

Longfleet Church of England Voluntary Controlled Combined School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113782
Local Authority	Poole
Inspection number	289723
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2007
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 category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	481
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vacant Position
Headteacher	Linda Benjamin
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2001
School address	Jolliffe Avenue Poole BH15 2HF
Telephone number	01202 673652
Fax number	01202 669526

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an above average sized combined school in an area which is a mix of owner occupied and local authority housing. Almost all pupils are of White British origin, and nearly all speak English as their first language. There is a small minority of pupils who are new to the country and are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is about average. The attainment of children when they first join Reception varies year on year but overall is about 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 where pupils achieve well and reach well above average standards at the end of Year 6 and when they leave Year 7. The school regularly exceeds the targets set for it by the local authority. Higher attainers do particularly well. Relationships are very good and the school, true to its Christian ideals, takes good care of pupils. Pupils are well supported and their personal development is good. There are notable strengths in pupils' outstanding moral and social development and excellent behaviour. This is securely founded on the good progress children make as a result of good provision and support in Reception. By the end of Reception standards are good with the vast majority of children achieving all that is expected of this age group. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Standards are usually above average by age seven. However, they dipped in 2006 partly due to a higher proportion of lower attaining pupils. This year standards are once again above average.

Throughout the school teaching and support are good. Consequently, regardless of their ability and experience, pupils learn well and enjoy most of what they have to do. Attendance is above average. Pupils with disabilities are particularly well supported and successfully encouraged to join in. However, pupils throughout the school are not sufficiently aware of the targets which would help them to make even better progress and this sometimes negatively affects their capacity to work independently. Pupils take a pride in themselves and the school and make a good contribution to the local community. Links with the church are good and enhance pupils' personal development. Pupils are keen to make the most of the good range of extra-curricular activities to keep fit and stay healthy. The good curriculum on offer helps to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the future. Parents appreciate what the school has to offer.

The school is well led and managed by the effective team of headteacher, governors and senior staff. As yet middle managers do not play a full part in contributing to the school's overall development and assessment information is not consistently well used by all staff. However, school self-evaluation has accurately identified the issues raised by this inspection. Consequently, work is in hand to improve the effectiveness of subject and Key Stage leaders' monitoring, as well as whole staff understanding of how assessment information can be used to identify, and plan for, areas for improvement. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and, by virtue of policies and procedures already in place, has a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the quality of learning by increasing pupils' awareness of how work can be improved, and involving pupils more in identifying targets that will help them to strive for even more progress.
- Strengthen the monitoring roles of middle managers, developing their contribution to whole-school development planning.
- Improve the effectiveness of the use of assessment information.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6 and Year 7 and have been so for the last four years. The value the school adds to pupils' performance is significantly above average. The school is very successful in helping pupils, particularly the more able, to make good progress and achieve well. The progress made by lower attainers in mathematics in Years 5 and 7 was

an exception in 2006. Such pupils did less well than they did in English and science. This problem is being addressed with pupils making better, and now good, progress for their abilities this year.

Standards at the end of Year 2 are usually above average, taking advantage of good progress children make in Reception and in Year 1. However, assessment results for seven year olds in 2006 dipped to average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. This was partly due to a greater than usual proportion of lower attainers in the year group and partly as a result of staff changes during the year. Overall, Year 2 pupils' achievement was satisfactory rather than good which had been the trend in the previous four years. Work seen during the inspection, school records and predictions for current Year 2 pupils indicate that last year's decline has been overturned and that standards are once again above average with pupils of all backgrounds and abilities making good progress. Pupils new to the country who are in the early stages of learning English skills make rapid progress because of good support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils show that they enjoy school and are keen to make the most of the good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall with clear strengths in moral and social elements which are outstanding. Pupils know right from wrong, show high levels of consideration for each other, and work and play well in groups. The excellent basis of learning to take turns and share, established in Reception, underpins the very good relationships and outstanding behaviour common throughout the school.

