

# St Ives First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113739
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	325873
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Diane Wilkinson

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)	116
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	24
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nick Musslewhite
<b>Headteacher</b>	Laura Crossley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 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>	Sandy Lane St Ives Ringwood BH24 2LE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01425 475478
<b>Fax number</b>	01425 472641

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## Introduction

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

the progress of pupils in Years 3 and 4

the effectiveness of the school's strategies to raise standards in reading and writing

the contribution made by subject leaders to school development.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, analysis of school tracking and assessment data and development planning, and from discussions with the headteacher, senior management team, members of the governing body and pupils. The views of parents were gathered from the returns of the Ofsted questionnaire.

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 form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

St Ives is a small first school, although numbers are increasing, with 25% of pupils travelling from outside the area. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.

Attainment on entry is broadly average, although lower in some key literacy skills. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above average, although much higher than this in some year groups. The school holds the Healthy School award. The school works closely with the St Ives Pre-School Playgroup, which shares the site, although the setting did not form part of this inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

St Ives is an outstanding school in all aspects of its work. This is the result of excellent leadership and management and the high quality provision, which ensure that pupils do especially well in both their academic and personal development. Parents are very appreciative of all that the school offers and pupils greatly enjoy being there. As one parent typically commented, 'St Ives First School is a credit to the area. The attention to each child is exceptional and I have seen significant progress in my child. She is happy and secure and loves going to school.'

Pupils make outstanding progress in all year groups. Standards by the end of Reception and in the national tests for Year 2 pupils have risen well since the school was last inspected. By the time pupils leave in Year 4, standards are generally well above those expected for this age. A slight dip in standards this year is due to the very high proportion of older pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Despite this, standards were above expectations due to the excellent provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that they made outstanding progress. As is the picture nationally, pupils tend to reach higher standards in mathematics than in English. St Ives staff are working successfully to narrow the gap, with the new programme for teaching letters and sounds having a very positive impact on progress.

An exceptional feature of the school's work is the very high quality system in place for guiding and supporting pupils' progress. Each pupil's progress is tracked very regularly and rigorously so that staff can intervene swiftly when needed. The outstanding support programmes help pupils to get quickly back on track. Pupils are set highly challenging targets for what they can achieve. They are very clear about what they need to do to improve, constantly referring to their targets throughout lessons and frequently discussing with their teachers what they need to do to reach them. Equally effective systems are in place for pastoral support, and procedures for safeguarding pupils' welfare fully meet government guidelines.

Pupils' great enjoyment of school is evident in their enthusiasm in lessons and capacity to work hard. Behaviour is outstanding and relationships between adults and pupils, and amongst pupils themselves, are very good. The school is a very happy and harmonious place to be. Pupils have an excellent awareness of how to keep themselves healthy and safe and thoroughly enjoy the daily 'Wake and Shake' sessions. They make a very positive contribution to the school and local community. Staff recognise that pupils' awareness of the international community can be widened further, including through planned links with schools in other countries.

The curriculum provides exceptionally well for the development of pupils' basic literacy, numeracy, investigation and technology skills, balancing this effectively with an exciting range of activities which capitalise on pupils' own interests and talents. Enrichment opportunities are excellent. For example, all pupils learn to play a musical instrument during their time in Years 3 and 4 and greatly enjoy the considerable range of opportunities to play different sports. High quality planning underpins the outstanding teaching seen in all classes. The tasks set are highly challenging and interesting so that pupils are motivated to achieve exceptionally well. A strong feature of all lessons is the use of talking partners to help pupils test out and extend their ideas. This strategy is introduced in Reception so that older pupils become highly skilled at exploring their ideas. They are confident and articulate young people, with an excellent range of skills to help them in their future lives. In particular, the middle school to which the majority of pupils transfer, comment on their very good work ethic. Well-trained teaching assistants are skilled at working with small groups or individual pupils so that those with learning or physical

needs are supported very well throughout all activities. Parents are fully aware of the strengths in teaching, one writing, 'The teachers are amazing, they are approachable, firm and teach children how to be independent.' The school has an excellent partnership with parents, ensuring that they have the information that allows them to work closely with staff in supporting their child's development.

Leadership and management at all levels are outstanding. Very effective systems for monitoring the school's work and pupils' progress help ensure that development planning is focused especially well on areas of relative weakness. The headteacher is an inspirational leader, motivating and supporting staff to work together very effectively. Over the past year, subject leaders have developed a very good range of skills to support school development. Together with the headteacher, senior staff and governors, they are driving forward development priorities especially well, as is evident in improvements in reading and in writing, and in the quality of teaching in the older classes. These strengths give confidence that the school is exceptionally well placed to improve further. Governors provide excellent support. For example, careful budgeting has led to the employment of a number of very good teaching assistants who give very good support to pupils' learning. The school's partnership with a range of schools and agencies is outstanding and significantly supports pupils' education and welfare. In particular, the East Dorset Education Partnership helps the school to work on new educational initiatives and to provide extra support for its most vulnerable pupils. These partnerships support community cohesion well and the school is extending its work in this area to cover the wider community.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The provision is led exceptionally well and is outstanding, exhibiting the significant strengths seen in other year groups. Children make excellent progress and standards are well above average by the time they enter Year 1. Progress is especially strong in personal, social and emotional development where standards are high. This is partly due to the excellent procedures to help children settle in to school and the outstanding links with their parents. Attention to children's welfare and safety is excellent and they feel very happy and secure in school. As a result, children quickly develop confidence and the ability to work and play happily together. They are highly motivated and develop very positive attitudes to learning.

The Reception teacher has very high and appropriately challenging expectations for the children. Lesson activities meet children's needs especially well, with a very good balance between those where they learn new skills under the supervision of an adult and those where they discover things for themselves. Both the teacher and classroom assistants are skilled at intervening where necessary and the use of talking partners is very effective in supporting children's independent learning. A wide range of resources, including puppets, and the spacious accommodation and excellent outdoor environment are used especially well to help children learn. Excellent systems are in place to assess and track children's progress, with the information being used very effectively to help plan the next steps in learning.

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

- Build on and extend the programmes and procedures in place to enhance pupils' understanding of global citizenship and to contribute further to developing this aspect of community cohesion.

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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	2
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

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<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	2
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 Pupils

Inspection of St Ives First School, Ringwood, BH24 2LE

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly and helpful. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their lunchtime to speak with us. We very much enjoyed the day we spent in your school. We think your school is excellent and are delighted that you and your parents agree.

- Here are some of the things we found out were good about the school.
- You get an excellent start in Reception and make outstanding progress, so standards are well above those expected by the time you leave in Year 4.
- You are developing into very friendly, thoughtful and confident young people. Your behaviour is excellent and you all get on very well together.
- Teachers plan lots of interesting activities that help you to work hard and develop new skills especially well.
- Teaching is excellent, and you get especially good help from your teachers and classroom assistants. We think you learn a lot from discussing your work with a talk partner.
- Adults take excellent care of you and you feel very safe and happy in school.
- The advice adults give you on how to do better is of very high quality. They set very challenging targets for you and the way that you keep checking on these in lessons helps to improve your work especially well.
- You headteacher, staff and governors are doing an excellent job in helping your school to get even better.

Here is what we have asked your school to do now: You have many opportunities to learn about how your school and local community work and to suggest ways in which they can be improved. We have asked staff to extend this to learning more about communities in other areas and countries.

Thank you again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

D Wilkinson Lead Inspector