



Spetisbury Hall and Sloper C of E VA Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113826
LEA Dorset
Inspection number 279261
Inspection dates 6 July 2006 to 6 July 2006
Reporting inspector Helen Barter AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Spetisbury
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 9DF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01258 452107
Number on roll	107	Fax number	01258 452107
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Maureen Davey
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Sue Cutler

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	6 July 2006 - 6 July 2006	279261

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils attend the school from Spetisbury and surrounding villages. Their attainment on entry varies year by year, but generally their skills and abilities are above average for Reception-age children. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is lower than average. Few pupils are entitled to claim free school meals. Nearly all pupils are White British and speak English fluently. As a result of a change to primary status, the school has Year 5 pupils this year for the first time. These pupils will become the first Year 6 in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. However, this does not match the school's self-assessment, which is that it is good in all areas. This difference has arisen because the school's processes for self-evaluation are only partially effective. As pupils move through the school, the systems for checking on their progress are not sufficiently robust. Assessment information is not used well enough to plan future work, and to stretch and challenge pupils of all abilities. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning do not focus sharply enough on the quality of learning and the amount of progress pupils make. So, although pupils are making satisfactory progress in their learning, there is scope to raise expectations further and improve levels of achievement.

Spetisbury is a school where pupils behave well and work hard. Pupils say that they 'love school' and show a lot of care for each other. The curriculum is good and stimulates pupils' interest and enjoyment of learning. Parents are rightly satisfied that the school cares for their children well. They value highly the fact that 'the school is at the heart of the village' and appreciate the way in which the school 'actively promotes kindness and consideration for others'.

Over the past few years, the school has experienced some significant staffing difficulties. These have affected the progress of pupils in Year 5, particularly in mathematics, but they are beginning to catch up now. The headteacher has managed a difficult period of change well, has rebuilt a stable staff team and promotes a good culture for further improvement. The school has the full support of parents, and staff morale is good as a result. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory in most areas, particularly in improving the provision for information and communication technology (ICT).

The school provides satisfactory value for money and has sound capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment information more effectively to plan work for pupils of all abilities and to set challenging targets so that the rate of progress for all pupils improves.
- Develop procedures to check on the quality of teaching and learning to gain a clearer view of the school's effectiveness and to raise expectations of what pupils might achieve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities which are above those usually found for their age. They make sound progress, meet their expected goals and enter Year 1 with particularly good communication and language skills and strong personal, social and emotional development. Pupils of all

abilities continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to work at above average standards. Their reading skills are particularly good. The new year 5 pupils are mostly working at levels expected for their age, although they are having to catch up following disruptions which affected their learning earlier in their school career. Assessments of current work show that they are now making satisfactory progress in English, although few are working at the higher levels in writing. In mathematics, however, pupils have not yet regained lost ground. Appropriate targets have now been set for these pupils in Year 6 which would allow satisfactory progress to take place. Nevertheless, the assessments of pupils' progress on which these are based are not yet secure. Consequently, targets may not prove to be sufficiently challenging, particularly for more able pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well, work hard and enjoy learning new things, such as tasting different soft fruits before making a pictograph in mathematics. Pupils' good attendance reflects their enjoyment of school life. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are respectful and thoughtful towards others. Pupils say that 'making friends at playtimes' is something that they like the most. Pupils know a lot about their local culture and have a keen understanding of other cultures. Pupils know that a healthy lifestyle is important, including regular exercise and a good, balanced diet. They speak positively about their learning during 'Healthy Week'. They know they should protect their skin against hot sun, wear something bright when walking in the dark and that composting fruit scraps is good for the environment. Pupils contribute well to the local community through positive church and village links and through charity work. The school council is beginning to learn how to make decisions, for example to improve the school grounds. Pupils value the 'Planet Point' system which encourages them to 'work as a team'. The satisfactory development of their basic skills means that pupils are suitably prepared for life ahead.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and enables all pupils to make satisfactory progress. There is good practice in teaching methods in all classes. Teachers use questioning well to extend pupils' thinking skills. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well which enables them to get on without disruption. As a result, pupils are confident learners and work hard.

