

# Emmanuel Middle Church of England Voluntary Aided School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113894
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	325909
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Anthony Shield

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9–13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	499
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Noel Baugh
<b>Headteacher</b>	Grahame Webb
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 May 2006
<b>School address</b>	Howe Lane Verwood BH31 6JF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01202 828100
<b>Fax number</b>	01202 828104

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<b>Age group</b>	9–13
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Emmanuel Church of England Middle School is a voluntary aided school, serving the small town of Verwood and its surrounding area. While most pupils are from a White British background, there are small numbers of pupils from a range of other ethnic heritages. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The current headteacher retires at the end of the summer term 2009 and a new headteacher has been appointed from September 2009.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Pupils thrive in this outstanding school. Under the astute and inspirational leadership of the headteacher, the school has gone from strength to strength in recent years. The headteacher has created a culture in which staff and pupils are confident to do well. The school's values, underpinned by its Christian ethos, are widely shared. These are characterised by high aspirations for every pupil and a determination not to accept second best; as one teacher remarked, 'The headteacher won't give up on the children and he won't let us give up on them.'

There are a number of other factors in the success of the school. Pupils take enormous pride in belonging and there is a keen sense of community and of looking after one another. Individuals matter, and the attention given to each and every child is key in making everyone feel special. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Learning is enjoyable, while exemplary behaviour and mature attitudes to work contribute strongly to pupils' outstanding standards and achievement. Standards by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 8 are significantly above average. In fact, many pupils exceed the standards expected at the end of Year 9 in English, mathematics and science. Opportunities for pupils to take the lead and take responsibility are many and ensure that pupils become confident and independent individuals.

Pupils' excellent personal development is encouraged by the school's outstanding care, guidance and support. Pupils are known well by teachers and other staff and they feel safe and secure. Pupils' emotional well-being is given a high priority, and the support for vulnerable pupils is especially good. Pupils' academic progress is monitored carefully and helps to ensure that pupils do as well as they can. Outstanding teaching contributes strongly to pupils' academic progress and personal development and is another key factor in the school's success. Classrooms are lively places and teaching is characterised by energy, pace and high levels of challenge. On occasions, teachers fail to spot opportunities to develop pupils' creativity and limit the potential of pupils to develop their own ideas to the full. The outstanding curriculum offers a rich palette from which pupils can draw inspiration. The range of enrichment activities and clubs is particularly good.

Leadership and management are excellent. Managers at all levels are reflective and self-evaluation is honest, thorough and accurate. There is no complacency and staff are resolute in their determination to seek further improvement. The award of specialist college status in sport has given the school a further boost, although the benefit of many of the planned initiatives has yet to impact. Given what has already been achieved, the school has an outstanding capacity to improve and maintain high standards. Parents are very supportive of the school, and many remarked how much their children enjoy school and spoke warmly of the contribution of the headteacher.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen pupils' creativity and curiosity by developing the curriculum and encouraging more teaching that fires their imagination and sets open-ended tasks.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

From their broadly average starting points on entry in Year 5, pupils make excellent progress. Although progress is less rapid in Years 5 and 6, particularly in mathematics, pupils quickly

make up any lost ground and most exceed their targets by the time they leave in Year 8. The school has entered Year 8 pupils for the standardised national tests normally taken by pupils at the end of Year 9. Results are a clear indication of how well pupils are achieving, with performance in English, mathematics and science above national averages. Attainment on entry is improving and the school is already taking action to raise its game even further. Challenging targets are being used effectively to raise expectations even further. All groups do well and there are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls. Higher-attaining pupils excel and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make exceptional progress towards their targets. Well-targeted support and intervention programmes ensure all pupils do well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's careful approach to ensuring pupils are respected and valued encourages outstanding personal development. In this respect, the careful planning and attention given to the programme for developing the social and emotional aspects of pupils' learning have had a profound effect. Pupils show a sensitive awareness of others and their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development are very well supported by the school's Christian ethos. Assemblies are reflective and respectful occasions which effectively reinforce these values. Pupils' infectious enthusiasm for school is shown in the animated way in which they talk about school lessons, trips and activities. In lessons, pupils are keen to please and they work with very good attitudes. Pupils use equipment and materials safely in technology and science and have a very good awareness of safety in school. They report that bullying is very rare, and that action to deal with it is swift. Their understanding of healthy lifestyles is excellent and pupils are aware of the importance of fitness and exercise. Participation in sports activities is high. Pupils know their views are respected, and the pupils' teaching and learning group in particular offers valuable perspectives on the school's teaching and curriculum. Pupils are proud of the contribution they make both to the school and to the wider community. High levels of communication skills, good teamwork and responsible attitudes mean that pupils are very well prepared for their future beyond school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

