

Sherborne Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115648
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	290289
Inspection date	21 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Malcolm Greenhalgh

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	43
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Garrett
Headteacher	Michael Pudifoot
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2002
School address	Sherborne Cheltenham GL54 3DH
Telephone number	01451 844277
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small, rural school located within a National Trust village in the Cotswolds. Attainment on entry is above the national average and the proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is low, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with good features. The recent appointment of a new headteacher has brought stability to a school that has seen a significant number of headteachers and acting headteachers over the last five years. Over the last 12 months, a number of good initiatives have been introduced to improve the quality of planning and teaching. The teaching throughout the school is now satisfactory but the changes have not yet had time to improve teaching further. The teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high and although the feedback given to pupils on how to improve their work is satisfactory it does not always tell them what they need to do next to achieve a higher standard. The presentation of pupils' work is unsatisfactory as is the quality of the pupils' handwriting.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with above average attainment on entry and are now getting a sound start to school and make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 2, attainment is above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics and progress is satisfactory. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils again make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. Standards in Year 6 have varied over the last few years but are above average.

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory and improvements in curriculum planning, to meet the requirements of the Foundation Stage and National Curriculum, has brought more structure and variety to what is taught. Overall, provision for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. A good range of additional activities such as gardening, musical instrument tuition, sport and the arts and a residential visit, helps to support the pupils' personal development. The personal, social and health education programme is now in place and this has a significant impact on the pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy school, have a good attitude towards healthy living, make good contributions to the village community and their behaviour is excellent. Care, guidance and support are good and this has a direct impact on the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils, the excellent behaviour and the satisfactory academic progress the pupils make.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and new governing body are beginning to develop a good working team, which bodes well for the school's future. A good management structure is in place and the school has introduced some sound self-evaluation systems, such as tracking the pupils' progress and setting challenging targets. These new plans are well documented in the school development plan. This plan has many actions identified but it is not clear which are the school's key priorities. The school is aware of this and aims to reduce the number of actions in the next plan. Overall, the school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The outside facilities are good with some new developments such as the adventure playground and the outside area for the youngest pupils, enhancing provision. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in the quality of handwriting.
- Raise teachers' expectations of the standards that can be achieved by the pupils.
- Improve the quality of information the teachers give to the pupils on what they need to do next to improve.
- Reduce the number of priorities for improvement in the school development plan so that the school can focus better on the most important areas.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Attainment is above average. Pupils' make satisfactory progress in all year groups and achievement is satisfactory. Progress in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory across all areas of learning. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been above average in most years. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, while good overall, is more variable. All subjects, at the end of Key Stage 2 tend to follow the overall attainment pattern with no significant variations between subjects or for groups of pupils. Across the school, standards of handwriting are unsatisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good. Pupils are very aware of how to live healthy lifestyles. They conduct self-evaluations on how healthy they are and participate in good numbers across a range of different physical activities in lessons and during after-school activities. Attendance is satisfactory and pupils feel very safe in school and are not bullied. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are confident enough to speak to staff about any issues they have. They enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to all that the school offers. Year 6 pupils were very keen to point out how much they had enjoyed their time at school and that they would very much miss the family atmosphere and the staff. The pupils enjoy their links with the Church and collective worship sessions in the school. The pupils' moral and social development is a particular strength with pupils demonstrating much compassion towards those less fortunate than themselves. The pupils contribute well to the local community. They are very involved in village activities and a range of specific events such as concerts and church services. They also contribute well to the National Trust by constructing bird boxes and helping with the local sculpture trail. Pupils have a good awareness of economic well-being through working effectively in small groups and on their own, running a business-like gardening club, making effective contributions to school improvement through sharing individual views and through the views of the school council. They decide which charities they would like to raise money for.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There have been recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning as a result of effective monitoring and evaluation. The personal needs of the pupils are clearly identified through good assessment systems. Lessons are soundly differentiated to meet the wide age range within each class but planning work across the ability range is not well developed. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported through effective personalised action plans and one-to-one support. Teachers provide satisfactory feedback but sometimes this is not well related to the key objectives of the lesson or the targets set for the pupils. Pupils are beginning to be encouraged to evaluate the quality of their own work but this is at an early stage and not well embedded. A good example of the pupils' involvement was their comments on how writing was assessed. They felt it was not providing a true picture of their writing abilities and, as a result, these procedures have now

