



William Barnes Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113676
LEA Dorset
Inspection number 279218
Inspection dates 4 October 2005 to 5 October 2005
Reporting inspector David Curtis RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bridge Street
School category	Community		Sturminster Newton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Dorset DT10 1BZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01258 472257
Number on roll	203	Fax number	01258 472257
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Richard Scott
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Alwyne (Polly) Patrick

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 4 October 2005 - 5 October 2005	Inspection number 279218
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves the small market town of Sturminster Newton. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average and a small number have statements of special educational needs. Very few pupils are at the early stage of learning English. A very small number of pupils are in public care, and are Traveller learners. The number of pupils who join the school at times other than of normal admission or transfer is high. Children enter the Foundation Stage with lower level of skill to those normally found in children of their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges its own effectiveness to be satisfactory. Inspection evidence is that the school is better than this. It is a good school, which gives good value for money.

Children start school with standards which are well below expectations, especially in early language skills. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage. Although children make good progress, the majority do not meet the goals they are expected to achieve by the time they start Year 1.

By the age of 11, standards are broadly average and pupils have made good progress since they started school. Pupils achieve the challenging targets set for them. There are significant strengths in the quality of support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. This is reflected in the views of parents who value the high quality care given to their children. Pupils enjoy school and they behave well. Relationships are good. Parents say that their children like school. At the age of seven, standards in mathematics are exceptionally low. The school is not setting clear targets at the start of Year 1 that pupils should reach by the end of Year 2. It is not using the impressive range of school data on pupils' performance as successfully in Years 1 and 2 as it does in Years 3 to 6. The school improvement plan has a clear focus on improving teaching and learning and raising standards. However, it is not clear how the outcomes are to be measured in relation to improved standards.

The school has the clear capacity for further improvement. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Issues to raise standards in English and information and communications technology (ICT) and to improve pupils' attitudes to school have been addressed successfully. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is much improved.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2; and set targets in mathematics for all pupils at the start of Year 1
- ensure that targets in the school improvement plan have outcomes which are measurable in relation to pupils' improved performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start school with standards well below expectations for 4-year-olds. Despite good teaching, few meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1.

By the age of 11, standards are broadly average and rising; they are stronger in science than in English and mathematics. Taking into consideration the low standards when children start school, pupils make good progress and their achievement is good. Most pupils achieve the challenging targets set for them. Pupils achieve good standards in art and design, as is seen in many high quality paintings on display in the school. Their love of singing is reflected in the impressive standards heard in collective worship. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress, as do Traveller

learners and those learning English for the first time. These pupils receive good quality support from teachers and teaching assistants.

By the age of 7, standards in English are broadly average and show good improvement since the previous report. Unusually, standards in writing are better than those in reading; this goes against the national picture. Standards in writing have improved. One of the key reasons for this is that all pupils have clear targets from the start of Year 1. At seven, standards in mathematics continue the year-on-year trend where they are exceptionally low. In mathematics, the school is not setting targets for all pupils at the start of Year 1. As a result, progress is only satisfactory and standards are not high enough.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and parents agree strongly that their children like school. Behaviour is good in lessons and when pupils move around the school. It is particularly good at lunchtimes. Pupils enjoy their work and show very positive attitudes to learning. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Relationships are good and pupils enjoy working in pairs and small groups. Because pupils enjoy school so much, they make good progress by the age of 11. Attendance is satisfactory and the school works hard to encourage good attendance and punctuality.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. An impressive range of visits and visiting speakers contributes to pupils' understanding of their own culture and those of others. Pupils contribute to making their own class rules and this has a strong impact on their moral and social development. The joy on pupils' faces when they receive stickers and merit awards shows that they know it is important to behave sensibly and to work hard.

Through personal, social, health and citizenship education, pupils understand the importance of personal safety and of keeping fit and healthy. Pupils talk knowledgeably about what a healthy lunch box should contain. They have access to water in lessons and all eat fruit at morning break.

Pupils make a strong contribution to the local community, including the local carnival.

