



Corfe Castle Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113760
LEA Dorset
Inspection number 279239
Inspection dates 16 November 2005 to 16 November 2005
Reporting inspector Judith Rundle HMI

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

Type of school	First	School address	East Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Corfe Castle
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		Wareham, Dorset BH20 5EE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01929 480428
Number on roll	78	Fax number	01929 481223
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	mr Nigel Dragon
Date of previous inspection	15 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Carol Bell

Age group 4 to 9	Inspection dates 16 November 2005 - 16 November 2005	Inspection number 279239
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one HMI and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Corfe Castle Church of England School is a small rural first school, with three mixed-age classes. The headteacher teaches three days a week and staffing is stable. The school has an imbalance of boys and girls, with particularly high numbers of boys in Year 3. A smaller proportion of pupils than average have learning difficulties with more boys identified as requiring support than girls. The proportion of pupils who receive free school meals is very low. The social and economic backgrounds of the pupils are slightly above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is providing a satisfactory standard of education and gives satisfactory value for money. This reflects the school's own self-evaluation.

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average for pupils aged seven and remain average when they leave school. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However, not all pupils make enough progress, particularly the higher attaining pupils and pupils in Year 1 because work is not always challenging enough for their ability level. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and make the same progress as other pupils. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress overall and the majority meet the early learning goals by the end of the year.

Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. They are happy and well cared for and their personal development is a strength of the school. The revised arrangements for child protection are not yet fully agreed and implemented and need to be done as a matter of urgency.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features, although this is not consistent throughout the school. Target setting and assessment processes are in place, but they are not used consistently or rigorously enough to ensure that all pupils make the progress they are capable of.

The procedures for checking the school's work have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory but they need to be used more robustly to focus on improving standards and ensuring all pupils make progress. Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall.

There has been satisfactory progress in addressing the main issues from the last inspection although they have not all been fully addressed. The school has the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- make better and more rigorous use of the tracking data on pupils' progress, especially for the higher attaining pupils, and extend the use of individual targets throughout the school
- plan and implement a long term checking programme of the school's effectiveness and make robust use of the findings to inform future developments linked to pupils' progress
- ensure that pupils in Year 1 have the same expectations made of them across both classes
- implement the revised child protection procedures as a matter of urgency and communicate these to all staff.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school grades achievement and standards as satisfactory and the inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils enter the school with average ability and most reach average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 4. Standards have

been consistently in line with national averages for pupils aged seven in recent years. The lower results in the Year 2 tests in 2004 were predicted by the school based on the ability levels of the pupils in that year. However, the 2005 results have returned to the average levels of previous years.

Girls have consistently out performed boys in recent years but the school has put into place an appropriate range of activities and support to address this. For example, additional individual work with a teaching assistant, using published English schemes, has helped to increase the opportunities for reading and writing.

Progress in the mixed class for Reception and Year 1 pupils is slower than in the other classes where the progress of most pupils is satisfactory. Year 1 pupils in this mixed class do not have enough activities that fully challenge their learning to meet their needs. In addition, the work is frequently easier than that provided for the Year 1 pupils in the other class. By the end of the Reception year most children achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Higher attaining pupils usually have work to match their needs although this is not consistent across the school. Consequently, these pupils are capable of attaining more than at present. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress and receive useful support from teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development and well-being are good. These judgements are better than the school's own view. Pupils enjoy school life, behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning. Attendance has improved and is now above average.

The school provides well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and the Christian ethos is both strong and evident. There are good relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils are encouraged to live healthy lifestyles through their participation in a good range of physical education and sporting opportunities and eating healthy snacks.

