

# Parracombe Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113382
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	311241
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Denise Morris

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 category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	33
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cathy Slow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jayne Peacock
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	Parracombe Barnstaple EX31 4QJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01598 763338
<b>Fax number</b>	01598 763338

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a very small school. All pupils are White British and the number with learning difficulties is below average. The school is going through a period of change, having recently become part of the 'West Exmoor Federation' of three small primary schools. The federation headteacher and the governing body are new to the school. A new federation pre-school opened six months ago at one of the other nearby schools. Attainment on entry to the school is 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 with many strengths. It has gone through a period of significant change over the past year, resulting in new leadership and management and several new staff. As a result of federating with two other schools, many new and exciting opportunities have been created and these are valued by the pupils. For example, pupils in Year 6 explained how they now had more friends, so that they feel better prepared for secondary education. The sharing of resources between the schools has led to increased staff expertise and improved curriculum experiences for all pupils. Leaders have clear vision for the future, and though there is still much to do, plans are developing well to take the school forward.

Standards are average overall and above average in English by the time pupils leave Year 6. Pupils across the school make good progress and achieve well in their lessons. This is due to the good teaching that they receive. Teachers know pupils well and relationships are very positive. Pupils behave well in and around the school, with older pupils taking good care of younger ones. The family atmosphere is a key strength of the provision. Pupils enjoy school. They particularly like the many trips and extra-curricular experiences that enhance the good quality curriculum and help to extend their knowledge and understanding of the wider world.

Pupils are well cared for. They say that there is always someone to talk to. Good support is provided to ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve well. Academic guidance is improving. It is beginning to inform staff about individual pupils' progress. Marking of pupils' work, however, is inconsistent. It often lacks rigour and does not always inform pupils about their next steps in learning.

The school is well led and managed and day-to-day organisation is good. The headteacher has a good overview of provision and strategic planning is good. Regular monitoring of teaching and close links with the other federation schools to moderate and check pupils' work are helping to improve standards. The federation governing body is new to the school. They are supportive and helpful, but are aware that there is much to do to develop their roles and the work of the federation. They do not yet fully challenge the school about its decisions. There has been good improvement in many areas since the last inspection, particularly in assessment, target setting and resources. Parents are supportive of the school, but several are concerned about the new regime and are not fully aware of the many positive aspects of federation, as confirmed in this inspection. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage of learning is good. Children share their classroom with older pupils in Years 1 and 2, benefiting from the supportive relationships that develop. Children behave well and enjoy learning. They benefit from good teaching and good support from the teaching assistant. They have good access to outdoor learning and resources are appropriate to their age group. Attainment varies on entry to the school, but in most Reception groups, attainment on entry to the school is in line with typical expectations. Children achieve well and make good progress overall during their time in Reception. The majority achieve the goals for children of their age by the time they enter Year 1. They achieve particularly well in their personal development, quickly developing confidence and independence.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Develop marking to ensure that it is consistent across the school and so that it gives pupils more information about how to improve their work.
- Raise the profile of the federation by developing governor's roles, and by improving parents' awareness of how the federation is working.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well during their time at the school because of good teaching and good provision. Their attainment varies from below average to above average on entry to the school according to each year group. In the 2007 assessments at the end of Year 2, pupils attained average standards in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. They achieved well from their starting points. In the national tests in Year 6 in 2007, pupils attained above average standards in English and average standards in mathematics and science. The small number of pupils with learning difficulties achieve as well as other pupils because of consistent support and high expectations of what they can achieve.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Good spiritual moral and social development underpins all aspects of school life. Pupils enjoy school and behave well in all areas. They say they feel safe at school. They are supportive to each other and have positive attitudes to learning. They value the help and support that they receive and say that they feel safe at school. Good links with the local church help pupils to have empathy with those less fortunate than themselves. They regularly collect funds for charity and do what they can to be helpful and take on responsibilities around the school. Pupils lead healthy lives and the school has received several awards praising their good understanding of how to keep fit and eat healthily. Community links are good and pupils work regularly with other pupils in the federation. They value this greatly and feel that the new opportunities are helping them to extend their friendships and preparing them better for secondary school. Cultural development is satisfactory. It has improved since the last inspection, although more could be done to help pupils understand about the different cultures that make up modern Britain. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are appropriately prepared for their futures.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Pupils across the school enjoy learning and quickly settle. Relationships in lessons are particularly strong. 'Teachers are really helpful', commented one pupil, reflecting a typical view. Lessons are well planned and managed so that all pupils are fully engaged in learning. Teachers make good use of resources to keep pupils interested, and information and communication technology (ICT) is used well particularly in English. Classrooms provide exciting learning environments and these are supplemented by some high quality experiences in and around the local community. Teachers make good use of effective strategies to improve writing so that pupils' standards are rising. The quality of marking is inconsistent and does not always tell pupils how they can do better.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

