



Bincombe Valley Primary School

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 113716
Local Authority Dorset
Inspection number 289700
Inspection dates 4–5 October 2006
Reporting inspector Michael Burghart

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Culliford Way
School category	Community		Littlemoor
Age range of pupils	3–11		Weymouth DT3 6AF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01305 832329
Number on roll (school)	284	Fax number	01305 835750
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Neville Wood
		Headteacher	Leslie Strong
Date of previous school inspection	22 October 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 4–5 October 2006	Inspection number 289700
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Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large school with its own state funded Nursery which has places for 26 children. A unit to support pupils identified as having social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) is based in the school. The ten pupils who attend this facility come from across the county. For most of their time they are integrated into regular classes. The school runs a breakfast club and after school activities to care for children outside the school day. It is normal practice in Dorset for Reception children to attend school for mornings only in the first term. However, children are able to stay at Bincombe Valley in the afternoons because of judicious use of the school's budget and a variety of grants.

The local area is recognised as being socially disadvantaged and a high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. In nearly all year groups this accounts for about half the numbers on roll, but can be much higher than this. Attainment when children first join the school is well below average. Virtually all pupils are of White British origin and have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils leaving or joining the school at times other than Nursery or Year 6 is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has a variety of outstanding features and no major weaknesses. Pupils thrive on the excellent care and good teaching which are supported by high quality leadership and management. The way the headteacher spearheads an extremely committed team of staff and governors is excellent. Together they continually search for ways of making improvements. Expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high.

Children get off to a good start in Nursery, settling in very quickly. They respond extremely well to good provision in Reception and are well prepared for Year 1. Pupils make good progress from well below average starting points to reach nationally expected standards by the time they leave Year 6. For a significant minority, especially pupils with extreme learning difficulties, this represents outstanding achievement. Those supported in the unit for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) make consistently good progress and show outstanding personal development. That progress overall is judged good rather than outstanding is because boys do considerably less well in English than they do in mathematics and science. The school has already introduced procedures to deal with this but the success of those measures has yet to be proved. The initiative is a good example of the effectiveness of how well the school monitors its own performance.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding because the school is particularly good at showing that everyone matters. Work is well planned to capture pupils' interest. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged and pupils are given opportunities to play a part in the life of the school and the community. Personal, social and health education is well taught. Recent success in developing links between different subjects in Years 3 to 6 has improved pupils' learning. Planning to extend this approach lower down the school is already well underway, but is not yet complete.

The local community can be proud of its school. The school does a good job in helping pupils overcome the disadvantages many of them face. It is having a very positive effect on how children are growing towards being well rounded, young people.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the achievement of boys; especially to ensure that by the time they leave they do as well in English as in mathematics and science.
- Complete the curriculum review already underway to further develop links between subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make at least good progress in their time at the school. A significant minority of pupils, including many of those with learning difficulties, make outstanding progress from the start of Nursery to the end of Year 6. Pupils who are supported through the

SEBD unit and those who join the school after Reception make good progress and achieve well for their ability and experience. Standards are below average at the end of Year 2 but rise to average at the end of Year 6.

In 2006 the school met its very challenging targets in mathematics and science but missed them in English. Nevertheless, test results were better than ever. The inspection team's judgement that pupils' achievement is good does not match the school's view that it is outstanding. This is because there are variations in progress rates within the school. For example, children make good progress from generally poor starting points in Nursery to the end of Reception. Progress is satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 4, but girls make better progress than boys. Pupils make rapid progress in Years 5 and 6 and achieve very well in mathematics and science. Girls achieve equally successfully in English, but in 2005 and 2006 boys performed significantly less well in this subject than in mathematics and science. This is a key area for improvement which, by virtue of its good assessment procedures, the school has already identified.

Since the last inspection the value the school has added to pupils' performance has been consistently above average. In 2004 it was outstanding. Given the high proportions of learning difficulties and the well documented social disadvantage of the area this is a considerable strength of the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Many children start school with limited experience of relationships and communication skills. Because support is good, they settle very quickly into Nursery and Reception and soon develop excellent attitudes to learning which last throughout the school. Pupils clearly enjoy school and obviously feel safe. Behaviour, despite a minority of pupils who could, and occasionally do, let off steam, is outstanding. There is a very strong ethos of respect for staff and other children. Pupils show great pride in their school and enjoy representing it in sport and musical activities.

Pupils who are based in the SEBD unit play a full part in the life of the school. Their integration in class work, clubs and break times is a credit to their own positive attitudes and the way that other pupils are prepared to welcome them.

Spiritual and cultural development is good with pupils appreciating what others believe in and the differences in the way people live.

