



Bovington First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113680
LEA Dorset
Inspection number 279220
Inspection dates 28 June 2006 to 29 June 2006
Reporting inspector David Curtis AI

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

Type of school	First	School address	Holt Road
School category	Community		Bovington
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		Wareham, Dorset BH20 6LE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01929 462744
Number on roll	161	Fax number	01929 463238
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Robert Haddow
Date of previous inspection	18 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Juliette Muir

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school mainly serves the families from Bovington Army Camp. This is a training camp which means that there is constant movement of children in and out of the school. Very few children start the school in Reception and go through to the end of Year 4 where they transfer to middle school. The school has a higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties than is found in most schools. There are a few pupils from Traveller families or who have English as an additional language. Children start school with standards which are below expectations for four-year-olds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that gives excellent value for money. At the heart of the school's success is the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and her deputy. They are totally committed to meeting the emotional, social and academic needs of all children, and are especially sensitive to those from service families. They start by making sure pupils are happy, secure and confident. Secondly, through outstanding teaching, pupils know what they are learning and why. As one teacher said, 'I want you to tell me how I can improve your learning.' As a result, pupils really love school, as is shown in their very good attendance. Pupils behave well. They are genuinely caring and supportive of each other and their teachers. They understand the importance of keeping fit and healthy. Through the very effective school council, pupils have a real involvement in the running of their school. The standard and quality of the Foundation Stage are outstanding and give children the best possible start to their schooling. Because pupils enjoy school so much and want to learn, they respond enthusiastically to high-quality teaching and succeed. Rigorous tracking demonstrates that all pupils make very good progress and those who spend a long time at the school achieve high standards by the end of Year 4. The school recognises the need to further improve pupils' writing. The support for pupils with learning difficulties, those from Traveller families and those with English as an additional language is first class.

The majority of parents are supportive of the school. As one wrote, 'The staff are all very helpful and approachable. I am very impressed with the way the children are taught.'

The school evaluates its performance very well and quickly puts right any weaknesses. It has made excellent progress since its last inspection and is extremely well placed to secure further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide pupils with regular opportunities to transfer their thoughts and ideas gained through speaking and listening activities, including drama, into their writing, both in literacy and other subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children make very good progress from the day they start school and standards are high by the end of Year 4. Most pupils reach the challenging targets which are set for them. When they start school in the Reception class children's attainment is below expectation, especially in communication, language and literacy. By the end of Reception, most achieve national expectations in all areas except communication language and literacy. When pupils join the school at other times their attainment is generally below average. Consequently, by the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average overall but those pupils who started school in Reception do very well and

reach high standards. By Year 4, standards are well above expectations and this represents outstanding achievement since pupils started school. Standards in speaking and listening are particularly good. In mathematics, more-able pupils show a very good understanding of number patterns. The school recognises that there is room to further improve the quality of pupils' writing. Pupils with learning difficulties, together with those from Traveller families and those learning English as an additional language, make very good progress.

Pupils use their speaking, reading, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills particularly well in other subjects. Standards in art and design, design and technology (DT), geography and history are very good. Mexican masks made by pupils in Year 1 are very impressive. Torches made in Year 4 show very good linking of making skills in DT with the use of circuits in science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils take great delight in coming to school and this is a key factor in their outstanding personal development. They show great enthusiasm for learning. In lessons, forests of hands shoot up to ask and answer questions. Behaviour is good. Pupils understand that, 'Teachers are strict when they need to be.' Pupils develop very strong and caring relationships. Their honesty is impressive. Attendance is good and reflects pupils' love of school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils value each other as friends. They are very reflective in their prayers during collective worship. Pupils willingly volunteer to help each other and their teachers. They have a very strong sense of right and wrong. Through art, music, geography and history, they gain a good understanding of both their own culture and those of other peoples.

Pupils talk with great confidence about healthy eating and living. They feel safe and secure in school. Through the school council, they have a real say in the running of the school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part in events with local schools. They raise considerable funds for charities. Pupils are prepared extremely well socially, emotionally and academically for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. The school's consistent approach greatly benefits pupils' progress. As one pupil said, 'Lessons are fun and we have great things to do.' Activities for Reception children are exciting and highly motivating, fully involving them in learning so that they enjoy it very much and want to do well.

