



Emmanuel Middle Church of England Voluntary Aided School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113894
LEA Dorset
Inspection number 279276
Inspection dates 17 May 2006 to 17 May 2006
Reporting inspector Valerie Pearson HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary	School address	Howe Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Verwood
Age range of pupils	9 to 13		Dorset BH31 6JF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01202 828100
Number on roll	483	Fax number	01202 828104
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Rachel Milledge
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr Grahame Webb

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector. The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, individual members of staff and groups of staff, pupils and the chair of governors. Lessons were observed, some of which were conducted as paired observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. A sample of the pupils' work was scrutinised, as were some of the school's documents. 263 questionnaires from parents and carers further assisted with the writing of the report.

Description of the school

Emmanuel CE (VA) Middle School is an aged 9 – 13 mixed Church of England school. It serves an area which is socially and economically advantaged. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is recorded as being in line with national averages, although the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The school's records show that very few pupils speak English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Emmanuel Middle School is a thriving school which is rightly proud of its successes. It is committed to doing the very best for every pupil and this is seen both in the excellent progress pupils make in their learning and in their outstanding personal development. Pupils clearly enjoy school and particularly value the excellent relationships that exist between all members of the school community. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school which provides a nurturing environment in which their children can flourish. As one parent wrote, the 'headteacher and staff care about the whole child'. This is an outstanding school. The pupils enter the school, at the age of nine, with average standards. They make substantial progress and by the age of 11, they reach standards that are above the national average. They continue to make excellent progress and attain standards that are well above the national average by the time they leave the school at the age of 13. Significant improvements have been made in the standards attained by pupils in mathematics. This means that the school has most successfully addressed the issue identified in the previous inspection about raising standards in this subject. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make excellent progress. As many pupils told inspectors, they make such good progress because teaching is strong. There are many examples of exemplary practice. The very best teaching appropriately challenges pupils of all abilities because the teachers and teaching assistants have a clear understanding of what the pupils can do and what they need to do next to improve. This is based on a detailed and accurate analysis of pupils' performance which is regularly and carefully monitored. This information is used effectively to set very challenging targets which the school consistently reaches. Pupils are well aware of their individual targets and can talk confidently about what they mean and what they need to do to achieve and exceed them. The provision to support pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is outstanding. One of the school's priorities is making sure that assessment is used well in all lessons to improve pupils' learning. Examples of outstanding practice, such as in science, literacy and modern foreign languages, demonstrate pupils' involvement in assessing their own and other pupils' learning against clear criteria. The school is rightly continuing to work on assessment for learning so that excellent practice, including in marking, is consistently applied across all subjects. The school is passionate about teaching and learning and is constantly seeking ways to improve. Investment in training for teachers is increasingly reaping benefits. Staff morale is high and they are keen to learn. They make a strong and successful team. As one subject leader commented, the school ensures that 'I can concentrate on teaching and learning'. In excellent lessons, teachers set high expectations, provide stimulating activities to motivate pupils and use questioning extremely well to extend pupils' understanding. Pupils particularly enjoy the use of interactive whiteboards which they say make lessons more dynamic. Pupils behave well and have excellent attitudes to learning. The school undertakes rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and the valued contribution that some of the pupils are making to this, through the teaching and learning group, is an important development. These pupils are really making the school think about what best helps them to learn. The school rightly recognises that extending pupils'

contribution in this area is a priority. The school holds true to its Christian foundation and in particular the principles of valuing and respecting every individual. This underpins the outstanding personal development of pupils and the excellent care and support they receive from the school. There is a strong sense of community and one parent wrote that members of staff 'have great consideration for the pupils'. Pupils know that respect is at the heart of successful relationships. They told inspectors that they feel safe in school and that incidents of bullying are rare. The pupils respond very positively to the trust placed in them and to the opportunities for them to take responsibilities. Pupils feel they are listened to and their views and ideas taken seriously. For example, the School Council initiated, leads and manages, the 'Pride in Emmanuel' project which ensures that the school environment is well cared for. Some of the older pupils are trained to provide help and support to younger pupils through HELPSQUAD. Other pupils in Years 7 and 8 are sports leaders and help run clubs for those in Years 5 and 6. The pupils appreciate and enjoy the extensive range of activities and clubs the school offers them. Opportunities for physical activities are excellent and support well the school's drive to promote healthy lifestyles. The wide range of musical activities is also much valued by the pupils. There are many opportunities to participate in performances, a high spot being the concert last year at the Royal Albert Hall, London. The success of the school is secured through outstanding leadership and management at all levels. Improvements since the last inspection are impressive and reflect the outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher. Through his vision and drive for improvement the school has gone from strength to strength. One parent wrote that 'it is refreshing to see a headteacher make such an effort to make school enjoyable but at the same time push for achievement'. There is a close working partnership between the headteacher and his deputy, who has made a significant contribution to improvements in the school. The school's evaluation of its strengths and areas for improvement is accurate. This self-knowledge is based on rigorous processes for asking itself how well it is doing. Whilst it knows itself well, it has high expectations and is inclined to be too modest when judging its achievements. This is partly because it is always looking for ways to improve. The school knows what it wants and needs to do next to take the school forward. Inspectors agree with the priorities the school has identified and is already addressing. Talented subject leaders respond very positively to the challenges of their role. It is clear what is expected of them and they seize opportunities to take the initiative to improve the progress and attainment of pupils. They are trusted and supported, by the senior leadership team, to do their job well. They make a vital contribution to the success of the school. The school is outward-looking and works effectively with a range of partners, including parents and carers, the diocese and other schools, to support the well being and learning of pupils. It is strongly committed to working with other schools to support the learning of pupils before they come to the school and after they have left. For example, the subject leader for mathematics is involved in an initiative with a first school to improve the progress and standards of pupils in Key Stage 1. Subject leaders also work closely with their counterparts in the high school. In science, for example, teachers from the middle school work with Year 9 pupils as they prepare to take national tests. The teacher with responsibility for supporting pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities works effectively with partner schools to ensure smooth transition between schools for these

pupils. The governing body is good and highly supportive of the school. An extensive building programme has recently been completed, providing valuable additional accommodation. This work has been ably supported by the school's excellent bursar. Resources are well managed and the school provides excellent value for money. The school has demonstrated its excellent capacity to improve. It is not complacent and is determined to keep striving to do the very best for the pupils in its care.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

This grade is explained above.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This grade is explained above.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

This grade is explained above.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

This grade is explained above.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This grade is explained above.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

This grade is explained above.

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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	NA	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	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	1	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	Yes
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 the warm welcome you gave to me and my colleague during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed meeting you and listening to your views about your work and your school.

It is our judgement that your school is outstanding. It is clear that you all make a great contribution to the school's success. You enjoy school, work hard in lessons and take a keen interest in how well you are doing. The headteacher and staff are very successful in helping you to make excellent progress during your time in the school. They are constantly working on how to make lessons even better for you.

The school wants you to have many different opportunities. We are impressed by the way in which you take responsibilities in the school. There are many examples of this including the School Council's 'Pride in Emmanuel' project; the support trained pupils give other pupils through HELPSQUAD; and the clubs that sports leaders in Years 7 and 8 help run for younger pupils. We are particularly pleased to see how the pupil teaching and learning group is sharing with your teachers what really helps you most with your learning. The school rightly wants to involve more of you in these discussions. You told us that you feel you are listened to and taken seriously by the school. It is clear that you greatly enjoy the many activities and clubs the school offers you, including sport and music.

Your headteacher and all the staff are doing an excellent job. They know what they want to do to keep getting better and the top priority for them is doing the very best for all of you.