

## Pamphill Voluntary Controlled Church of England First School

### Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113764
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	311364
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Anna Sketchley

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>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Frank Miller
<b>Headteacher</b>	Trevor Davies
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2004
<b>School address</b>	Pamphill Green Wimborne BH21 4EE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01202 883008
<b>Fax number</b>	01202 883008

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Pamphill is a very small school situated in an idyllic rural setting in a listed building near Wimborne. It has recently benefited from the addition of a new school hall that is currently used in the mornings by a nursery which works in partnership with the school. The school offers a breakfast club. Most pupils are taught in mixed age classes. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups and none are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has increased over the last three years and is now above average. There are no pupils entitled to free school meals.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Pamphill is a good school. Standards are above average and all pupils make good progress. Following the last inspection, there was a period of significant disruption to the leadership and staffing of the school over a period of two years. The current headteacher, appointed in 2006, has worked hard to establish a more settled ethos and has focused on addressing previous areas of weakness. As a result, the school has made good improvement since the last inspection and has good capacity for further improvement. However, subject coordinators are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring the actions the school is taking to be certain that new strategies are successful, and so ensure that pupils' achievement is at least good in all subjects.

Although standards have dipped slightly over the last four years, the headteacher and the whole school team are fully committed to arresting this. Rigorous tracking of pupils' progress shows that they are on track to meet the challenging targets set for reading, writing and mathematics this year. Some pupils have already exceeded their individual targets in reading and writing, and standards in both these areas are above average. This has been secured by good teaching and changes to the curriculum, especially the successful teaching of phonics. However, the impact is slower in mathematics, where standards are average and pupils, especially the more able, do not do as well as they might.

Children start school with the skills expected for their age. They achieve well in Reception because of the good provision in the Foundation Stage and this year, they are on course to reach above average standards by the end of the Reception Year. Children's personal and social education in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school, ensuring that by the time they reach Year 1, they are developing good attitudes to school life.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. They really enjoy coming to school, are very well behaved and feel secure in the well-established school routines. In the words of one pupil, 'There are lots of kind people in the school and they help you a lot.'

Although focused on improvement, the headteacher is thoughtful and caring and a good pastoral leader. The Christian ethos of the school and its calm family atmosphere support all pupils well, especially those with learning difficulties. Pupils are respected and listened to and, as a result, they have very good attitudes to their work and towards each other. This is recognised by many parents, who make positive comments such as, 'We are very pleased with our daughter's progress... she is always happy to go to school and has an eagerness to learn... the school is friendly and supportive.'

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Home visits and a successful partnership with the nursery on site ensure that children settle quickly into school life. Relationships are warm and friendly, helping children to develop in confidence and learn quickly. The bright, stimulating and well organised environment both indoors and out, alongside a carefully planned curriculum, takes account of the needs of all children. During the inspection, the development of personal and social education and speaking and listening skills were exceptionally well combined while children enjoyed their snack. Basic skills are imaginatively taught and progress in phonics and writing is particularly good. Activities directed by adults are balanced well with opportunities for children to learn independently.

Assessments are carefully collated and contribute to a useful record that informs further learning, tracks children's development and ensures that they make good progress. The school recognises that it does not yet do enough to assess each child's skills quickly on entry to establish a clear individual baseline in all areas of learning, and it already has plans to refine assessment further.

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

- Raise standards in mathematics, especially for the more able pupils, so that they achieve as well as they do in English.
- Ensure that all leaders have a greater impact on achievement in the subjects for which they are responsible through more active monitoring.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Following the dip in standards, all pupils are now making good progress and current standards are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Last year, at the end of Key Stage 1, girls did not do as well in mathematics as boys and boys did not do as well as girls in writing. However, this was caused by an imbalance in the number of girls and boys in a particular group and is no longer an issue. The school has correctly identified why pupils do not do as well in mathematics as they do in English and has begun to address this. A new scheme of work has been introduced to improve the order in which mathematical concepts are taught and there has been a greater concentration on the teaching of number bonds and tables. Small booster groups have been introduced in Years 3 and 4 for more able pupils. These strategies have already had a successful impact upon pupils' progress, but not yet on standards.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have a good understanding of the need to keep healthy and of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They are active on the playground and enjoy swimming, physical education lessons and after-school sports. They feel very safe in school and say there are lots of people to go to if they are experiencing difficulties. Pupils are confident and responsive and show their enjoyment of school by taking a real pride in their work, fully understanding sanctions and appreciating the rewards for good behaviour. Attendance is satisfactory, but is a continuing challenge for the school. Authorised absence is above average, and is affected by pupils whose families take holidays in term time and by the significant number who are late in the mornings. The school now has a firm policy in place that is having a clear impact on these issues. There are rewards for good attendance, but pupils are not encouraged in the same way to be punctual.

