

Lilliput Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113783
Local Authority	Poole
Inspection number	325883
Inspection date	20 May 2009
Reporting inspector	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.

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	240
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	Anne-Maria Lush
Headteacher	Julie Jeans
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lilliput Road Parkstone Poole BH14 8JX
Telephone number	01202 709013
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Age group	4–8
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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 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- the progress of pupils in Year 3
- how well the school's work on curriculum development is enhancing learning.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, analysis of school tracking and assessment data and development planning and monitoring, and from discussions with the headteacher, staff, members of the governing body and pupils. The views of parents were gathered from discussion and the returns of the Ofsted and the school's own questionnaires.

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

Lilliput Church of England First School is an average sized first school with pupils from Reception to Year 3. The school is extremely popular and is increasing to three-form entry from September 2009. A few of the small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups speak English as an additional language. Attainment on entry is above that usually found. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. These include severe and moderate learning needs, speech and communication difficulties and visual and hearing impairment. The school holds a considerable number of awards including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investor in People status and the Healthy School Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Lilliput Church of England First School is an exceptional school which fulfils its development aims of maintaining '...a relentless focus on ways of improving the learning experience for children'. Judged as outstanding at its last inspection it not only remains so, but has enhanced its high quality practice exceptionally well over the last few years and is very well placed to continue to improve further. Pupils and their parents are highly appreciative of the school, with parents commenting: 'A gold standard start to school life', and 'A fantastic school, a shame to have to leave.' Pupils themselves were bewildered when inspectors asked if there was anything they would like to change about their school, responding, 'Of course not!'

The headteacher is an outstanding leader who wants the very best for pupils and is an expert in achieving this. The very effective leadership team benefits from the excellent support of the deputy headteacher and strong subject leadership so that monitoring and development work is of high quality. Systems for tracking pupils' progress and evaluating the quality of provision are especially good, ensuring that the school can easily pinpoint relative weaknesses and speedily address them. Excellent relationships between staff, governors, pupils and parents mean that all are working very successfully to continually enhance the school's work. Partnerships with a range of other schools and agencies are excellent and support pupils' education and welfare especially well. Governors are exceptionally good at supporting and challenging the school and have been very effective in establishing strong community links. The promotion of community cohesion is excellent, making the school a very happy and harmonious place to be. In addition, it is very outward looking, willingly sharing expertise and resources to support other schools and organisations in the local area and beyond. There is a strong determination to promote this aspect of the school's work even further.

The school is extremely successful in meeting the needs of all its pupils so that across every year group all individuals are challenged and supported exceptionally well to fulfil their potential. This is evident in all activities, including the very successful programmes put in place to support pupils who have specific learning, language, behaviour or physical needs. As a result, all pupils make exceptionally good progress throughout their time in the school. Both at the end of Year 2 and by the time pupils leave, standards are exceptionally high and have been for a number of years, not only in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but also in other subjects such as information and communication technology and design and technology. The new Early Years Foundation Stage team has been very successful in raising standards in Reception, which are well above expectations. The significant strengths apparent in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding mean they are exceptionally well prepared for their future life.

Consistently high quality provision is seen in all the school's work. This is apparent in the outstanding teaching evident throughout the school, in the excellent support provided by classroom assistants and in the way that students and parent helpers are given very good advice on how to help pupils learn. The development of a highly innovative curriculum, capitalising on pupils' interests has been very successful. As one parent commented, 'A fabulous creative curriculum making learning exciting, Lilliput always seems to be ahead of the game.' Staff take every opportunity to make learning fun, which was apparent in the way Year 1 pupils enjoyed solving mathematical problems based around the animals in the 'Jungle Book' story. Tasks are exceptionally well matched to the stage at which individual pupils are working and are very challenging, inspiring them to reach high standards. A practical, investigative and

problem-solving approach is promoted especially well and learning difficult concepts, such as how to measure angles, benefits greatly from this. In addition, pupils are rarely 'told' an answer, but are questioned or prompted to help them discover it for themselves. Staff give pupils very good advice on how they can improve their work and pupils themselves are very skilled at checking on their own progress. In this they often help each other to judge how well they have done, as was observed in the very thoughtful comments made by pupils in a Year 1 lesson on Indian dance. The school's grounds have been especially well designed to support learning and staff make very good use of these. For example, during the inspection pupils were carrying out mathematical and science investigations in the playground, nature trail and bog garden.