The award of the Basic Skills Quality Mark Award in 2005 shows that pupils develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT effectively by the age of 11.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good Teachers provide a suitable range of activities so pupils are interested and attentive in lessons. Teaching has been successful in raising standards in writing. Classroom assistants help children effectively, especially those with learning difficulties and disabilities, who make good progress. Planning is good, so staff teams

work effectively together and pupils make good progress in most subjects. Adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and children respond positively.

In writing, detailed assessment sets clear targets which pupils understand. This has led to improved standards. Reading has improved and pupils' work is closely monitored. In other subjects, teachers select target groups where potentially underachieving pupils' progress is carefully monitored. In mathematics, assessment is not detailed enough to ensure enough good progress for all pupils. This has contributed to continued low standards in mathematics by the age of seven. Work is not always accurately matched to the needs of younger pupils, especially more able ones. Pupils do not make enough progress in mathematics to the age of seven, despite a recent school focus on this. However, achievement speeds up significantly by the age of 11.

Marking is helping pupils to understand how to improve their work. Assessment accurately identifies small groups of pupils who require additional help in English and mathematics. The results of this show good improvement for the pupils involved.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The range of work pupils do in most subjects is good. Many interesting opportunities, such as clubs, residential visits and visitors, excite pupils and enrich classroom experiences. Many of these help to develop pupils' social skills well. Teachers use the local rural environment in many subjects, providing a good contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the natural world.

Subjects such as music and art and design show pupils' enjoyment and success in creative work and standards are high. Provision for ICT has significantly improved, with hardware and software now good and pupils are enthusiastic and competent. Clubs extend their enjoyment and skills into areas, such as animation, where some pupils produce high-quality presentations. Good planning and provision for personal, social and health education ensure that pupils are well aware of the importance of fitness and well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils. Good personal progress and development are ensured because staff know pupils well and show a high level of concern for their well-being. This is greatly appreciated by parents and carers. Enough non-teaching adults are deployed to support those with learning difficulties and disabilities very effectively in classes. This often occurs through very focused one-to-one help which enables pupils to make good progress. All pupils have access to clubs and other activities, providing a wealth of opportunities which enrich their lives. The school's provision of a safe environment where pupils work and play happily together is good. Pupils learning English as an additional language and Traveller learners are well integrated. They receive good support which ensures that they too make good progress in both personal and academic development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, supported by all staff, is passionate in ensuring that all pupils, irrespective of ability, gender or ethnicity, play a full part in all aspects of school life. This is recognised and valued by parents who speak highly of the support given to children who have learning difficulties or medical needs. The school is very successful in meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. This is because of the effective work of the very knowledgeable special educational needs co-ordinator and the work of teaching assistants. The school places great emphasis on pupils' enjoying school and wanting to learn and this makes a very strong contribution to the good progress made by the age of 11.

The school's clear capacity for improvement is shown in the way it has successfully addressed the key issues from the previous inspection. The success in raising standards in writing by giving all pupils clear targets is particularly noteworthy. There is a desire to bring about further improvements in teaching and learning and standards.

The school improvement plan is aimed at raising standards but it does not establish clear criteria for measuring that improvement. Teachers, teaching assistants, governors and parents contribute effectively to the school improvement plan. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and know that standards in mathematics need to be improved in Years 1 and 2. The school has not been rigorous enough in following-up weaknesses in the subject. The support given to small groups in mathematics is effective in improving their performance but it is not given to all pupils. This contributes to only satisfactory progress and standards not being high enough.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ 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

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	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	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?	2	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?	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	3	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

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

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and talking with many of you. We liked many of the things we saw and here are some of them:

- your singing in assembly was really good and we thought that your art work displayed in the school is very impressive
- there are examples of good writing, including poems on display in your classrooms
- you behave well
- you like coming to school and work hard in lessons
- you enjoy meeting visitors and taking part in the many clubs teachers provide for you after school
- you are friendly, polite and well mannered.

To make your school even better, we have asked your teachers to:

- help you understand how you can improve your work in mathematics even further
- spend more time talking to you about the targets they give you
- think of ways to help them tell how well their plans to improve the school are working.

Thank you again for talking to us.

Yours sincerely

David Curtis