

Sherborne St John Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116315
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312256
Inspection date	17 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Pritiben Patel

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	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr R Walters
Headteacher	Mrs K Payne (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2003
School address	Church Lane Sherborne St John Basingstoke RG24 9HT
Telephone number	01256 850180
Fax number	01256 850180

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	17 October 2007
Inspection number	312256

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

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

- pupils' achievement and personal development
- the quality of teaching
- how well the school keeps track of pupils' progress
- leadership and management.

Evidence was gathered from observing lessons, assembly and morning break; discussions with senior managers, governors and pupils; checking the school's records of pupils' progress, the results of questionnaires returned by parents, and looking at other paperwork.

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 in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Sherborne St John Church of England Primary is a small school. Pupils come from generally advantaged backgrounds. The vast majority of pupils are of White British origin and a small minority come from other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher have been in post since September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Sherborne St John Primary is a good school with outstanding features. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding because the school's Christian ethos and values underpin its work. Pupils are very respectful and happy, they have very good relationships with their teachers and each other and their behaviour is excellent. They make an outstanding contribution to both the school and local community by being active members of the school council or becoming library monitors. Older pupils help the younger pupils at lunch times and the choir sings for elderly citizens. Their sheer enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance.

The local community holds the school in very high regard. For example comments made by parents such as, 'My children are very proud to be part of the school' and 'We feel very privileged that our village school maintains such a high standard of education, care and wealth of experience offered to our children,' were typical of many. Standards are most certainly outstanding. Pupils make consistently good progress, reaching above average standards by the end of Year 2. They maintain this good progress and, by the end of Year 6, standards are exceptionally high.

The school has an excellent track record of ensuring that pupils achieve well because of good teaching. Strengths in teaching include positive relationships, the use of the interactive whiteboard to engage and motivate pupils and the setting of clear lesson aims so that they know exactly what is expected of them. 'Partner Talk' is used very effectively by teachers to ensure that pupils have opportunities to explore their own and others' ideas. Teachers' marking, although regular, is mainly used to praise pupils and does not consistently inform pupils of their next steps. Consequently, not all pupils are clear about their improvement areas.

The well-planned curriculum makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development. The inspector saw how pupils thoroughly enjoy 'Creative Week' when they are given opportunities to plan their work, solving problems as well as working collaboratively. For example, older pupils were involved in identifying problems within the school grounds, brainstorming potential solutions and then writing action plans for improvement. 'Health Week', has a very positive impact on pupils' outstanding understanding of healthy lifestyles and safety. All pupils understand why only healthy snacks are permitted at break times; they drink water throughout the school day and take part in a range of extra-curricular activities such as football, cookery and sewing.

Sherborne is a school in which every child really does matter. The high quality day-to-day care provided for pupils is an excellent feature appreciated by both pupils and parents. The tracking of pupils' writing is well established within the school and provides senior managers with a clear overview of pupils' progress. However, the tracking of pupils' progress in mathematics does not provide senior managers with a clear overview of how well pupils are doing.

The new acting headteacher is working very hard to make her mark on the school and has already identified areas of its work that require further development, such as the tracking of pupils' progress in mathematics, and is putting effective measures in place. She ensures that all staff are involved in making decisions and thereby contribute to school improvement. She has the confidence of both the local community and the two consultants who are working with her, to move the school from strength to strength. For example, parents have noticed her positive impact already, as exemplified by this comment 'The new head and deputy have carried

on leading the school very well and have already introduced some exciting new ventures such as residential trips for Year 6.' All adults working in the school share a clear sense of purpose and work very well together as a team. Governors played a key role in the recruitment of the senior leadership team and they make a good contribution to school improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter Reception with levels of skills, attitudes and knowledge above those expected of most four year-olds. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage, with most exceeding the expected levels by the time they move to Year 1. The teacher and support teacher both provide effective individual attention to the children. This, along with their careful questioning, ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning. Children are very well behaved and eagerly pursue activities that have been planned for them. The teacher also ensures that children have opportunities to make their own decisions, explore their own ideas and pursue their own interests. For example, the inspector observed children working in pairs, outdoors, drawing various items on the ground that would improve their playground. Careful and regular assessments are kept of children's achievements, which allows the teacher to know very clearly skills that have been successfully achieved by children as well as those that may need reinforcing.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure consistency in teachers' marking so that pupils are clear about their next steps for improvement.
- Improve tracking in mathematics so both teachers and senior managers have a clear overview of pupil progress.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
--	-----------------------

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 ¹ reached by learners	1
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	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	1
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?	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?	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?	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	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

1 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sherborne St John Church of England Primary School, Basingstoke, RG24 9HT

Thank you for being so welcoming and helping me so much when I came to inspect your school to find out how well you are getting on. I particularly enjoyed visiting your lessons, talking to some of you at break time and talking to a group of you after lunch. I would also like to say an extra 'thank you' to the pupils that gave me a tour of the school.

You go to a good school with some outstanding features. Here are the reasons why:

- You attain outstanding standards in tests because you are taught well by your teachers and you work hard. You should be very proud of this.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you get on really well with each other and your teachers.
- You really enjoy the curriculum that your school offers, particularly creative weeks.
- All of the adults in your school make sure that you are really well looked after.
- Your acting headteacher, acting deputy and governors are doing a good job and making sure that you get a good education.

Even a good school like yours can be even better. This is what I think should happen. I have asked your teachers to tell you very clearly when they mark your work, what you need to do next to improve your work. I have also asked your headteacher to improve the way that teachers track your progress in mathematics.

I am sure that you will continue to have great success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Pritiben Patel Lead inspector