Pupils also benefit from the outstanding level of care and support they receive. As one parent, reflecting a typical view, commented, 'The school has a very warm, welcoming and relaxing ethos.' Pupils know that they can approach any adult in the school for help if they need it. The genuine care shown was apparent in the way staff looked after a sick pupil during the inspection. Pupils feel very safe and secure in school, developing an excellent awareness of ways in which they can help keep healthy and safe. Both staff and governors pay rigorous attention to pupils' health and safety and the school fully complies with government guidelines for the safeguarding of pupils. Those pupils who have specific needs are especially well supported and included in school life. Liaison with their parents and support agencies is excellent, with staff continually updating their skills in different support strategies. The school works hard to ensure parents are included where possible in their children's learning and takes very good account of their views. One result of this has been the institution of a very well run before-school club to help working parents.

The high quality education and level of care help pupils to thoroughly enjoy their time in school and they are very keen to attend. The excellent range of after-school clubs and special activities provided by visits or visitors are very popular. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are very friendly, polite and helpful young people who exhibit a real excitement in discovering new things in the world around them. For example, Year 2 pupils were thrilled to discover three newts and a toad sheltering under a log in the bog garden. By the time pupils leave, they have a maturity far beyond their years, apparent in the way that Year 3 pupils reflected on 'why God allows suffering in the world'. Behaviour is excellent, both in lessons and at playtimes, and pupils have a genuine care and concern for each other. They play an outstanding part in school life, for example as school councilors, librarians, sports leaders or playground pals. Through links with schools overseas, pupils develop an excellent awareness of global citizenship.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Due to excellent leadership and management the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved especially well since the school's last inspection. As a result, children are provided with rich, interesting and very challenging activities that help them to make excellent progress. On entry to Reception, children's skills are generally above those expected for this age although their pre-school learning experience varies considerably. To address this staff are very good at assessing children's individual needs and strengths so that activities are especially well designed to help them progress. By the time children move on to Year 1, the vast majority exceed the standards expected, with a good number attaining even higher than this.

Outstanding links are established with parents so that children can settle in quickly and parents are fully involved in supporting their children's learning. As in the rest of the school, staff pay

very good attention to children's welfare so that they feel very safe and secure in their environment. Outstanding pastoral support encourages children to behave exceptionally well and work and play very happily together. The very good balance between activities where children work with an adult and those where they discover things for themselves helps children to quickly develop confidence and independent learning skills. Both teachers and classroom assistants are highly skilled educators so that the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are especially well taught. For example, children quickly became confident at identifying the different sounds they heard in the words of the poem read to them. Excellent use is made of both the indoor and outdoor accommodation to create areas which encourage children to continually discover new things. As a result, there is a busy environment with excellent learning resources and stimulating displays which support all aspects of children's development especially well. Regular assessment clearly identifies the stage at which each child is working and the information is used exceptionally well to help plan the next steps. In addition, children become very skilled at reviewing what they have learnt and considering how they could improve their work next time.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on and extend the range of activities in place to share outstanding practice with other schools.

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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 ¹ 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

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?	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	1
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 learners' needs?	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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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?	1
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**

21 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lilliput Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School, Poole, BH14 8JX

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We very much enjoyed the day we spent with you and were very impressed by all the activities we saw and the way that you helped look after us and answered our questions. I am delighted to tell you that we think your school is excellent. You and your parents told us that also and I am glad that we agree with you.

- Here are some of the especially good things we found out about the school:
- You make excellent progress, and standards in many different subjects are very much better than those found in most schools.
- You love coming to school; your behaviour is excellent and you all get on very well together. You are very mature, caring and thoughtful young people.
- Staff are especially good at adapting activities to help you do well and also to ensure you really enjoy learning.
- All adults who teach you or support you in your group work are very skilled at helping you to do your very best. They take excellent care of you and if you need special help they make sure that you get it.
- Staff are very good at working closely with your parents so they can help you to do work at home.
- Adults keep a very careful check on how well you are doing and so do you too. Together you are very good at identifying how you can do even better.
- You have an excellent headteacher who leads the school exceptionally well. Together with all staff and governors – and you and your parents – she is doing an excellent job in helping your school to keep on improving.
- Here is what we have asked the school to do now:
- Your headteacher, staff and governors have started to share many of the excellent things they do with other schools and we have asked them to carry on doing this. You can help by showing visitors all the wonderful things your school does, like you did for us.

I am so glad that you are really enjoying school and are doing so well. Thank you again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

D Wilkinson

Lead inspector