Pupils show that they know how to stay safe and handle tools and equipment with care. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to keep fit. 'Wake up and shake up' sessions are seen as great fun! Pupils make a good contribution to the community, for example through fund raising for charity, and are eager to have an influence on how the school is run. However, formal opportunities are too limited for pupils, especially in Reception and in Years 1 and 2, to air their views. With good basic skills and a willingness to work with others, pupils are well prepared for future study and life in general. The school is aware that some pupils lack experience of working independently and that this can negatively affect their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall and this leads to good learning and above average standards. Teachers manage classes well, are well prepared, and generally challenge pupils across the ability range effectively. Teaching assistants play a very successful part in supporting pupils' learning, especially those with learning difficulties or disabilities and those for whom English is a new language. There is a good team spirit amongst staff which results in much sharing of expertise, experience and new ideas. Strengths of teaching include perceptive questioning which encourages pupils to express their feelings. Good planning, which has been developed through in-service training, seeks to make work enjoyable. It identifies objectives which are being used effectively to make it clear to pupils what they are learning in lessons and to gauge progress. Least successful teaching in a small minority of lessons means the pace of learning is too slow and has not always given enough support to older lower attainers. Whilst marking praises pupils'

efforts, guidance to show pupils how to improve is too infrequent. Opportunities are missed to set individual targets for pupils to aspire to.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is well planned and improvements are continually being considered. The full breadth of subjects and opportunities is on offer for each of the four key stages in the school. This ranges from a good balance of learning through play and teacher directed activities in Reception to specialist taught subjects such as French, science, food technology and design and technology in Year 7. The curriculum gives good support to pupils' personal, social and health education and is very well enhanced by a good number and mix of extra-curricular activities. These include a variety of visits (a residential trip to France for Year 6 is regularly over subscribed) and a wide range of visitors.

Support for pupils with learning difficulties is good and there are outstanding features in how those with disabilities are helped to make progress. Those new to learning English are given good support.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good all-round care of pupils and is sensitive to their needs. All necessary checks and procedures to ensure that pupils are safe and taught in a good learning environment are fully met. The comment of a Year 5 girl, 'I feel the school is a safe place', sums the situation up well. Pastoral care is a strength of the school. Although the school is large, pupils are well known by the staff they are regularly in contact with. Parents, whose views of the school are overwhelmingly positive, confirm this, and they are particularly pleased with the support for those with special needs and those new to the school.

Academic guidance is good. Assessment is much improved since the last inspection. The school now has a wealth of data and information about pupils' performance and progress. Key staff have a secure understanding of how this can be used to bring about improvements. However, such use of information is still underdeveloped with too many of the teaching staff as yet unaware of its full potential.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management ensure that pupils make good progress and reach well above average standards by the time they leave the school. The effective governing body and a successful senior leadership team have been well guided by the headteacher and have created an environment where pupils are happy, safe and are able to learn. There is very good consideration of 'the whole child' which ensures provision successfully encourages pupils' personal as well as academic development. The school is well run. Self-evaluation is accurate and, as a result, the school was already aware of the areas for improvement raised by this inspection. Good analysis and procedures in place reflect the school's commitment to make continual improvements. As yet the contribution to the school's development planning of subject leaders, who make up most of the school's middle management, is underdeveloped. Work is in hand to address this but improvements are at an early stage.

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Annex A

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	2
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	2
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?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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?	2

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

27 April 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longfleet C of E VC Combined School, Poole, BH15 2HF

Thank you for your welcome and help during the recent inspection of your school. We really appreciated your excellent behaviour, your politeness, and the way you are being helped to grow up as healthy, sensible people. Longfleet C of E VC Combined School is a good school. Staff take good care of you and make sure you are safe. Their teaching and support are good. Teachers plan lessons which are interesting and we can see that you try hard because work is enjoyable. You are making good progress and reaching good standards. We saw many good examples of how well you are doing, for instance the excellent poems about war graves in France, Year 7 taking food technology very seriously, and Year 2 writing sensitively about their feelings. Well done!

The school is well run and is well set for the future. To make things even better, we have asked the headteacher, governors and teachers to work on three main areas. These are to:

- help you to understand how targets can improve the way you learn
- make sure that subject leaders know enough about what is happening to help the headteacher manage the whole school
- make more use of the information teachers get from assessing what you do in planning for the future.

You can play your part by continuing to work hard. We wish you well.

Yours faithfully

Mike Burghart Lead inspector