. The school's policies for all aspects of pupils' personal, social and health education are well implemented. Consequently, pupils are developing a good understanding of how to develop healthy lifestyles. This has been further promoted with the improved facilities for physical education on the new site.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Good levels of pastoral care ensure pupils feel happy and safe in school. This is much appreciated by parents. All staff make sure pupils' welfare is a priority and their health and safety are secure. The school provides a calm, dependable environment in which pupils can develop and learn. Adults know the pupils well and are particularly alert to any who may be upset or needing support. Provision for child protection is sound. Good support and guidance are provided for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities. Good use is made of outside agencies to provide additional advice.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and often add words of helpful advice. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are checked and noted from reception upwards but better use could be made of the information to guide their progress. Pupils are not sufficiently well supported in evaluating their work and in understanding how it can be improved. They are set targets for improving their work but these are not yet fully effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school has successfully come through a period of significant difficulties caused by prolonged building work, the change of school site, increasing pupil numbers and significant personal difficulties. The management of fluctuating class sizes and the annual need for reorganisation have deflected staff from other aspects of school development such as analysis of pupils' progress, but this is now being addressed. Many strategies are fairly new but already showing an impact on improved teaching and learning. Crucially, the strong inclusive ethos of the school has been well maintained, as can be seen from the very good relationships, pupils' good personal development and their pastoral care. The effective start to careful analysis of tracking data has identified areas of weakness and raised expectations of pupils' progress. Monitoring procedures are established and effectively linked to the school improvement plan, but systems are not yet sufficiently rigorous to measure accurately the effectiveness of some aspects of the school's provision. Self-evaluation is therefore satisfactory. Governors are kept well informed, are very supportive of the school and are satisfactorily involved in its development. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is now very good and good progress has been made in the provision for ICT. The headteacher and other senior managers are creating a positive climate for change. The recruitment and induction of new staff have been well managed and a fresh focus for bringing about improvement is now clearly evident. The school has the secure capacity to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to say thank you for making us feel welcome in your school and for helping us with our questions. We really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said very interesting. I thought you would like to know what we found out about your school.

What we liked about the school

Children in the reception classes make good progress in their learning.

You are happy at school and enjoy your lessons.

You get on very well with each other and the adults in the school.

You behave extremely well and are kind to each other.

We think you try hard to do well in your work.

You are given lots of opportunities to take responsibility and you do it well.

The teachers look after you well and help you feel safe and secure.

There are lots of additional activities, visitors to school and visits for you to enjoy that make your learning fun.

What we have asked the school to do

We have asked the staff to keep a close eye on how well you are doing so they know who needs help to work a little harder.

We have asked teachers to involve you more in checking your work so that you have a better idea of what you need to do to improve.

We have asked Mr Scriven to ensure you are given the best teaching possible in all of your lessons.

Thank you again for being so polite and helping us.