

Sampford Peverell Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113362
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	325801
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Robert Pyner HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	107
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Bevan
Headteacher	Janet Dinsmore
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Higher Town Sampford Peverell Tiverton EX16 7BR
Telephone number	01884 820284

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2009
Inspection number	325801

Fax number

01884 820274

Age group	4-11
Inspection dates	11-12 March 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sampford Peverell CE Primary School is smaller than average and serves the village of the same name and surrounding area. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) is variable from year to year but broadly as expected for their age. Children in Reception share a class with pupils in Year 1. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national figure but the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is well above average at over double the national figure. Pupils' difficulties include moderate learning and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties as well as physical disabilities. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups, and none for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than is usually found. The headteacher took up her post in January 2008.

The school has achieved the Healthy School and Bronze Eco-School awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Sampford Peverell provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. The pupils' personal development and the curricular provision made for them are good. The school has continued to develop since it was taken out of special measures in November 2006 and the headteacher has worked to build on this improvement since her appointment just over a year ago. The large majority of parents support the work of the school and most say that their children enjoy their time there. However, a small minority were critical of the way staffing issues have been managed and feel that the school does not take the views of parents into consideration. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in the class affected are now making satisfactory progress and teaching is appropriate. The school has evidence that it seeks the views of parents and carers, but accepts that it is not always effective in sharing what it does with this information and how it is used to inform developments in the provision for pupils.

Pupils have a good understanding of the need to live healthy lifestyles, and their behaviour and relationships are good. Pupils enjoy school and attend well. They participate well in the development of the school, although a number of their planned projects have not yet been completed, such as the Playground Squad and the healthy tuckshop. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. An increasing amount of teaching builds on the assessment of individual learning needs. As a result, pupils' progress is improving and standards are beginning to rise. However, lessons still sometimes lack pace and challenge, especially for the more able pupils. Standards are now broadly average by the time pupils leave the school, with attainment in reading being good. Standards in mathematics have improved but remain below what they should be for more able pupils. Writing is weaker across the school and last year, pupils in Year 2 attained results which were below average at the higher National Curriculum levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make clear progress based on thorough monitoring and appropriate intervention. Provision is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage, enabling pupils to make appropriate progress.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and includes opportunities to work on cross-curricular projects in mixed age groups. The school cares for the pupils well. Assessment tracking systems have been developed but these are not yet sufficiently embedded to ensure a lasting impact on pupils' achievement, particularly in terms of target-setting. Marking in pupils' books is encouraging and positive, but comments which help individuals to understand the next steps needed to improve their learning are not consistently helpful across the school. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and governors have had to deal with some difficult issues over the last year and this has required resilience and fortitude. Staffing is more stable now and the systems needed to raise achievement and meet pupils' full potential have been implemented. Staff and governors recognise that there is still much to do, but have the commitment, and now the systems, to bring this about. The improvements already made show that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children generally enter the school with knowledge and skills at the levels expected for their age. A clear induction programme involves visits to pre-school settings, homes and the classroom, enabling children to settle quickly. The progress made by the children is satisfactory across all the areas of learning, and most are ready for the challenges in Year 1 by the end of their time

in Reception. Children are nurtured in a safe and secure environment and all welfare requirements are met effectively. There is a supportive atmosphere where children are encouraged to be independent and try things out for themselves. Attitudes to work and behaviour are good. Systematic observations and assessments of children's progress ensure clear planning for the next steps in their learning. The curriculum is relevant to children's needs and includes an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. The class teacher and teaching assistant work well together to ensure that there is an appropriate focus for the Reception children in their learning, and that they have sufficient time for play. An outdoor play area with a variety of equipment and materials is accessible in good weather, but not in inclement conditions because it does not offer appropriate all-weather protection. An enthusiastic practitioner is improving her management skills and leads the Early Years Foundation Stage satisfactorily.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that lessons consistently challenge all groups of pupils to do well, but particularly the more able pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Fine-tune the system for tracking pupils' progress and implement suitably challenging targets to raise attainment in writing and mathematics.
- Develop teachers' marking so that it consistently informs pupils about their next steps in learning.
- Ensure that parents' and carers' views are considered appropriately and that any consequent action taken is communicated clearly to them.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are broadly average and overall, pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make clear progress reflecting the careful and targeted support they receive. Children settle into the school satisfactorily due to the individual induction procedures and make satisfactory progress in Reception. Although the small size of each year group means that attainment can vary from year to year, national assessment results over time show that pupils attain broadly average standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and make satisfactory progress across Key Stage 1. However, in 2008, standards declined in these three subjects, particularly in writing and in mathematics at the higher level. The school had predicted this dip in standards through its pupil assessments. At the end of Year 6, the latest assessment results were just above average and generally, reasonably challenging targets were met. However, within these results, there are clear strengths and weaknesses. English continued a good overall rate of improvement, especially at the higher levels, although reading was much stronger than writing. Mathematics results, although improved, were weaker at the higher level and missed the target set. Science results were broadly in line with national figures at the expected and higher levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Relationships with adults and between pupils are particularly positive and children say they feel happy coming to school. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good, with visits by local ministers developing their spiritual understanding effectively. Attendance has improved and it is clear pupils enjoy school, with older ones relishing the opportunities to take responsibilities such as helping with assemblies. Behaviour during lessons and attitudes to learning are good. Pupils feel safe. They say that bullying is rare, and if it occurs, staff deal with it promptly and effectively. They say that they know that staff are in school to help them and are happy to share any concerns with adults. Members of the small school council feel valued and understand the importance of their role. However, although the council has a number of projects in progress, information about these is not shared as widely as it could be and some parents feel that the school does not consider pupils' views seriously. Pupils have a good understanding of health issues and can discuss in a mature way their need to eat healthy foods and take regular exercise. They participate enthusiastically in the many opportunities to take part in sports. The pupils' good social skills and satisfactory academic performance soundly prepare them for the next stage of their education and later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Improving teaching through better monitoring and support continues to be a priority for the school. Sharing of objectives with the pupils has improved their understanding of the learning in lessons. Classroom management is satisfactory overall; in some cases, it is good, but sometimes there is not enough challenge and pace, particularly for more able pupils. Work on teachers' use of assessment information to guide planning and set targets for pupils is beginning to have a clear impact on achievement. There is now more effective intervention to improve progress for individuals and groups based on need. Pupils work well in pairs and teachers encourage them to consider and reflect on their work and suggest ways to improve it. Teachers use interactive whiteboards and information and communication technology appropriately and there are examples of the effective use of subject knowledge to extend pupils' enjoyment and learning of numeracy skills. Teaching assistants support pupils well, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and teachers ensure that the contribution to lessons of this group of learners is celebrated.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum encourages the pupils' personal development well. It is broad and balanced and enriched by an effective range of visits and themes. For example, each half-term, the curriculum is collapsed for 'Day 16' to enable pupils to work in mixed-age 'family groups'. These sessions are greatly enjoyed and enable pupils to develop skills for a sustained period of time. Just before the inspection, the pupils had worked on an environmental day within the school grounds, developing garden areas and producing, among other things, a striking life-sized figure made from recycled materials. Pupils were keen to describe the activities they had undertaken and were rightly proud of their achievements. Pupils learn French in Key Stage 2 and their skills and understanding are enhanced through the colourful and thought-provoking displays all