Pupils are encouraged and volunteer readily to take on a good range of responsibilities for their school community, such as the 'playground friends' scheme which helps to integrate all pupils successfully. The school has secure procedures to guard against anti-social behaviour, but these are not always fully explored or implemented with pupils to help their understanding and to resolve issues.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and have some good features. This is in line with the school's own evaluation. Teachers have good subject knowledge and most use this well so that pupils work at a good pace and are fully engaged in their

learning. However, in some lessons the pace of learning is too slow for the more able pupils, who are capable of achieving more. Where children are challenged in their learning and work is well matched to their abilities, they make better progress. However, this is not consistently planned for across the school. There is insufficient sharing of good practice across the school.

Teachers use the termly assessment data well in some classes and most pupils understand how they have improved, but data is not used rigorously enough to challenge every pupil in their learning. Targets for individual pupils to support learning and progress are starting to be used. However this has not been extended throughout the school so not all pupils know how they can improve their work further. Teaching assistants are used effectively and pupils are given useful support in lessons; they are particularly skilled at questioning pupils to extend their understanding of the work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is suitably broad and balanced and is planned adequately over the two year rolling programme to support pupils' progress. However pupils in year one do not all experience the same curriculum activities and those in the mixed reception and year one class work at a slower pace than their capabilities. Higher attaining pupils across the school do not consistently have enough planned activities to extend their abilities. The school makes appropriate use of teachers with specialist knowledge to teach the curriculum such as physical education and design and technology. A good range of enrichment activities supports pupils' learning, such as visits and opportunities within the locality, and some pupils take part in festivals and competitions. Art and music have a particularly strong focus. Pupils enjoy these subjects and are justifiably proud of their achievements. They also enjoy the range of clubs on offer, and the extended opportunity of learning to swim on the school site. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support to help them learn and make progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school judges care, support and guidance to be satisfactory and inspection evidence supports this view. As this is a small school staff know individual pupils very well and use this knowledge to advantage when supporting their education. However, the procedures for identifying and recording support for the most vulnerable pupils are not rigorous enough. The schools links well with external agencies, such as ensuring support for speech and language development. The school provides a safe environment and the majority of pupils feel secure. Pupils comment that there is a trusted adult to whom they can go if they need help and support. Most feel this works well but a few pupils feel problems are not always fully resolved. Procedures for child protection are currently satisfactory, but are being updated, and these should be implemented as quickly as possible.

The school assesses pupils' progress and analyses test results, but this information is not always used well or monitored sufficiently to make sure all pupils are making the progress they are capable of.

The school works closely with both the pre-school and the middle school so that pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school knows its strengths and areas for development and its self-evaluation is mostly accurate. A school development plan is in place but there is insufficient focus on raising pupils' standards and rates of progress. Production of the plan is largely undertaken by the headteacher and there is not enough input from all staff and governors at the early stages of its development.

Procedures for checking the school's effectiveness are in place and this is an improvement since the last inspection. However, these procedures do not include a long term programme of monitoring known to all staff and governors. This process is not sufficiently robust to ensure that the prime focus is on all pupils making the progress of which they are capable, particularly the higher attaining pupils.

Governors have secure knowledge of the school and undertake their monitoring roles diligently. Governors support school developments well, such as formulating new policies for information and communication technology (ICT) and make sound financial decisions.

Parents views are sought at least annually and the vast majority of responses are very positive and supportive of the work undertaken at the school.

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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	3	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	3	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	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	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	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	NA
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

Corfe Castle Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School East Street Corfe Castle Dorset
BH20 5EE

16 November 2005

Dear Children

Following our visit to your school, we wanted to say thank you for talking to us and telling us so much about the things you are doing and what you enjoy. We are writing to let you know what we found out about your school.

What we most liked about your school:

- you work well in lessons and behave well around the school
- you enjoy school and go to clubs, extra activities and competitions such as sport and music
- the number of you that help other children in the school when you are playground friends
- teachers look after you and care for you
- pupils with special needs are helped by the teachers and teaching assistants. We have asked the school to find ways of:

- helping you to understand how you can get even better in your work
- helping some of you learn faster
- making sure that all of you feel safe in school all the time.

Thank you for making us feel so welcome and we hope that you continue to enjoy school and learning.

Best wishes

The Inspection Team