



# Puriton Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 123694  
**LEA** Somerset  
**Inspection number** 281540  
**Inspection dates** 21 September 2005 to 22 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Susan Wheeler HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Rowlands Rise
<b>School category</b>	Community		Puriton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Bridgwater, Somerset TA7 8BT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01278 683630
<b>Number on roll</b>	208	<b>Fax number</b>	01278 683630
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Rvd David MacGeoch
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gina Harris

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 21 September 2005 - 22 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 281540
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI).

## Description of the school

Puriton Primary School has 194 pupils aged 4 to 11 and almost all are from White British backgrounds. Most of the school is housed in a modern building, with the older pupils in a separate unit alongside. Over the past year, the school has been through considerable upheaval, with a high turnover of staff, including members of the senior management team. This created a period of instability which has now become more settled with the appointment of a new headteacher this term.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory with some strong features and the school assesses itself similarly. The standards reached and the progress made by pupils are satisfactory. Pupils in the reception class get a good start and most achieve the expected standards by the time they move to Year 1. Teaching is satisfactory overall with good features. The school has successfully linked some subjects together to ensure pupils have a range of interesting first-hand experiences. The good quality of care for all pupils is evident and the majority of parents feel assured by this. Pupils are confident and many express pride in what they have achieved.

Since the last inspection, the new building has meant improved facilities for reception pupils in particular. Up-to-date resources and better opportunities for pupils to make progress have improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT).

The stability brought about by the appointment of the new headteacher and the effective relationships between governors and staff ensure that leadership and management and value for money of the school are satisfactory. There remain some areas for improvement, such as the standards pupils reach and the progress they make as they move through the school. This is particularly relevant to the more able pupils who do not always do as well as they could. The school does not make full use of its extensive and comprehensive assessment information to set appropriate targets for pupils' learning and to help teachers to plan and monitor progress more effectively. Nevertheless, this inspection concludes that the school has the capacity to improve its performance and prospects for improvement are promising.

### What the school should do to improve further

- ensure that the more able pupils are given more challenging work
- ensure that planning for school improvement takes more account of information about pupils' achievements
- develop effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. In recent years, results in the national tests at age 11 have sometimes been significantly above the national average. Performance in different subjects and from year to year shows considerable variation. The school knows that it needs to investigate the reasons for this. When they start school, pupils' capabilities are similar to those of others within the local education authority area and by the end of Year 2 most are reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Although most pupils' achievements are in line with expectations, more able pupils throughout the school are not given work which is well matched to their ability and

they are capable of achieving more. The teachers carry out frequent assessments, but the school does not use this data effectively to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged by the work. When targets were set for the national tests for the present Year 6, expectations were not high enough, particularly in English. The standard of work seen in the class during the inspection suggests that more pupils should achieve a higher level. This is true of achievement in English in other parts of the school. The school has recognised rightly the need to focus on standards in English.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The school correctly identifies this area as a strength. Despite recent difficulties and turnover of staff, the school has maintained the care and well-being of the pupils particularly well. Social and moral development is good. Pupils are polite and courteous. They look after each other and form good relationships between themselves and with staff. They are receptive to the opportunities for spiritual reflection, especially in assemblies when they participate with enjoyment and enthusiasm. Cultural development is promoted satisfactorily through events like an international awareness week but, in an area with few families from minority ethnic groups, pupils' understanding and awareness of different cultures could be extended further.

Pupils display good attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. Behaviour in lessons is generally good, although a very small minority of pupils in the junior classes occasionally lose concentration and the school has rightly identified what needs to be done about this. Behaviour around the school is good and the pupils play well together at playtimes. The school has improved behaviour with effective use of reward systems. There is an excellent approach to healthy living with an emphasis on exercise and diet and pupils are knowledgeable about this. The school works effectively with the local community and pupils learn about the wider world including raising funds for charities. Attendance is satisfactory, but a significant number of holidays are taken in term time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is often good. The satisfactory lessons also have many good features. Most pupils make reasonable progress in their learning and some do even better. However, the quality of teaching is not yet making a difference to the progress of more able pupils. Pupils are often unclear about their targets and work is sometimes too easy for them. Pupils in the reception class find that learning is fun through interesting and engaging activities led by staff and from those they have chosen for themselves. The school has well developed systems for assessing what the youngest pupils have learnt and what they should do next. They are eager learners, clapping and stamping rhythms with great enthusiasm during a creative activity.