Teachers' expertise is very good and lesson planning is outstanding. In particular, effective activities are provided for pupils of different abilities so that all are included

exceptionally well. To ensure full concentration, pupils are actively involved in all stages of a lesson. Pupils say teachers are very helpful and, 'If you don't understand they will go through things in an easier way.' This is reinforced by very good probing of pupils' understanding and exceptionally good use of resources, especially the interactive whiteboards. Excellent calm, consistent management of each class helps pupils to behave well and work very hard. Teaching assistants support learning well, particularly for pupils who find this difficult. Assessment is excellent. Teachers know exactly how well each pupil is doing and set very good targets to help them improve. Targets are regularly referred to throughout lessons and pupils are given very good advice on how to achieve them. Pupils are involved in helping to assess how well they are doing and this motivates them to do even better.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. The excellent programme of work for Reception children gives them a very good start. Pupils benefit from very effective links between subjects and especially good arrangements to use their speaking, reading, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects although links with writing are less well used. Excellent planning provides challenging activities which are relevant to pupils and well matched to the stages at which individuals are working. This meets the needs of all pupils, including those who are gifted and talented, exceptionally well. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is outstanding, both in individual or group work and in classroom activities. In particular, the way that class teachers ensure that the targets set out in pupils' individual education plans are addressed in class lessons is very high quality. An excellent range of visits, visitors and school clubs enriches the curriculum and helps ensure pupils' excellent attitudes to school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. This is an exceptionally caring school where every child matters. As one parent said, 'Teachers are always there to answer any questions or concerns.' Pupils feel very happy and safe and thrive in this supportive environment. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are rigorous and all staff are very well informed. Support and guidance for pupils' personal and academic development are excellent. Certificates for hard work and good behaviour together with 'Golden Time' make an especially good contribution. Support for vulnerable pupils and those who have learning difficulties is excellent, as is the school's liaison with other agencies regarding their welfare. Outstanding procedures for tracking pupils' academic progress help teachers set very effective targets to help pupils improve. Constant reference to these and pupils' involvement in checking how well they are doing help to ensure their outstanding progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management are the key to the school's success. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are an exceptionally effective team. They are supported effectively by a strong team of subject managers and the special educational needs co-ordinator. The commitment to continuous school improvement is absolute. The excellent progress made since the previous inspection is a testimony to their success and to the school's capacity to improve even more. At the heart of their work is a deep understanding of the very specific needs of all children, particularly those from service families. Ensuring that first and foremost pupils are happy, secure and confident is paramount as the prerequisite for effective learning. All staff then build on this to create a school where pupils want to learn and know why and what they are learning. As a result, pupils' achievement is outstanding.

The school places great importance on seeking the views of its pupils, especially through the school council. Pupils' views are valued and play a significant part in the writing of the very good school improvement plan. The school works hard to involve parents, although the nature of service families moving on a regular basis restricts the commitment of parents to supporting the school. The information that the school provides for parents through a series of fliers is excellent. Governors are very supportive of the school and are prepared to question and challenge the headteacher. Being a school with service families, the recruitment, retention and training of governors sensibly features strongly within their own development programme.

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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	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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	1	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?	1	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	1	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 feel so welcome when we came to your school. Mrs Wilkinson would like me to thank the school council for giving of their time to meet with her. You are very lucky to go to such an outstanding school with an excellent headteacher and teachers.

We particularly liked the way you work hard in your lessons. You enjoy being given targets by your teachers and you like the way the staff help you to understand the work you are doing. In your classrooms, there is some lovely work that you have done in many subjects. We particularly liked the Mexican masks we saw in Year 1 and the torches made by Year 4. We noticed that you get on really well with each other and we were impressed by how many of you are always ready to help your teachers with jobs around the classroom. Many of you received certificates in the celebration assembly on Wednesday and we noticed how proud you were to receive them. It was good to see the rest of the school sharing in your success with lots of smiles and claps.

To make your school even better, we have asked your headteacher and teachers to do one thing. We have asked them to give you more time for writing using the ideas that you get from drama and role-play lessons.

Yours sincerely,

David Curtis

Lead inspector