Teaching assistants are an effective part of the teaching team and are well deployed to give good support to groups and individual pupils with learning difficulties. While planning for lesson activities is detailed, teachers do not always make enough use of assessment information to plan work for pupils' different ability levels, nor to set them challenging targets which would speed up their progress. As a result, pupils make uneven progress from year to year and, as in the case of mathematics for Year 5 pupils, occasionally fall behind. The school is now developing new systems for gathering information about pupils' performance to more accurately track their progress and to plan pupils' work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum for all pupils is good and promotes their enjoyment of learning. Pupils say that teachers 'make learning fun'. They learn a broad range of subjects, including French. Work in displays around the school shows good opportunities for pupils' creative development. The recent involvement in a 'Dick Whittington Day', as part of a new 'Creative Thinking' project with other schools, was greatly enjoyed by pupils of all abilities. Provision for ICT is much better than at the time of the last inspection and is used well to support learning in other subjects. A good range of visits, such as to the Sea Life Centre, and visitors, including artists and musical performers, bring learning to life for pupils. Although there is a good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in Years 3 to 5, the school recognises the need to develop more opportunities for younger pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are cared for well. Procedures for health and safety are good. Child protection procedures are well established with further staff training planned. Pupils say 'that adults listen to us and sort out any problems' and this helps them to feel safe and secure. Parents' comments such as 'the school really cares for each child' and 'staff are always available, no matter how small the problem' typify many others made. Links with the adjoining pre-school group are good and enable children to settle very quickly and enjoy being at school. Pupils appreciate the efforts of teachers to improve their work by discussing what they could do next in lessons and marking in their books. The school is well aware that the links between tracking of pupils' progress and individual target setting are not yet firmly established and has made this a priority for school development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership in the areas of curriculum, care and pupils' personal development. However, significant staffing difficulties and the ongoing change of the school to primary status have held

up some areas of school improvement. The tracking of pupils' progress, particularly at Key Stage 2, has only recently started to develop as pupils have moved into the new Year 5. The school is beginning to tackle the monitoring of teaching and learning but observations so far have focused more on teachers' performance than on pupils' learning. As a result, there is only a partial view of how much progress pupils make in lessons and over time, and whether they will meet the targets set for them in Year 6. This in turn means that the school does not have consistently good information to make secure judgements about its overall effectiveness and the quality of pupils' achievement. Even so, the views of parents, pupils and governors have been effective in helping the school to identify the stronger aspects of its work, such as the strong and supportive school ethos, and to plan for improvement in resources, such as books for older pupils.

Governance is satisfactory and ensures statutory requirements are met. While governors' understanding of pupils' achievement is not yet fully developed, they support the staff very well, know the school's strengths from regular visits and have been active and effective in supporting the school's plans to improve the accommodation. Staff morale is good as the school acquires more teachers and improved accommodation to meet the needs of pupils in Years 5 and 6. A number of issues identified at the previous inspection have improved, in particular older pupils' spelling and the good development of ICT. The school has the capacity to improve further.

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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?	3	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	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

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?	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?	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	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

Thank you for making us welcome when we came to visit your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and listening to what you had to say about your school and your work. These are some of the good things that we found out.

You behave well in lessons and are sensible around the school and at playtimes.

You told us that you enjoy coming to school because teachers 'make learning fun'. You work hard in lessons and are very positive about everything you do.

You know that doing sport and eating well keeps you fit and healthy.

Your teachers care about you and make sure that you are safe and well looked after. You told us that adults always listen to you if you have a problem.

You told us that, now that the school is a primary school, you like having more teachers and are pleased that you have more computers and books and that the buildings are being improved.

Your school has made a plan to help it to improve even more. We have asked your teachers and governors to especially work on these things.

Use all the information that it has about your learning to plan work for you which makes you think hard so that by the time you leave the school in Year 6 you are learning well in all subjects.

Improve the way the school checks up on lessons and how much you are learning, to help you all do as well as you possibly can.

I hope you all have safe and happy summer holidays and come back to school in September ready to work hard, especially those of you who will be in Year 6 for the first time!