

# Colehill First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113664
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	325855
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eileen Chadwick

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	148
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gordon Richards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Turrall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 September 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Middlehill Road Colehill Wimborne BH21 2HL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01202 882506
<b>Fax number</b>	01202 848196

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

The evenness of high standards and progress across the school, especially in mathematics, and impact of initiatives to improve mathematics.

The extent of good and outstanding teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement.

The impact of leadership and management on improving achievement, especially through monitoring and evaluation.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, discussions with pupils and staff, a review of the assessment data the school uses to track pupils' progress, and analyses of pupils' work. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors 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 smaller than average school draws its pupils from the local area as well as further afield. Very nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils come from a range of social and economic backgrounds but most are from relatively advantaged circumstances. Although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average, these pupils' needs vary and include speech, language, emotional and behavioural and specific learning difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry is just above average, although this covers a wide range. The 30 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are in Reception. There is also a nursery in the same building as the school but this is separately managed by a private company.

The school holds an Activemark award reflecting its commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This school is outstanding. The academic performance of the pupils is exceptional in English and mathematics. A well rounded education gives high priority to developing pupils' basic skills and also provides high quality opportunities for them to develop their creative, sporting and practical talents. A key strength of the school is the outstanding quality of relationships and the degree of care and attention given to supporting each pupil. Consequently, pupils' personal development is excellent. This ensures they behave brilliantly and grow in confidence and self-worth. Pupils love learning and the school fully lives out its motto 'A happy school where children love to learn'. Parents agree and one expressed a typical view with the comment that 'This is an excellent school with a very caring atmosphere. My child is making really good progress in reading and loves maths.'

Staff have high expectations and prepare pupils extremely well for future learning and their life ahead. Pupils achieve exceptionally well as they move through the school. Children in Reception make excellent progress and, by the time they begin Year 1, they reach significantly above average standards, including in literacy and numeracy. This rate of progress continues through the rest of the school and, by Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are exceptionally high. By Year 4, pupils' exceptionally high standards in English and mathematics are a testimony to continued high quality teaching in these subjects. Standards have risen in recent years, particularly in mathematics, where initiatives to improve teaching are having a very beneficial impact. Pupils show a flair and thirst for problem solving in mathematics and have very accurate calculation skills. This results from the rigorous teaching of how pupils can apply their basic number skills in solving mathematics problems. By Year 4, the pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding in science are well above average. The school is currently improving pupils' investigative skills in science in order to bring these up to the same high levels as in mathematics.

The headteacher's excellent leadership is central to ensuring that there is a constant focus on high achievement within a warm, purposeful and stimulating environment. Staff are empowered to play a full part in raising achievement and this is important in a smaller school where each member of staff has many responsibilities. Very systematic and accurate evaluation of the school's performance has resulted in the school knowing what is working and what needs improving. These systems, with a sharp focus on teaching, learning, assessment and the process of setting targets, have ensured that teaching and learning are at least good and usually outstanding. More recently appointed teachers have settled very well and their particular strengths complement the range of other staff's expertise. Teachers and assistants are given strong professional development opportunities and share their knowledge so their subject expertise is kept up-to-date. Governors provide first class support and challenge, for example, by closely monitoring the impact of actions and investment on the standards being achieved.

Teachers capture pupils' interest and are very adept in providing for the wide ability ranges in their classes. Gifted and talented pupils are given extra challenge and the school liaises with middle schools to provide extra challenge for them, and this process is being strengthened. The few pupils with learning difficulties are helped extremely well and as a result make excellent progress. Support staff make a valuable contribution to this support. Pupils' targets are challenging and the school takes every step to make sure they are met. The curriculum not only gives pupils exceptional opportunities in the basics but is particularly strong in information and communication technology (ICT), the arts, design and technology, and sport. The school has

revised its curriculum over the past few years so that pupils' learning in one subject enhances another. There are some high quality learning opportunities in history. The work on Florence Nightingale and the Second World War links with art, reading, writing and mathematics, and this brings excitement and relevance to pupils' learning across the curriculum. The application of mathematical skills to science is developing well so that learning in both subjects is enhanced. Parents really appreciate the increase in extra-curricular activities and pupils' enthusiasm for them. The school acknowledges that the outdoor play area for Reception children is small and the learning environment is not so well developed as the indoor environment.

Support from the local church and strong links with the community help to promote the school's family atmosphere and pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school promotes community cohesion well, successfully reaching out to parents and the local area. Pupils are well prepared for life in a multicultural society because they learn to respect people with different faiths. Work with the 'Traveller Education Service' plays an important part in raising pupils' awareness and respect for people from different backgrounds. The school is now examining how to widen opportunities for pupils to extend their experience of the many cultures in Britain today. Pupils' contributions to the school and wider community are excellent. Pupils contribute regularly to local events and raise money for charities. The thriving school council is a very good vehicle for enabling pupils to contribute to whole-school decision making. Pupils develop very good teamwork and problem-solving skills with good opportunities for enterprise awareness. They develop a superb understanding of how regular exercise and a healthy diet help their bodies to grow stronger. Their great enthusiasm for school life is reflected in their good attendance.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children arrive with a wide range of skills but, overall, their attainment on entry is just above typical levels for their age. They progress and achieve exceptionally well in a stimulating and colourful learning environment. By the time they leave, they have reached significantly above average standards, including in literacy and numeracy. The quality of teaching is excellent. Well trained and qualified staff ensure that routines are well established and that children are exceptionally well cared for. Close links with the adjacent nursery ensure that new children settle in well, and links with parents, to ensure a smooth start, are extremely good. There is a very good range of stimulating activities in the classroom, although the outdoor play area is small and not developed well enough. Children choose activities independently during appropriate free play sessions and especially enjoy role play in the 'vet's surgery', which provides excellent scope for developing communication skills, knowledge and creativity. More formal sessions are of an equally high standard, for example in promoting understanding of letter sounds and early reading and writing skills. Children are making excellent progress in areas of personal development and in communication. They show high levels of ability when working with others and sustain interest very well. Assessment of children's progress is exceptionally thorough and regular. Children have very good opportunities to use computers. The EYFS is exceptionally well led and managed.

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

- Increase outdoor play facilities for Reception children to the level of those found in the classroom to extend their learning.

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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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	1

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	1
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**

20 November 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Colehill First School, Wimborne BH21 2HL

I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping us with the inspection. Your views are important as you are the school's customers. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

- Your school is outstanding and that means it is a really good school. Here are some things that are first class about your school:
- You make excellent progress and, by the time you leave, you reach very high standards in English and mathematics.
- You make excellent progress in the Reception class.
- You are extremely good at solving mathematical problems.
- You have some really good opportunities for ICT, science, sport, art and design and technology.
- You are a credit to your school and behave extremely well.
- You really enjoy school and get on very well with each other.
- Teaching is often excellent and teachers take superb care of you.
- Your headteacher leads you all extremely well and your teachers and the school governors are working very hard to make the school even better.

Here is something we are asking the school to change:

- Improve the Reception outdoor area so it gives the youngest children more exciting opportunities to extend their learning. I hope you will continue to enjoy school and try hard in all you do so that your work continues to improve.

Yours faithfully

Eileen Chadwick Lead inspector