

# Berry Pomeroy Parochial Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113388
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	311245
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Barron

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	67
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tony Gibson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hugh Edwards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 October 2004
<b>School address</b>	Berry Pomeroy Totnes TQ9 6LH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01803 863519
<b>Fax number</b>	01803 863645

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

The impact of the school's initiatives to improve achievement in writing.

The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school and the impact of specialist teachers.

The quality of pupils' personal development, with a focus on pupils' multi-cultural awareness.

Achievement and standards in music, art and also information and communication technology.

The inspector gathered evidence from discussions with pupils, staff and a representative from the governing body, observations of teaching and of pupils at work and at play, scrutiny of school documentation and self-evaluation, samples of pupils' work and an analysis of parent questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a small rural primary school to which pupils travel from a wide area. Pupils are taught in three mixed age group classes. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is comparable to the national average, as is the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The headteacher is the only full-time member of the teaching staff as all other teachers are either part-time or employed on a job-share basis.

## 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 welcoming and inclusive ethos and provides a good education for pupils, preparing them well for the next stage of their education.

It is well led and managed by a dedicated headteacher who is held in high regard by both the school and the community it serves. He provides a clear vision and direction for the school, and works well with governors and staff to ensure that the school regularly analyses and evaluates its performance very methodically in order to identify and implement improvement strategies where needed. This is seen not only in the very good quality of school improvement planning but also in the way the school has tackled the issues raised by the last inspection. As a result, the school has made good progress and demonstrates a good capacity to improve in the future. Parents are very positive about the school, 'A wonderful school in a beautiful setting' being typical of the many supportive comments in parents' questionnaire replies.

The quality of teaching is consistently good and serves the needs of all pupils well, enabling them to make good overall progress in all year groups, even though there are very rare occasions when pupils of different abilities are given similar tasks to complete. This good progress is not just limited to academic subjects. The school's innovative measure of employing a range of part-time specialist teachers has led to pupils attaining above average standards in subjects such as art, music and physical education. Standards in Year 6 are above average overall and pupils are on course to meet the challenging targets set for them in the national tests. However, even though the school has introduced a range of strategies to improve pupils' writing skills, standards in writing are still lower than in mathematics and reading in nearly all year groups. The school is aware that pupils' achievement in writing needs to be improved if standards in English are to rise and be comparable to those that pupils attain in other subjects.

Pupils really enjoy school. They are keen and eager to learn and describe their school as a happy and friendly place where they all feel wanted and where pupils know each other well. As one pupil put it, 'It's like one big family here'. Pupils of all ages are very friendly. They play and work together very well and say they feel extremely safe and well looked after. They know there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. Older pupils make it their duty to look after younger ones, especially at playtimes. Attendance is in line with the national average, although the school works hard to promote good attendance by, for example, ensuring pupils do not take holidays in term time. Whilst the quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, their moral and social development is a significant strength. This is reflected in pupils' outstanding behaviour and their high regard for the safety and well-being of others. Pupils are very polite and confidently engage in conversations and discussions with other pupils and adults. They understand the importance of making sensible and healthy choices, especially about what they eat and the importance of regular exercise. Pupils play a very active role in the life of the school and take their responsibilities seriously. Older pupils, for example, regularly answer the phone at lunchtimes. Pupils are keen to explain that the school is at the very heart of the local community and how they play a full and active part in village life. A variety of visitors and visits to places of interest, including residential visits to outdoor activity centres, help pupils build up their knowledge of the wider world. However, pupils only have limited opportunities to develop their appreciation of the multi-cultural nature of modern British society and, as a result, their understanding of the cultural diversity of the country they live in is not as well developed as other aspects of their education.

The curriculum effectively links subjects together well whilst making full use of the school's rural location. During discussions with pupils, it was evident that many of them fully understand the importance of caring for their environment and that they enjoy being able to develop their writing, mathematical and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in topics which focus on environmental issues. The curriculum is enriched by a range of additional activities that develop pupils' skills and their enjoyment of learning. Pupils of all ages enjoy taking part in the range of after-school clubs on offer, which is particularly wide for such a small school. These include skiing, football, chess and recorders.

Teachers are enthusiastic and are good at using a variety of approaches to make sure pupils work hard whilst making learning interesting and enjoyable. Pupils say they look forward to lessons, especially when these involve practical work. It therefore comes as no surprise that pupils state that art and music are amongst their favourite subjects. They say that teachers are approachable and that they are friendly. One pupil stated, 'I'll really miss the teachers when I leave'. Good quality teaching assistants have a positive impact on pupils' learning. They work well with class teachers to make sure pupils needing help are always effectively supported and so make the same good progress as others.

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding. Parents are extremely positive in their appreciation of the very caring way the school looks after their children and comment about the 'happy, caring environment' the school provides. Very good induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle quickly into new routines. Pupils' health and well-being are securely safeguarded and child protection procedures fully meet current government requirements. The quality of teachers' marking is consistently good and always gives pupils ideas about how to improve their work. The school has also developed and implemented very good procedures to assess and track pupils' progress and these are used very effectively to set individual pupils challenging targets for improvement.

Governors play a full and active part in school life and the governing body offers a good level of support and challenge to the school whilst fulfilling its statutory duties effectively. The headteacher leads and manages the school very well even though he has a heavy teaching commitment. However, as he is the only full-time teacher, he has only limited assistance from the other members of staff. The school works closely with parents who appreciate that the school regularly seeks and acts upon their views. Resources are good and used well, whilst good links with external agencies such as educational psychologists help to support pupils with learning difficulties effectively.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the school at the age of four with many of the skills typically expected for their age and join a mixed age group class containing Foundation Stage children and Year 1 pupils. The well-resourced classroom provides a stimulating learning environment for both year groups. It is full of colour and is an exciting, vibrant place where children say they feel happy and safe. The curriculum provides a good range of interesting and practical activities. These cover all areas of learning and ensure that there are good opportunities for pupils to regularly develop their early numeracy and literacy skills.

Children make good progress because teaching is consistently good and caters well for the needs of all, regardless of their abilities. Lessons effectively blend opportunities for independent activities with adult-directed tasks. Progress in personal, social and emotional development is

good and parents appreciate the care and support their children receive. Children are happy to share and to take turns whilst joining in lesson activities with enthusiasm. A further range of interesting activities ensures children exceed expectations in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. There is no discrete Foundation Stage outdoor area and children share the school's playground with older pupils in order to build up the skills associated with outdoor play.

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

- Develop and implement strategies to improve pupils' achievement in writing throughout the school.
- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the multi-cultural nature of modern British society.

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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	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?	1
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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	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

<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	1
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**

18 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Berry Pomeroy Parochial Church of England Primary School, Totnes TQ9 6LH

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. Everyone was so friendly and helpful and I soon realised why you like your school so much. I enjoyed talking to you about what you like the most about school, seeing you all working in lessons and being entertained by a group of talented young musicians. Your parents believe that the school looks after you all very well indeed and I agree with them. Here are some of the things I particularly like about your school:

- Yours is a good school which gives you a good start to your education.
- Your teachers always try to make lessons interesting and this helps you to make good progress and reach above average standards.
- You really enjoy everything about your school.
- Your personal development is excellent. You all behave very well indeed and you are very friendly, caring and polite.
- Your headteacher and governors work hard to make sure that the school is led and managed well.

I believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better and these are the things I have asked them to do:

- Help you to make the same progress in writing as you do in other subjects.
- Help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from different cultural backgrounds to your own.

You can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron Lead Inspector

18 June 2008

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Michael Barron  
Lead Inspector