An excited hum characterises the learning in classrooms. Planning is carefully executed and tasks are well designed to capture the pupils' interest and attention. Pupils know they will have to work hard. At its best, teaching inspires pupils to ask questions as well as answer them, and to seek ways of finding things out for themselves. A Year 8 history lesson on the Black Death offered pupils just the right balance of teacher input and collaborative learning in which the pupils confidently shared ideas and listened respectfully to the views of others. This emphasis on pupils thinking for themselves and working together in pairs or small groups is particularly effective in promoting good learning skills. Learning is usually well matched to the needs of individual pupils and keeps pupils on their toes. At times, there is a tendency for teachers to do too much and this can close down opportunities for pupils, especially the more able, to express themselves and develop their own ideas. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is effective, and teaching assistants work alongside teachers in providing well-targeted support.

Feedback, both through marking and discussion, is usually good. Pupils know their targets and usually know what they have to do to meet them.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding curriculum affords superb opportunities for pupils to grow and develop. While due weight is given to the teaching of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, the curriculum is made to come alive through the balanced range of subjects in which visits, visitors and enrichment activities play their full part. There is an exceptional range of well supported extra-curricular activities, particularly in sports and the arts. Specialist teaching, often using specialist facilities and rooms, makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress in science, technology and art. Support and intervention programmes for those at risk of falling behind are well targeted. The well-planned personal, social and health programme has made a significant difference to pupils' personal development, particularly their behaviour and attitude in class.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's strong commitment to the nurturing of individual children radiates through all aspects of its provision. This is best seen in its concern for the most vulnerable pupils, where staff show a sensitive concern alongside a belief that every child can achieve well. Statutory requirements for risk assessment, health and safety and child safeguarding are fully met. Transition arrangements with both the first and upper schools are comprehensive and well managed. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are thorough and provide regular points for measuring progress and identifying where extra support is needed. Although primarily the responsibility of subject heads of department, both tutors and heads of year play significant roles in this process. As a result, pupils are well known to a number of staff and their progress and personal development are tracked effectively.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Outstanding leadership by the headteacher has provided strategic vision alongside a hands-on approach much appreciated by staff, pupils and parents alike. He is very well supported by his deputy and all staff at subject and year level. Although the quality of subject reviews is uneven, all leaders have a good understanding of their areas of responsibility. They are encouraged to innovate and take responsibility and relish the opportunity to do so. Self-evaluation is driven by a rigorous and detailed analysis of performance data, the school's own monitoring, and surveys of parental and pupil opinion. The school development plan provides a sharp framework for the future. All managers, including governors, are used to measuring the impact of initiatives taken. In this respect, the governors' audit committee is particularly effective in reviewing and evaluating the success to agreed policies. Challenging targets are used to raise aspirations, especially as the impact of rising attainment on entry in Year 5 works its way through the school. At a local level, the school makes an outstanding contribution to community cohesion, but there is more to be done before its contribution at a national and global level matches this.

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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**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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

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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	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

<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

8 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Emmanuel Middle School, Verwood, Dorset BH31 6JF

- We very much enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming. We particularly enjoyed the cream tea you provided for us. That was a special treat! Thanks also to those of you who took time to talk to us and for helping us during the inspection. We agree with a lot of what you told us and are not surprised that you enjoy coming to school so much. Emmanuel is offering you an outstanding education, and there are lots of good things to say about it.
- You are growing up into sensible and mature young people.
- You take pride in your work and try hard to do your best in lessons.
- You behave exceptionally well, and for the most part are polite and kind to each other.
- You make exceptionally good progress in all your subjects because the teaching is so good and because you are keen to do well.
- Teachers make the learning interesting by offering an excellent range of things to do both in and out of the classroom.
- The school takes very great care of you, ensuring that you feel safe and well looked after.
- The headteacher and all the teachers are working successfully to make your school even better.

We have asked the teachers to ensure that you are given more things to do which fire your imagination and make you think for yourself.

Thank you once again for your help during our visit, and good luck with your work in the future!

Yours sincerely

Tony Shield

Lead inspector