around the school. For a small school, there is good enrichment of class activities through school clubs. Links with the local churches are strong, with local ministers regularly leading assemblies which are thought-provoking and entertaining. The school lies at the heart of the community, enabling pupils opportunities to make positive contributions to their school and village life. For example, the school supports a child living in Kenya and is involved in the annual visit to the area by children from Chernobyl, and hence makes a good contribution to community cohesion.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is a strength of the school. All pupils are known as individuals and parents appreciate how the school works hard to take care of their children and keep them safe. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and staff training is up to date. Staff work as a team to support all pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Their progress is monitored carefully and accurately using the school's tracking system and this links to all the intervention strategies used by the school, developing effective inclusion.

Academic guidance is satisfactory overall. A comprehensive assessment tracking system has been developed over the last two terms and this process is reinforced by discussions between class teachers and the headteacher each term. These discussions focus on the progress made by individual pupils, and interventions are planned if underachievement is identified. This recently-introduced system has yet to have a clear impact on standards achieved. Teachers give good oral guidance and annotate targets in writing and mathematics books when they are achieved, a process which the pupils understand. However, although marking in pupils' books is regular and provides praise and encouragement, there are few examples where it guides them to understand the specific next steps needed in order to improve their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

In the year since her appointment, the headteacher has continued to work on the challenge of improving pupils' achievement and standards, despite having to resolve some difficult staffing issues. In this she has shown perseverance, although at times the workload created by the situation has meant that the drive to raise achievement has suffered. However, self-evaluation is accurate and there is a clear awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. All at the school are aware of the need to improve outcomes. The staff are developing a thoughtful approach to subject leadership based on the assessment of skills for learning. This has appropriately involved all teaching staff but is yet to be implemented. The school has recently developed a system for more challenging targets for pupils in writing and mathematics, the impact of which is beginning to be seen through assessment tracking. Staff are aware that this process is not yet fully embedded. The governing body has continued to develop the management systems initiated whilst it was in special measures, and gives clear support to the school as well as holding it to account.

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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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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 learners' needs?	3
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?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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**

13 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sampford Peverell CE Primary School, Tiverton EX16 7BR

Thank you so much for welcoming me to your school when I inspected it recently. I enjoyed my visit and I am writing to tell you about what I found.

Your school is satisfactory overall and there are some aspects that are good. One of these is the good curriculum that provides you with lots of opportunities to learn. Another is the way you develop as sensible, thoughtful young people. I could see that you really enjoy your time at school and I found that your behaviour is good. I liked the friendly way you work together and how thoughtfully you talked to me about your life at school. You are rightly proud of the displays and models you made on 'Day 16' recently; 'George' is a very impressive model made from recycled materials and lots of you talked to me about making him. Another good aspect is the way the staff take good care of you, making you feel safe and secure.

I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work on a number of areas to improve your learning and achievements even further. The first is to make better use of the targets for your work which you talked to me about, to ensure you achieve as well as you can. This is particularly important to raise your attainment in writing and mathematics, and for some younger pupils who find learning easier and so can manage harder work. I have also asked your teachers to mark your work carefully so that you always have clear guidance on what you need to do to improve. Finally, I have asked that the school takes care to consider the views of your parents and carers and makes sure that they are fully informed about the developments in your school. You can play a very important part in helping to improve your school even more by continuing to work hard and help each other. I am sure that you will.

Yours faithfully

Robert Pyner

Her Majesty's Inspector