been reviewed. Parents are effectively involved in the learning processes in a range of different ways, especially through supporting homework tasks and out of school activities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory and has a positive impact on the progress pupils make in all areas of academic and personal development. The school is beginning to meet the challenge of providing an effective curriculum to cover the wide range of pupils' needs in each of the two classes. The school follows a small school's rolling programme to meet the National Curriculum requirements but this is in its first year of use and has not been fully evaluated yet. There is an emphasis on developing the basic skills but there is also a good focus on all other areas of the National Curriculum and beyond through activities such as the French Club. The personal development of the pupils is well addressed through the personal, social and health curriculum and through a wide range of extra-curricular activities, specialist teaching from outside the school and a residential visit. The Foundation Stage provision has been highlighted for improvement through the Foundation Stage Quality Mark. Good progress is now being made to this part of the curriculum ensuring that the children make at least satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. The school also emphasises the need to develop a relevant and local curriculum and makes very effective links with the local National Trust.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided by the school are good. The school gives pupils plenty of opportunities to voice their opinions through such things as circle times and the school council. This has led to a mature approach from pupils in making suggestions about what the school can do to improve. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are fully in place and meet statutory requirements. Academic and personal development are effectively supported through satisfactory classroom assessment processes and pupils receive sound feedback about what they need to do to improve further. There is good liaison with the playgroup and secondary school to ensure there is a smooth transition between schools. The Foundation Stage provision is satisfactory with specialist support provided by the nursery nurse. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to live healthy lives and to enjoy a wide range of school activities, to support the school, local and international communities. The school also does much to develop key skills, including business skills, and these will support the pupils well once they move on to their next school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has been through many recent changes in staffing and the governing body. However, the present headteacher has gained a good grasp of what the school needs to do to improve. He has put some significant actions in place, but these are yet to have a significant impact in the classroom. He is well supported by governors and an effective team is developing. The school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory. The school has received good support from the local authority and the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning is having a positive impact on learning. The school has an over-large number of actions for improvement in the school development plan and this

reduces the focus needed to make the best progress against the most important issues. The new governing body has settled down well and has an effective committee structure and performance management procedures that are helping the school to make sound progress. There are good links with neighbouring schools and play groups and these add to the quality of the school's provision. The school's resources have been developed well since the last inspection and the large budget carry forward has already been appropriately allocated to additional capital improvements and to withstand a fall in the number of pupils. Overall, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	3
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

Thank you for making me so welcome during our time at your school and for helping the inspection by providing me with some very valuable information.

The school is improving well and is providing a satisfactory standard of education for you. You make sound progress in your reading, writing and mathematics as you move through the school and the teaching you receive is satisfactory. Although the teachers give you some good support they need to provide you with better information on what you need to do to improve and must raise their own expectations of how well you can do. Your handwriting also needs to improve.

You have a good understanding of how to live healthy lives, you feel very safe around school and make good contributions to village activities. You enjoy school and have good respect for your teachers. You work well on your own and in groups and help the school council to run effectively. I particularly liked the way you have made suggestions for how the school could improve.

The school provides you with a good range of subjects in lessons and lots of additional activities which are well attended. The members of staff also know you very well and provide you with good guidance and support so that, when the time arrives, you are ready to move on to your next school.

The headteacher has done a good job since he arrived and he is well supported by the governors. Lots of new things have been introduced to the school, such as new curriculum plans and target systems, but not all of these have had chance to bed down yet. The school's own plan to improve has too many things to be done. I have told the school it is best to reduce the number of areas it is improving so that it can concentrate on the most important things that will have the best effect on how you will improve the work you are doing. I wish you all every success for the future.