



# Radipole Primary School

Inspection Report - Amended

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**Unique Reference Number** 113717  
**Local Authority** Dorset  
**Inspection number** 289701  
**Inspection date** 11 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Helen Hutchings

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Radipole Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Weymouth
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		DT3 5HS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01305 783353
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	423	<b>Fax number</b>	01305 789979
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	W Stone
		<b>Headteacher</b>	S Stockham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 November 2002		

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## **Amended Report Addendum**

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a large, oversubscribed primary school. A number of pupils join the school in Years 3 to 6 rather than at the normal time of entry. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average. Most children are from White British backgrounds.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. No aspects of its work are less than good. The sense of school community is exceptionally strong, so that pupils feel valued and cared for as individuals. The responses to the parents' questionnaire were overwhelmingly in praise of the school, with only a couple of suggestions of how provision could be improved. A typical comment was, 'I just want you to know how brilliant the school is'. Of particular note were the supportive comments from many parents whose children had joined the school after the normal time of entry. It is clear that these children feel welcomed and do well at the school.

The undoubted reason for the school's success is the consistently good teaching in all classes that enables pupils to make outstanding progress during their time in the school as they continue to build on previous successes. Standards in the tests at the end of Year 6 are consistently above average and sometimes well above average. Overall results in the 2006 tests improved significantly over previous years, particularly in English. Teaching engages pupils very well, making learning a shared activity and, as a pupil said, 'it's put into a fun context'. Teaching is underpinned by a very carefully thought through curriculum. For example, the approach to handwriting is developed consistently right from the start in the Foundation Stage. Another reason for the good level of literacy skills is the way in which the skills are taught in different subjects. Pupils use their writing in a very wide range of situations, from creating 'PowerPoint' presentations to expressing their opinions about aspects of their study of the humanities. Pupils constantly see the success of their efforts as their work is presented to the highest of standards and marked well. Teachers' marking encourages and recognises effort, while being meticulous in correcting errors and constructively pointing out how work could be improved further. Pupils are given high levels of individual or small group support by many adults in classrooms, including skilled teaching assistants and parent helpers, all of whom know the part they have to play in the lesson.

Pupils enjoy attending school. This is reflected in the above average attendance. One parent wrote, 'My son couldn't wait to return after the holiday'. They feel safe and say that bullying is not a problem. Children are encouraged to take responsibility to look after themselves and look out for others, such as helping younger pupils to read or acting as buddies in the playground. They are all willing contributors and do not see the need to wait for adult intervention to take action if another pupil is alone or upset. However, pupils are confident that they will have the support of adults should any problems arise. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the reward system of team points and are keen to point out that 'the school is always fair – if team points are taken away, it's for a real reason'. Pupils' understanding of how to live healthy lives is reflected in the school's recent award of Healthy School status, and pupils love the excellent opportunities provided by the school for exercise and sport. On the day of the inspection, a very large number of pupils – girls and boys from across the age range – were involved in an after-school football club. The school is particularly successful in developing pupils' personal skills of confidence and independence which will serve them well in secondary education and later life.

Many parents commented on the headteacher's exceptional leadership and her knowledge of, and concern for, individuals. Others in the school respond very well to her drive and enthusiasm and the result is a climate of high expectations and consistency across the school's work. The school itself is modest, but rightly proud of its achievements and is just now seeing the positive outcomes of its well-thought-out philosophy and the rigour it has brought to its work in recent years. It has been careful in its choice of initiatives which will bring benefits to the school and discarded any which might become a distraction. This rigour is seen in the in-depth analysis of the reasons for a dip in English performance in the 2004 Year 6 tests and the subsequent introduction of a revised range of approaches to motivate boys to write better. These strategies have been successful and have also improved girls' results. Although English results are again in line with those in mathematics and science, the school is not complacent and improving writing continues to be an ongoing priority. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is another area which has been enhanced significantly in recent years but again the school recognises that ongoing review and investment will be necessary to meet pupils' growing capabilities.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Continue to improve pupils' standards in writing.
- Continue to enhance provision for and use of ICT.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

The overall attainment of pupils when they join the school in the Reception class is broadly typical of children of this age, although a significant proportion of pupils find it difficult to express what they are thinking. They make good progress during the year, particularly in developing positive attitudes to school and improving their language skills, so that most reach the standards expected in the Foundation Stage, but some have not yet reached the expected standards in writing. From this strong foundation, pupils make outstanding progress through the rest of the school to reach standards in English, mathematics and science consistently above the national average for the last five years. The most recent results, in 2006, have maintained the high standards and are particularly impressive in English. The results are a significant achievement for this particular group, many of whom have learning difficulties.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are rightly proud of their school. They feel valued and enjoy influencing school life, such as how the playground is organised, and organising events for charities of their choice. Even some relatively young pupils are mature in their understanding. For example, they appreciate that although they would like to have hot meals, this decision has to be taken in conjunction with the local authority. Their behaviour is exemplary

so that the school is a secure and pleasant place for children to learn and play and for adults to work. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Despite the inspection taking place at the very beginning of the academic year, already there was a very calm and purposeful atmosphere in classrooms and a good range of activities for pupils to learn in a variety of ways. Pupils are really encouraged to think for themselves, resulting in work which shows a strong degree of individuality. The school plans to improve teaching and learning further in a number of ways, such as widening the use of information and communication technology and developing speaking and listening skills through more use of drama.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers plan collaboratively very well to provide a well-structured, consistent curriculum. The English, mathematics and science curricula are particularly well planned with rich experiences and taught in a manner that meets the individual needs of pupils. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the range of extra-curricular activities and the school has planned its clubs well to complement other activities taken up by pupils out of school. The opportunity for residential visits as early as Year 4 is an important aspect of school life.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are clear that one of the best things about the school is that 'teachers are always kind and helpful'. Pupils are safe and well cared for. Each is known as an individual. A range of additional provision helps pupils experiencing difficulties and helps them to integrate well. Pupils know the quality of their work because of the excellent guidance they are given on what needs to be done next to improve and move to the next level.

## **Leadership and management**

#### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher is reflected in the calm atmosphere in the school and the sustained focus on developing areas which will bring about the greatest improvements. The school has benefited from stable staffing and teaching is monitored rigorously. This provides individuals with thorough feedback and training is planned closely to address aspects that need further improvement. Governors bring

a range of important skills and experience to their work. They understand the achievements of the school and how to support its ongoing development.

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## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	1
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**

Thank you for the friendly welcome you all gave me when I visited the school recently. I really enjoyed my time with you so near the beginning of a new school year. Unfortunately, I was only able to talk to a few of you but the group who spoke with me at lunchtime helped me to understand just what makes your school 'tick'. They told me that you feel safe and are happy at school, and that there are lots of things to do to keep you busy. I was pleased to see how many of you attended the football club after school. This is just one example of how you get involved in everything offered at the school. Well done. Thank you for encouraging your parents to complete the questionnaires quickly and many of them added extra comments, like 'Radipole School is brilliant', and I agree. You all play your part in making Radipole an outstanding school. The group also told me that teachers make learning fun. I know that you work very hard and, with the help of your teachers and other adults, this means that you do very well and produce high quality work. I was impressed with the care you take in all your work and saw this in the books and folders that some of you left for me to see.

I hope that the whole school year will continue to be as successful as the start and that Year 6 pupils will do as well in their tests as last year, the best results ever for the school and a tribute to a lot of hard work. The school has planned some things, such as ways to improve your writing further and making the best possible use of computers, which should help you to do even better in the future.

Best wishes for the future.