Lessons usually get off to a well paced start, with many teachers making good use of interactive whiteboards to provide an immediate focus for the pupils. The most effective teaching has a clear focus on helping all pupils to build on what they know with high expectations of what they can achieve. Staff have a clear understanding of what has to be taught in each subject and work hard to make lessons interesting for the pupils. They use questions effectively to assess what pupils have learnt, but this information is not always used to provide sufficient challenge.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a well balanced and interesting curriculum which meets the needs of the pupils. It was reviewed in 2004 to provide a more integrated approach to learning. The success of this was seen during the inspection when aspects of English and mathematics were being taught through other subjects such as history, science and religious education. The school has run a number of special focus projects including a global week and a health week which provide further innovative opportunities for learning. Good use is made of the extensive school grounds and the local area. Educational visits, travelling theatre groups and a residential trip provide further opportunities for first-hand learning and personal development. A number of visitors come to the school to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of a variety of topics. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which include creative crafts, aerobics, Spanish and a story club.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good. They are well supported in class by their teachers and the learning support assistants who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and welfare. Teachers place a high priority on the safety and well-being of the pupils and understand the policies for securing a safe environment. Pupils develop self-confidence, can make decisions and use their initiative. External agencies are used sensibly to provide advice and support. Early identification of pupils who need additional help ensures that they make satisfactory progress. All pupils need to be more actively involved in devising and securing their individual learning targets, which the school recognises as a priority.

Induction procedures for the reception class are good. Pupils who join established classes through the year soon settle. A 'buddy' system is in operation and a quiet garden provides a secure space for reflection at break times.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

During 2004-2005, the school experienced a 70 per cent turnover in staff. This had a significant impact on the leadership and management of the school, particularly the lack of a permanent headteacher until this term. The headteacher and governors are

aware that standards and achievement are not high enough. Quite rightly, the school has begun to reconsider its self-evaluation and recognises appropriately that leadership and management, whilst satisfactory at present, could be improved.

The way resources are allocated to support pupils' learning is good. Good communication with parents ensures that home-school links are strong and this contributes to a constructive partnership. However, a few parents would like to have more information about their children's progress. Pupils are given a number of opportunities to have their say including through the school council and one important outcome was the introduction of fruit for break times.

Staff who are responsible for the development of particular subjects and aspects, including special educational needs and the provision for the gifted and talented, are enthusiastic and often very experienced in their areas. They have the capacity to move the school forward given a strategic and coherent steer from the senior management team. The headteacher is aware that an area for improvement is the monitoring of teaching and ensuring that staff performance is measured by how well their pupils achieve and has already started this process. The senior management team has the capacity to make a significant contribution to improve the overall effectiveness of 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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	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	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	4	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	2	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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

Puriton Primary School Rowlands Rise Puriton Bridgwater Somerset TA7 8BT

23rd September 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for helping us to feel welcome in your school and for answering our questions and sharing your work with us. We understand that last year was quite difficult because there were lots of changes in staff, but this year things are more settled and you now have Mrs Harris as your new headteacher. As you know, we visited every class and talked to your teachers, Mrs Harris and the chair of governors. We would like to tell you what we thought about your school.

Here are some of the good things we found:

you do quite well in your tests

you care about your health through taking regular exercise and eating healthily

the school council helps to share your ideas with staff and these were certainly effective in getting fruit for tuck started

you play carefully outside and look after each other

you go on interesting visits and people also come to your school to help you learn about lots of different things

you enjoy using the interactive whiteboards in class, including those of you in reception who find your photographs on it at the start of the day

you have a number of school clubs which sound like fun

you were very confident when speaking with us and showing us how proud you are of your work

most of you behave very well.

These are some of the areas where your school can improve:

you need to have work which is not too easy so that you can learn more

the staff are going to look very closely at your results and help you to do even better

a small number of you could try to concentrate a bit harder in class.

Thank you again for all you did to make the inspection go so smoothly and we appreciate everything you told us about yourselves and your school. We hope you enjoy the rest of your time at Puriton Primary School and that you do your very best.

Yours sincerely

Susan Wheeler

Susan Wheeler Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools