

Hampreston Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113802
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	311382
Inspection date	2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Deborah Zachary

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Hobbs
Headteacher	Jane Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2004
School address	Hampreston Village Wimborne BH21 7LX
Telephone number	01202 573074
Fax number	01202 580307

Age group	4-9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following: • pupils' achievement, with a particular focus on progress in the Foundation Stage, mathematics in Key Stage 2 and progress in lessons • pupils' personal development, in order to examine what areas the school feels are exemplary and why, and to check pupils' contribution to the community and understanding of Britain as a multicultural society. Evidence was gathered from discussions with staff, pupils and governors, analysis of school data on progress, examination of pupils' work, study of documentation, observations of lessons, observation of playtime, and study of questionnaires returned by parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Hampreston is a fairly small school, serving the village and its surroundings, but the majority of its pupils come from families who choose to travel to the school from outside its catchment area. Almost all pupils are of White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Hampreston is an outstanding school. Pupils reach very high standards before they leave and their achievement is excellent. Their personal development is also exceptional. The children are central to everything this school does. Not only is the excellent curriculum designed to seize their imagination from the moment they enter the school, but they also receive first class pastoral care. One parent reflected the views of others by commenting, 'A real love and passion for the children permeates throughout the school.' As a result, the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent. Pupils of all ages were very keen to talk about how much they enjoy being at the school, but one Year 4 pupil summed up the views of many when he exclaimed, 'It's the best school ever!'

The pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They focus closely on work in class and release their energy at playtimes, making very good use of the various activity areas and organised games. Year 4 children are on duty to resolve minor conflict, wearing 'here to help' tabards; they can describe maturely how they would go about this, and when a matter would need to be referred to a teacher. In fact, pupils of all ages show a care and concern for each other. A school council is being developed and pupils' contribution to the community is good. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. They also have a good understanding of their own learning and progress, and are able to describe areas in which they want and need to improve. They find the teachers' very good marking particularly helpful in this.

The very wide range of activities are carefully planned to provide a thoroughly coherent experience of learning. Out of school visits give the stimulus for activities across a wide range of subjects, ensuring that pupils feel that everything they are learning is relevant to their own experiences. Visits and themes also provide opportunities for excellence for gifted and talented pupils – a recent trip to Salisbury Cathedral led to some exceptional photography and artwork, for example. Many pupils are also developing great prowess in music and in sports, where school teams have significant success in competitions. In tandem with developing the breadth of the curriculum, however, the school holds a close focus on basic skills, ensuring pupils are extremely well prepared for the future. Writing has been this year's target for development in the school, and as a result pupils now make excellent progress in literacy. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well. Mathematics is identified for a focus next year; progress in this subject is good for pupils of all ages, and Year 4 pupils are on track to reach very challenging targets. The identification of areas for development is very well judged, ensuring that achievement remains excellent overall whilst avoiding taking on more than a small school can manage.

Teaching is outstanding. Teachers enthuse pupils through very well chosen activities, and very careful planning ensures work is targeted well for pupils of different abilities. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent support and make the same progress as their peers. Able pupils are challenged very well – one said what he specially liked about lessons was that 'they give me hard problems'. Teachers also use resources extremely well. A Year 1 class learned about how to use sequential writing by first going out into the school field and doing a range of interesting activities that they could then remember and describe, in order. Yearly monitoring of teaching meets the requirements of performance management, but other ongoing monitoring is not formally recorded. It is sufficient to give the headteacher a very good understanding of the quality of what is happening, but there is no agreed monitoring

schedule and it does not provide the detail that would be needed to support improvement, should teaching in the future have any significant areas of weakness.

The headteacher's quiet yet exceptionally effective leadership nurtures and encourages staff and pupils alike. There have been a variety of changes to the staff team since the headteacher's arrival almost three years ago, including a new assistant headteacher, but there is a strong sense of shared purpose in the school. Other leaders provide strong support, for example in the very effective development of ICT. Governance is good. Governors are strongly supportive yet analytical and willing to challenge. They have a range of informal ways of finding out what is going on in the school, as well as the headteacher's termly reports. Information about pupils' standards is analysed rigorously, and this ensures improvement actions are very accurately targeted. Understandably, given the staff changes, lesson monitoring has been carried out to a greater extent by the headteacher than by other staff in leadership positions, though there are plans to share responsibility for observations wider next year. The improvements to writing and the searching identification of areas to work on demonstrate that the school has an excellent capacity to improve further. No-one is complacent. Indeed, the school's evaluation of its own achievements in its self-evaluation form was over-modest.

The school has a very strong partnership with others to promote the pupils' progress and well-being. Staff use outside expertise where necessary to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make as rapid progress as their peers. The 'Friends' raise large amounts of money each year, and this has had a big impact on the facilities for children in Reception. Particularly strong links with the church nourish pupils' understanding of the Christian faith, and they also learn about other faiths and cultures, through, for example, links with a school in India. They are well aware that many cultures other than their own make up British society.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Foundation Stage (Reception) is outstanding. This year pupils entered the school with skills and understanding that overall were broadly as expected for their age, but relatively weak in communication, language and literacy, and relatively strong in mathematics. Standards now, at the end of the year, are high, especially in reading. Here, for example, the large majority of pupils have reached all the early learning goals, whereas nationally a small minority tend to achieve all of them. Children are given every opportunity to talk and to read out their own emergent writing. Lesson planning is highly detailed with a very well balanced range of independent and teacher-led activities around a theme. The new outside area is used very well and teaching is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

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- Formalise the ongoing monitoring of teaching with an agreed schedule and recording method, and involve a wider range of leaders in monitoring

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

3 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hampreston Church of England Voluntary Aided First School, Wimborne, BH21 7LX

Thank you for welcoming me to your school when I visited yesterday. A particular thank you goes to the Year 4 pupils who gave up their time to meet me and tell me about the school. Thanks too to those of you who spoke to me in the playground – the many Year 1 pupils but also those from other year groups. You told me that everyone gets on really well and you think this is an excellent school. I agree.

You are making outstanding progress in your work and you have a good understanding of how to improve the work you do. You know a lot about how to keep healthy and safe, and adults look after you exceptionally well, too. The youngest children get an excellent start in Reception, and your behaviour in all years is outstanding. Well done!

You are really lucky to be taught so well and to learn about so many interesting things. Your headteacher has been really successful in making sure the school is excellent. I judged leadership as outstanding overall, but I have asked the school to involve more staff and get them to write down a bit more when checking on how well the school is doing – so that all the excellent things stay at this high level.

Keep up your outstanding work!

Best wishes

Yours sincerely

Deborah Zachary Lead inspector