A wide range of exciting activities for all pupils results in pupils enjoying lessons and taking part with enthusiasm in all that the school has to offer. Good provision for different ability groups means that those with learning difficulties, as well as higher attaining pupils, achieve well. The Reading Recovery programme is a particular strength, helping a few pupils to make rapid gains in linking sounds and letters. Parents value this provision highly. Extra-curricular provision is good and is enhanced by the opportunities created by the new federation. For example there is a new federation minibus, which is used well to develop outdoor learning and visits to places of interest. A federation curriculum plan is developing but is not yet fully established.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are well cared for. They know that there is always an adult ready to talk to them and they are confident that their problems will be quickly dealt with. Child protection procedures are robust, keeping pupils safe and secure. Health and safety procedures are clear, although adults and pupils do not always close gates behind them. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Good quality new procedures to monitor and track progress have been introduced and are just beginning to be used by the school. All pupils have targets for improvement, though a few pupils do not know what these are. Marking of pupils' work is not monitored rigorously enough to help all pupils to know how to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The recent federation of three local schools under one overall headteacher and governing body is working well and has resulted in many positive improvements to provision and to the education for pupils. For example, the minibus, purchased through the federation pooling its resources, has led to many more trips and visits by pupils, who say that this is really positive. They like the way that they now work with pupils from the other schools and have whole-federation enrichment days such as the recent African drumming experience. Pupils say that because of these changes, they have many more learning opportunities. The federation has a clear view for the future, and a good long-term curriculum plan is developing to help pupils from all the schools to improve their skills. School self-evaluation is good, due to regular monitoring and improved tracking that is helping the school to know how well it is doing, though more could be done to monitor and improve marking. Pupils and staff are very excited about the new initiatives and now recognise the need to share these more thoroughly with parents. Good improvement has been maintained since the last inspection. Governors are supportive and helpful. They have made a good start but have not yet fully developed their roles. The school uses challenging targets well to help it improve, and improvement planning highlights the issues identified by this report.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

### 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?	3

<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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parracombe C of E Primary School, Barnstaple EX31 4QJ

Thank you very much for your help in my recent visit to your school. I very much enjoyed meeting you and talking to you about the things you like doing. This letter is to tell you about some of the things I found out about your school.

Yours is a good school. You achieve well in your lessons so that standards are similar to those in other schools in mathematics and science, and are above those in other schools in English. You told me that you enjoy school and that behaviour is good. I agree with you. I saw how well you get on with each other and how well you help those who are younger than you. Teaching is good, helping you to make good progress. You have lots of exciting activities to do, both in school and on visits. You told me how much you like having the new federation minibus. It is helping you to improve your awareness of the world around you and to meet with children from other schools.

All of you are well cared for. Your work is checked regularly although marking could give you more guidance on how to improve. Leaders and managers work hard to keep you safe. Governors of your school have more to do to make sure that the new federation works well, and to make sure that your parents know all about how the federation schools work together.

I am asking the school to do two things to help you do even better.

- Look closely at the way your work is marked and make sure that it helps you to improve.
- Make sure that your governors develop their roles and inform your parents regularly about the work of the federation.

Thank you again for your help, and good luck for the future.

Best wishes

Denise Morris Lead Inspector



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Lead Inspector