



# Okehampton Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 113260  
**LEA** Devon  
**Inspection number** 279127  
**Inspection dates** 18 January 2006 to 19 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Laurie Lewin AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Glendale Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Okehampton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Devon EX20 1JB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01837 52866
<b>Number on roll</b>	557	<b>Fax number</b>	01837 55357
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Barbara Stevens
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Brian Cunningham

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 18 January 2006 - 19 January 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279127
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large school. The majority of pupils come from the town of Okehampton, with a small proportion coming from the surrounding area. This part of Devon is noted as having a significant level of social deprivation. The school has an above-average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Most pupils are White British, with a few coming from other cultural backgrounds and a very small number speaking English as an additional language. The attainment of children on entry to school is generally well below average. This has been declining in recent years, alongside an increase in the proportion of children showing social, emotional and language difficulties.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school in which pupils achieve well in their academic and personal development. Good leadership and management ensure that all staff work very well together and are fully focused on helping all groups of pupils succeed. Inspectors agree with the school's generally accurate evaluation of its own performance. Improvements have moved ahead at a good pace since the school was last inspected.

Good teaching and provision in the Foundation Stage help children to make a good start and achieve well. Overall, as a result of good teaching, all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, progress well throughout the school. Pupils achieve average standards by the end of Year 6 except in mathematics, where attainment remains below average. The school recognises the need to fine tune its assessment systems in mathematics in order to clarify the picture of pupils' progress and to sharpen the process of target setting.

Strong procedures for ensuring they are well supported and cared for underpin pupils' good personal development and very good behaviour. The school has a good quality curriculum that is well enriched. However, not enough use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance learning in other subjects.

Staff and governors are committed to constantly improving the facilities and standards, and make full use of their good links with partner organisations to support developments. The school provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Throughout the school, further develop teachers' confidence and subject knowledge in teaching mathematics and improve the use of assessment information in order to raise standards in this subject.
- Develop greater use of ICT across the curriculum.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Overall, pupils achieve well. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress from a very low starting point and standards are below average at the beginning of Year 1. Progress in the infant classes is also good, but in spite of this, standards are currently below average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Results in national tests for this age group have dipped in recent times, mirroring the significant drop in the attainment of children starting school. Pupils make good progress in junior classes and achieve average standards in English and science by the end of Year 6, although standards in mathematics remain below average. Through improving planning and teachers' subject knowledge, the school has made much headway in raising standards in English and science. The school has increased its focus on improving standards in mathematics and the green shoots of improvement are now apparent. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well and make good progress, as do those who speak English as an additional language. Overall, boys perform

significantly less well than girls when they start school. Effective teaching and efforts to make the curriculum more 'boy friendly' are successful in substantially improving boys' performance as they move through the school. The school sets itself challenging targets and has been successful in reaching these in English but not in mathematics.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good. Strong provision in the Foundation Stage fully promotes children's social awareness and understanding. A major strength of the school is its success in building on this good start to develop confident, friendly and courteous youngsters. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy school. In conversation some said ... 'you get lots of cool stuff to do in lessons!' They tackle work conscientiously and behave very well. Their attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and lessons and assemblies help them gain a keen awareness of the diversity of cultures in Britain today. Through the school's strong emphasis on healthy food and fitness, pupils develop a full understanding of leading healthy lifestyles. They carry out responsibilities well. Pupils have good opportunities to voice their opinions through their effective school council, which plays a significant part in initiating school improvements. Activities such as applying for responsibilities and being interviewed and raising funds for charities equip pupils with important life skills and an awareness of the value of contributing to the community. The school has sound provision in place to enhance pupils' understanding of how to secure their future economic well-being, but pupils' development in this area is not as strong as it could be because of the need to raise standards in mathematics.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers in the Foundation Stage show a good awareness of the needs of young children across all learning areas. Throughout the rest of the school, teachers plan well so that work matches pupils' needs closely. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities and the very few who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. Pupils spoken to said they liked their teachers, who they feel work hard to make lessons interesting. Results in mathematics tests indicate that teaching has not been as good in mathematics as in other subjects. Training for staff and revisions to lesson planning have helped improve this, but the school recognises rightly that still more needs to be done to upgrade teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in this area. Assessment information is not used well enough in mathematics to show a clear picture of how well individuals progress and help teachers to set accurate targets. Teaching assistants are a valuable asset and work very effectively in support of teachers and pupils.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of the curriculum is good, with some strengths. Much work has been done with developing the curriculum in literacy and science to good effect and, as a result, standards have risen in these areas. Work in these subjects is organised, adapted and matched well to the needs of all groups of pupils, including those with additional learning needs. Parallel developments in mathematics have been inhibited by unplanned changes of subject leadership. Music is a particular strength, but ICT is not sufficiently well used across the curriculum. Good links are made between subjects so that pupils gain an all-round knowledge. Children in the Foundation Stage are offered a good range of activities. Pupils enjoy a wide choice of clubs and extra activities, especially in music. Effective use of the local area and a wide range of visitors enhance pupils' learning. Arrangements made for pupils to learn about safety, health and living in a community are good.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's good care, guidance and support ensure pupils feel happy and safe. Pupils told inspectors ... 'there's always someone you can talk to if you are worried.' This strong support for their children is much appreciated by parents. Robust procedures are in place to ensure child protection. The school provides a calm and secure environment in which pupils develop as confident individuals. Adults in the school know pupils well and are particularly alert to any who may be upset or needing support. Good use is made of outside agencies to provide support for individuals or advice for the school. Pupils are routinely reminded of the need to take care, for example, when conducting experiments in science, and of the importance of an active, healthy lifestyle.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's very effective vision, energy and ambition have made it possible for the school to thrive and develop at a good pace. His contribution over the years, ably supported by the deputy head, has been considerable in terms of both ensuring stability and in moving the school forward. A succession of good appointments to key roles in subject co-ordination and the management of special needs have considerably strengthened the leadership team since the last inspection. This has contributed significantly to helping improve English and science standards. The team has correctly identified current weaknesses in mathematics and assessment and set in motion good plans to tackle these areas.

Through good quality self-evaluation procedures, staff and governors have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing and what action to take to sustain improvement. The school is good at ensuring that pupils and parents are effectively involved in these processes.

The governance of the school is good. An exceptional feature of its work is the skilful way in which finances are managed.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	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	2	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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	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	2	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	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Okehampton Primary School Glendale Road Okehampton Devon EX20 1JB

20 January 2006

Dear Children

I am writing to let you know how much we enjoyed coming to visit your school. Thank you for making us so welcome and helping us during the school's inspection. We especially enjoyed hearing about how much you like the activities that you do. Some children we spoke to said 'we get cool stuff to do in lessons'. •You work carefully in lessons and show a lot of interest with the tasks you do. •You progress well in most subjects, but we feel that standards could be better in mathematics. •Your school is a very friendly and happy place and you behave very well. •You like your teachers and you told us that they try to make your lessons interesting. We also think they do a good job. •You really appreciate all of the extra activities that the school provides for you. •We think the school does a good job of taking care of you. •We were impressed to see how much you know about the need to eat healthy foods and stay fit. •We think that your headteacher works well to organise the school and to help you all become successful.

We think the school now needs to improve the way it uses information to show how well you are getting on and to make sure you all have more chances to use information and communication technology in different subjects. We also think that the school is right to move ahead with the efforts it is making to improve the way in which mathematics is taught.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lewin Lead Inspector