



Colehill First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113664
LEA Dorset
Inspection number 279213
Inspection dates 19 September 2005 to 19 September 2005
Reporting inspector Michael Burghart RISP

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

Type of school	First	School address	Middlehill Road
School category	Community		Colehill
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		Wimborne, Dorset BH21 2HL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01202 882506
Number on roll	141	Fax number	01202 848196
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr G Richards
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr Andrew Turrall

Age group 4 to 9	Inspection dates 19 September 2005 - 19 September 2005	Inspection number 279213
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized first school with five classes, one for each age group. All pupils are White British. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities and the proportion of children eligible for free school meals is well below average. Children start school with above average levels of attainment. Most children attend the on-site independent nursery before joining Reception part-time at the start of the year in which they are five. The school moved into new, purpose-built accommodation last year and has a new headteacher this term. The school received an Achievement Award from the Department of Education and Skills in 2003.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This outstanding school gives good value for money. Pupils reach very high standards and make very good progress because teaching is exemplary and the school is extremely well run. Results show that this has been the case for several years. The school takes outstanding care of pupils. The excellent ethos and the high quality of relationships underpin pupils' outstanding personal development. This starts in Reception where provision is first rate. Pupils with learning difficulties are helped to make very good progress. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent. The new headteacher is particularly well supported by governors and staff. His very recently established leadership is building on the school's strengths and is making the most of the staff's strong team spirit and the school's excellent links with parents and the community. The school's excellent commitment is very effectively moving Colehill First even further forward. This is based on a very good, and growing, understanding of what the school is doing well and what it needs to do next, and matches the findings of this inspection.

The school has identified that the time is right to review the curriculum and redefine the school development plan priorities. These are not weaknesses, but dealing with them will help the school to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

As an outstanding school, all aspects judged in this report are good or better. As such, this report raises no fundamental areas for improvement. It recognises that the school's agenda for developing cross-curricular links between subjects, raising the profile of multicultural awareness, and making the priorities of the school development plan clearer, will serve to make the school even better.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are very high, being regularly in the top five per cent of all schools at the end of Year 2. Children enter Reception with skills which are better than normally found in this age group. They take advantage of outstanding provision and make very good progress to exceed all the early learning goals expected of six-year-olds. Boys and girls of all abilities make very good progress, building on this very good start.

Throughout the school, the high quality learning environment and outstanding teaching enable pupils to make the most of their potential. As a result, pupils do exceptionally well in assessments for seven and nine-year-olds and are very well prepared for the middle school. Standards of reading, writing, mathematics and science are all very high. This has been the case for several years. Since the last report identified standards in information and communication technology (ICT) as a weakness, provision has been significantly improved. Teachers are now well trained and make very good use of the new suite and resources. Consequently standards have been raised and are now better

than what is expected for this age group. Pupils are achieving well and making good use of ICT in other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Parents and children are overwhelmingly enthusiastic about the school and rightly think that it is very friendly and caring. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is well above average. Standards of behaviour are excellent both in class and around the school. Nobody could identify any significant anti-social behaviour but pupils know how to get help if they need to. From Reception onwards, staff ensure pupils feel safe and so grow in confidence and self-esteem. As a result, pupils show high levels of independence in their learning from an early age. Pupils have excellent opportunities to take responsibility. Some have specific jobs helping in school and each year group has representatives who support the 'Buddy' system and contribute to the school council. Older pupils are beginning to develop workplace skills through mini-enterprise schemes. The headteacher intends to develop this even further. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop a healthy lifestyle through a range of sporting activities which are enhanced by the very good links with the local middle and secondary schools.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding overall. Since the last inspection, the school has improved opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness through reflection and this is shown in pupils' attitudes and sensitivity to others. Pupils' moral and social development is exceptionally good. The school works well with other schools locally to raise pupils' knowledge of different cultures, but realises that more opportunities can still be offered to extend pupils' awareness of multicultural Britain.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Outstanding teaching is the main reason why standards and pupils' development are so good. Teachers very successfully help pupils to build on what they already know and can do. They make excellent use of assessment information to track how well pupils are progressing. Very effective planning and target setting for individuals make sure pupils of all abilities are challenged to do their best. This approach is particularly effective in getting more able pupils to higher levels. Teachers and teaching assistants give very good support to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, skilfully helping them to do as well as they can.

