

Meare Village Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123653
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	314659
Inspection date	2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	David Shears

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	128
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Les Keen
Headteacher	Deborah Eveleigh
Date of previous school inspection	14 September 2004
School address	St Mary's Road Meare Glastonbury BA6 9SP
Telephone number	01458 860228
Fax number	01458 860448

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Introduction

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

How well teaching supports the needs of all pupils to ensure their good progress in English and mathematics

How well the curriculum supports the progress in writing

The impact leaders and managers have on the progress of pupils, in particular boys and the more able.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and documents, and by speaking with staff and pupils. 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

This is a smaller than average primary school. Most pupils are of White British ethnicity and speak English at home. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is higher than the national average. The current headteacher has been in post for 18 months.

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. Pupils arrive with skills and understanding that are broadly in line with expectations for their age and leave with standards that are currently average. However, under the good leadership and management of the recently appointed headteacher, progress has improved dramatically this year so that pupils from Reception to Year 6 now make good progress and their achievement is good. This is beginning to have an effect on standards which have begun to rise in 2008. The improvement in progress has been due to a rigorous audit of strengths, and weaknesses which are now being addressed. There is now a strong senior leadership team which has established a clear vision for the school that has been adopted by all staff. This has resulted in a staff team that is working well together to improve the standard of education for all. Governors work well with staff and support and challenge appropriately. They provide a good forum for discussion about future planning. Pupil tracking is now very effective, with termly assessments that show clearly the progress of each individual. Where pupils are not making good progress, this is being picked up quickly by teachers and the pupils are given extra support through a variety of interventions appropriate to their needs. The provision, both for pupils with learning difficulties and the more able, has improved this year, resulting in these groups making good progress overall. Although in the past, the progress of boys appeared to be an issue, this was identified by the school as a small number who had previously not made enough progress. A number of new initiatives introduced this year have ensured that the rate of progress for these boys has improved. The many successful interventions clearly demonstrate that leaders and managers have a good capacity to improve still further.

Teaching in the school has improved so that it is now good overall although the quality varies between lessons. Nevertheless, pupils know their targets and are working well to achieve these. Lesson objectives are made clear and planning ensures that work is suitable for the range of abilities in the class. The excellent teaching assistants support learning extremely well, enabling both individuals and groups of pupils to achieve. Currently, pupils are making good progress in reading and mathematics, although writing is weaker. Nevertheless, the school has identified the need to further raise the expectations of pupils in order to accelerate their progress even more to impact on future standards. Work is marked carefully with positive comments to encourage pupils. There are some excellent examples of sharing the next steps in learning with pupils in English although these are not consistent enough, particularly in mathematics.

The good curriculum supports the needs of pupils well. There are many stimulating activities for pupils to enjoy through a planned programme of visits out and visitors to the school. These include a major focus on 'Education for Sustainable Development'. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities on offer and pupils enjoy taking up these opportunities to further their learning. Specialist teachers support a number of areas, such as music, physical education and French. There are good cross-curricular links, such as the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning. There has been a focus on writing this year and this has been evident through many opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in other subjects. Their writing skills have improved although more still needs to be done to develop these further by consistently reinforcing pupils' punctuation and grammar skills. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their mathematical skills across the curriculum. Pupils receive good care. Risk assessments are routinely carried out to ensure their health and safety, and safeguarding procedures are robust. There are a number of staff who are fully trained to administer first aid. Good arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils receive

immediate help when necessary. Pupils with medical needs are well supported through individual plans that are implemented by trained staff. As a result of this good care, pupils feel safe in school. They enjoy their lessons and feel they are making good progress. Pupils generally play well together and when there are difficulties, they are confident that they can either solve the problem themselves or ask a teacher to help. They have a good knowledge of safe practices and how to keep healthy. Pupils not only make a good contribution both to the school and local community, but also to the global community, such as supporting a child in Kenya. Preparation for their future economic well-being is currently satisfactory, in line with the average standards they attain at the end of Year 6.

Attendance is currently satisfactory although not better partly due to a small number of pupils who find attendance challenging. There are appropriate procedures in place to monitor and encourage good attendance. A very small minority of parents had reservations about the leadership and management of the school and the seeking of parental views. However, there is clear evidence that leadership and management are good, with a number of clear opportunities for parents to give their views, such as homework diaries, questionnaires and parent forums. A large majority of parents are very pleased with the provision at the school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children now make a good start in their education. There are good procedures for induction where positive relationships are built with parents. The classroom is warm and inviting. Children make good progress in all of the six areas of learning. This is having a positive impact on children working securely within the goals they are expected to achieve by the time they enter Year 1. Good management ensures that planning meets the needs of all learners and the excellent teaching assistants provide good support. Children are seen as individuals. This is clearly evident in the way they are valued by having a display board, in turn, devoted to an individual child. The outdoor area is used well and children understand much about their environment through first-hand experiences. The tracking of children's progress in the Foundation Stage is good although the consistency of assessment between Reception and Year 1 needs to be improved to ensure that learning continues to build on previous knowledge.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching is of a consistently good or better quality with high expectations of all pupils.
- Improve the standard of writing across the school.

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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 ¹ 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?	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

3 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Meare Village Primary School, Meare, BA6 9SP

Thank you for your friendly welcome that I received when I visited you recently. It was good to hear all about your school.

You told me that you like coming to school because the teachers are good and help you a lot and I agree. You are all making good progress this year because your teachers are good at knowing how well you are doing and what you need to learn next. You have lots of opportunities to go on visits and have special visitors to the school to make your learning even more fun and you told me how much you enjoy these. It is good to know that you mostly play well together and that when there are problems you are either able to resolve them or know where to get help if you need it.

I have asked your teachers to make sure that they expect the very best from you by giving you even more challenging work. I also want you to improve your writing skills by remembering to apply your grammar and punctuation skills in all your work. You can help by always trying your very best in your work so that the teachers can easily see what you are able to do.

Thank you for a very enjoyable day. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Shears Lead Inspector