Moral and social development is outstanding. Pupils know right from wrong and adjust to living and working together particularly well. Pupils respond extremely well to the encouragement to act sensibly and safely, and to keep fit. They show that they care about healthy lifestyles. Joining in discussions about school rules, taking part in the school council, and acting as monitors are prime examples of pupils' strong involvement in the school as a community. The marked progress pupils make in literacy and numeracy and the popularity of information and communication technology (ICT) form a good basis for life in general.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching is typical throughout and has been improved markedly through very good monitoring since the last inspection. It is clear that pupils' good learning is underpinned by the consistent approach of teachers and good quality assistants. There are examples of outstanding teaching, notably in Reception, which ensures children make good progress, and at the top of the school where pupils achieve particularly well during their final year.

Very strong relationships and how pupils are managed have very successful effects on pupils' personal development. Pupils say, 'We know where we stand'. The consistent approach to treating pupils positively encourages them to join in and behave. This makes it possible for teachers to teach rather than simply control. Staff plan effectively for a wide ability range. This gives good support to pupils with learning difficulties and those from the SEBD unit. Teachers succeed in making learning enjoyable. Using sandwich recipes in Year 2 to develop writing skills and using computers in Reception Sunshine Club are both delightful examples. High expectations, which are deeply rooted in the school's aims, are translated through teachers' good marking to show pupils how they can improve their work. Good use of assessment information and involving pupils in evaluating their own work result in everyone, staff as well as pupils, knowing what to aim at. Further developing how well boys are challenged is a way to make teaching even better.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good, well planned, balanced and relevant curriculum is on offer to all pupils. It is successfully broadened and extended in a good range of clubs, visits and activities. Residential trips to places such as Carey Camp are very popular and have a very good effect on pupils' social skills as well on subjects like science and geography. The school's good programme to promote personal, social and health education really works. As an integrated part of the curriculum it very effectively helps raise pupils' confidence, provides opportunities for pupils to share ideas and feelings, and raises their awareness of well-being.

Although the start which has been made in developing links between subjects in Years 3 to 6 is successful, it has not yet been finished for the whole two year rolling programme lower down the school. Completing this already features in the school's forward planning as part of the national initiative to raise 'Excellence and Enjoyment'. It is having a notably good impact on pupils' involvement and success in creative subjects such as art and music.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes outstanding care of its pupils. Attention to aspects of safety, including statutory checks on staff and volunteers, is of high quality. All teachers are trained in child protection and first aid procedures, and SEBD unit staff are skilled in appropriate techniques to deal with emergencies. Everyone is clearly committed to the school's aim to encourage learning by getting pupils to feel positive about themselves in a safe environment. This is a fundamental reason for pupils' excellent personal development.

Parents are right to have such confidence in how the school supports their children. Comments like, 'My son's behaviour has improved fantastically since he came here because of the way he is treated, especially by the headteacher', are common. Very good links with the church and outside agencies such as speech therapists and educational psychologists add to the quality of care.

Staff show they are prepared to listen to pupils and as a result pupils grow in confidence. They have learnt to take notice of the sensitive advice of teachers who in their high quality marking show pupils how they can make improvements. Challenging targets, particularly in Year 6, prompt pupils to do their best. A recently introduced, well resourced programme to help anyone, but most especially boys, catch up in reading is showing good signs of success.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The comments of pupils, parents, governors, staff and the local authority confirm that the school's success is built on the outstanding leadership and management qualities of the headteacher and the way he has created an excellent team spirit amongst staff. Together they manage the school extremely well. The consistent approach to the full inclusion of all pupils in all activities is first rate and the effects are obvious in pupils' achievement and personal development. High quality leadership and management have been the major factors in raising standards from well below average at the time of the last inspection to average currently at the end of Year 6. The school's good track record, the potential of new initiatives, and the quality of the people involved point to there being an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Senior staff are excellent role models for those new to management posts. The new staffing structure provides a very secure basis for future monitoring of how well the school is doing. Governors are a good part of the team. Their much improved involvement in analysing financial planning is built on a good awareness of what will make a difference to pupils' learning.

Self-evaluation is good. The school has a clear insight into its strengths and areas for development and this closely matches inspection findings. Inspectors and senior leaders have positive views of the school's overall effectiveness. That these are not exactly the same is because of differences in judgements concerning pupils' achievement.

With more to do to improve the performance of boys in English the school is not yet quite good enough to be judged as outstanding, but it is well on the way.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

The inspection team really enjoyed our time at your school. Thank you for your friendly welcome. We can see why new children settle in so quickly. We found you to be very polite and helpful. We were very pleased that many of you told us how much you like the fact that staff are ready to listen to what you have to say.

Bincombe Valley is a good school. It gives you a good, all round education. Some things are outstanding, which is another way of saying particularly good!

Here are some of the highlights:

- Your behaviour is excellent. (It does not have to be perfect to say this!)
- You obviously enjoy school for most of the time.
- All of you show really good attitudes to your work.
- You make good, and sometimes extremely good, progress.
- The school takes top quality care of you.
- Staff are very good at helping you to see how you can improve your work. Their teaching is good.
- The way the school is run is outstanding.

To be even better the school needs to help boys do as well as they can (especially in English), and to make improvements to the way some subjects are planned.

You can play your part by working hard.

I wish you all the best for the future.