Highlights in teaching are obvious, not only in the lessons seen but also through school monitoring records and work in pupils' books. These include:

outstanding provision in Reception, where children's learning is extremely effectively developed through play activities

literacy, which is very well planned and taught in ways which encourage a love of literature and give an excellent basis for developing writing skills. For example, in an outstanding Year 3 lesson, onomatopoeia and alliteration really captured pupils' imagination and resulted in work of a much higher standard than is normal for this age group

ICT teaching which makes the most of outstanding accommodation and resources. An excellent Year 2 lesson using the Internet for research into the Great Fire of London gave pupils the chance to follow their own lines of enquiry

very effective planning to make learning fun. Pupils clearly enjoy school. They pay attention and show considerable enthusiasm because staff present work in ways which will interest them. The school's commitment to being 'A happy school where children love to learn' really works!

Staff question pupils very effectively to prompt them to think before answering. They show that they are prepared to listen to pupils and that they value their contributions. Consequently, pupils are not afraid to try out new ideas and learn from their mistakes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is good. The curriculum for Reception is very effective and gives children a very good start which is built on successfully throughout the rest of the school. Work is planned well for pupils of different abilities, with very good support for those with learning difficulties. All pupils enjoy lessons. One said, "I really like maths even though I'm better at English". Teachers very successfully use a variety of strategies such as 'Brain Gym' and 'learning partners' to encourage pupils to widen their thinking. Some of these new ideas have resulted from the very effective partnership with other local schools. The very high standards in basic skills of literacy and numeracy show that teachers plan well for more able pupils. Pupils are well challenged and the school is developing this even further, for example in investigations and problem solving in mathematics. Pupils enjoy the good range of clubs and enrichment activities that the school offers and talk enthusiastically about the visits that they made last year. As well as adding to pupils' enjoyment of learning, these rich experiences help pupils to develop healthy lifestyles and new interests. The excellent new school building with up-to-date technology enhances these learning opportunities and is much appreciated by staff, parents and children.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes outstanding care of pupils. The school's ethos is excellent and all pupils feel valued and safe. From Reception onwards, children are very successfully encouraged to develop confidence and self-esteem and this forms an excellent base for their personal and academic development. Effective child protection arrangements are in place and there are excellent links with parents, carers and support agencies. The high expectations of behaviour and excellent relationships throughout the school

enable pupils to work and play together without fear of bullying or harassment. In fact, pupils found it difficult to think of more than one instance of 'bad behaviour' in the last year.

The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are excellent. Pupils are well aware of their learning targets and appreciate how teachers help them to improve. Pupils with learning difficulties have clear and informative individual education plans. These are shared with parents and form the basis of the very good support given. Pupils' annual reports are informative but the school is aware that parents do not get a clear enough view of what their children need to do to improve. However, parents are exceptionally positive about the education and care that their children are receiving at this school. Those whose children have only just joined from other schools commented on the high level of information and support that they were given, and the ease with which their children had settled into their new school. Governors and staff work very effectively in evaluating health and safety and consequently the school is a safe and secure environment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The new headteacher is building on the work of his predecessor in leading the school very effectively. The quality of leadership and management continues to be outstanding, with the result that for a number of years, standards have remained very high and pupils' personal development is excellent. The learning environment is exceptional. Senior managers, staff and governors continue to work very closely together and make an excellent team. There is an extremely successful balance of headteacher and senior staff leading curriculum development, and governors very effectively co-ordinating finance and overseeing building initiatives. As a result, although spending is above average, the school gives good value for money. The new headteacher has already shown how his incisive evaluation and analysis of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses will make the school even better, for example in developing further cross-curricular links and prioritising the school development plan. There is a strong commitment to continue to build on the strengths in management of the Foundation Stage, literacy, science, ICT, support for those with learning difficulties, and assessment. These are to be used as models to further develop other subject areas.

Parents clearly recognise the school's many strengths and were very keen to tell inspectors how good it is. A 'Top Class School' one parent wrote and this view was echoed by many more. Links with the community and partnerships with others to support pupils' education and personal development are outstanding.

The management team show that they set challenging targets and are very effectively making improvements through monitoring and evaluation. Together headteacher, staff and governors demonstrate that the school's capacity to improve is excellent. The school's track record confirms this.

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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?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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	1	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?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	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	1	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

We really enjoyed our day at your school. It was a pleasure to see you at work and hear how much you like the place. How wonderful for you to have such a beautiful new building and such attractive grounds.

Colehill First is a top quality school. Here are some of its strengths:

Standards of reading, writing, maths and science are very high, and you are very well prepared for the middle school.

Teachers and their assistants are extremely good at helping you to learn and to grow up into very sensible people. They take excellent care of you and do their best to make learning fun.

The headteacher, staff and governors run the school extremely well. They know what works well and how to make things even better.

Your parents and carers are right in thinking that this is an excellent school. Their very strong support helps the school to stay like this.

You are doing well in ICT and making very good use of the excellent computer suite and new whiteboards.

Everyone at your school is working hard. The staff and governors are continually planning improvements for the future. We encourage them to keep up the good work!