The school council works very well and pupils were able to talk about their involvement in a campaign for saving electricity. However, there is not enough liaison between the classes and their representatives to ensure that the views of all pupils are raised for discussion. Pupils participate well in the school and wider community and have a good awareness of cultures and faiths other than their own. Their literacy and numeracy skills prepare them well for their future schooling and later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teachers' warm relationships with pupils ensure a positive climate in which to learn. Despite the difficulties encountered because of the limitations of the building, the learning environment is bright, stimulating and well organised. Lessons are interesting and fun and have many good features. The interactive whiteboards are used particularly well to engage pupils and help them to concentrate. For example, during the inspection, pupils greatly enjoyed playing a game on the whiteboard to reinforce their number bonds. Teachers generally plan well for the differing needs of different ability groups, and are adept at adapting their questioning to give pupils of all abilities the opportunity to answer at their own level. Those with learning difficulties are ably supported by well-deployed and skilled teaching assistants. Marking helps pupils to know what to do to improve but teachers miss opportunities to remind pupils of their individual targets. Occasionally tasks are insufficiently challenging in mathematics for more able pupils and they do work that is too easy for them. This means that they do not make as much progress in the lesson as they might.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The recent strong focus on literacy and numeracy is successfully addressing the slight dip in standards. The new government strategies for these areas have been successfully implemented. However, the impact in literacy, for example in the introduction of the new phonics programme, has been quicker to take effect than strategies introduced to improve mathematics. Curricular planning for mixed age classes is good, demonstrating considerable flexibility for pupils to work in the most appropriate groups within the classroom. Although good examples of the use of information and communication technology (ICT) were observed, current resources are inadequate. The school has plans to address this in the near future. Extra-curricular activities and enrichment are impressive for such a small school, with a variety of clubs on offer, including French. These are well supported. Parents commented positively on this and upon the value of visits and visitors, including the residential visit. Creative connections with local schools for such things as sports partnerships enhance and develop opportunities for pupils' learning.

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

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are very well cared for and well known to all staff, who provide a secure and welcoming environment in which to learn. Some health and safety issues that were not formalised at the time of the last inspection are now in place.

Through rigorous tracking, teachers have a very good knowledge of pupils' progress and provide individual targets for literacy and numeracy. Although pupils know these targets, they are not yet sufficiently encouraged to use them on a daily basis to help them to take a more active part in the improvement of their own learning. Individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties are sharply focused, helping them to make the same good academic progress as their peers.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher has worked extremely hard to nurture, develop and sustain working relationships within the staff after a period of considerable turbulence, resulting in a dedicated team who share his vision for the school. The school's accurate self-evaluation and development plans highlight the correct priorities. However, subject coordinators are not yet monitoring and evaluating the strategies they are putting into place sufficiently rapidly to know which are the most successful. Some governors are very supportive and make an important and effective contribution to the school by acting as 'critical friends' to the headteacher and offering him constructive challenge. However, not all governors are involved sufficiently in the life and work of the school to enable them to carry out their role effectively.

A number of developments are new this year and because the school is small, the load falls heavily on just a few people and the impact has not yet been fully seen in terms of raised achievement, but successes to date show that the school is well placed to make further improvement.





## 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?	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	1
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	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?	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	3
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

**Annex B**

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

14 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Pamphill VC C of E First School, Wimborne BH21 4EE

Thank you very much for the warm welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed spending time with you and talking to you. Your school provides you with a good education.

These are some of the things we found:

- You work hard and make good progress so you achieve well by the time you move to the middle school.
- You enjoy school very much and appreciate all the extra activities the school has made for you in the wider community.
- You know how to keep healthy and safe.
- You get on very well together and your behaviour is very good. Well done!
- You and your parents told us how well the school takes care of you, and we agree.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors are making sure that the school is improving every day.

We have suggested two things to make your learning even better:

- We have asked your teachers to make sure that you reach the same high standards in mathematics as you do in your reading and writing.
- We have also asked your teachers to make sure that the new things they plan to help you improve really are making a difference to your progress.

With best wishes

Anna Sketchley Lead Inspector

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Anna Sketchley  
Lead Inspector