

Dogmersfield Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 116355 |
| Local Authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 326369 |
| Inspection date | 27 February 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Keith Sadler |

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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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 128 |
| 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 | Mrs Elizabeth Waller |
| Headteacher | Miss Susan Wall |
| Date of previous school inspection | 6 December 2005 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Chatter Alley Dogmersfield Hook Hampshire RG27 8SS |

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|--------------------------|------------------|
| Age group | 4–11 |
| Inspection date | 27 February 2009 |
| Inspection number | 326369 |

Telephone number
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Introduction

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

- Why have results in mathematics not been as high as in English and science?
- What are the elements in the school's provision for pupils' care, guidance and support that make it outstanding?
- How well do subject leaders contribute to the school's monitoring and evaluation processes?

Evidence was gathered from the school's analysis of pupils' progress, a scrutiny of samples of their work, and observations of pupils in lessons. Discussions were held with staff, governors and pupils. In addition, the responses of 87 parents' questionnaires were analysed, and their comments taken into account. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but 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

Dogmersfield is much smaller than most primary schools, though it is growing in size and is heavily oversubscribed. A few pupils come from Dogmersfield village, with others coming from nearby villages and towns. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage share a class with Year 1 pupils.

Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is average. Most of these have either behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, or speech, language and communication issues. The school has gained the Sports Activemark award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Dogmersfield school provides a good standard of education. Its pupils achieve well because good leadership and management ensure that the school's provision is of good quality. The school promotes pupils' personal development well, so this is also good. The school has improved well since the previous inspection and this demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.

Almost all the families in the school completed the parents' questionnaire, and these show that parents are overwhelmingly supportive. They are unanimous in saying that their children enjoy school, are safe, and that staff take good account of their children's views. Parents were very positive in the comments they made, as exemplified by one who wrote: 'The children always come first. The school offers a friendly, open environment which actively encourages my child's individuality. My son cried recently when I had to pick him up from school due to sickness, because he protested about leaving.' Pupils achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. Those that find learning hard, or have particular behavioural support needs, also make good progress. This is because their learning needs are quickly identified and they are supported well. The school tracks pupils' progress carefully and makes very good use of subsequent information to ensure that future work is targeted effectively to accelerate learning. This has helped to raise achievement and has resulted in standards in national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 being strengthened from previously above average levels to the current exceptionally high levels. This improvement project successfully concentrated on ensuring that pupils who find learning easier achieve particularly well. In consequence, the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics has improved. Progress in Years 3-6 is good, and pupils also achieve well in these classes. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average and occasionally, for instance in science in 2007, are exceptionally high. Standards have improved in mathematics because the school has addressed previous weaknesses well. It has focused on strengthening pupils' practical skills, and the curriculum has been reorganised to provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their calculation skills in problem-solving activities. As a result, standards in mathematics no longer lag behind those in English and science. Current Year 6 pupils are on track to attain standards that are well above average.

The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. She is rightly much admired by parents and governors because she is deeply committed to the school and its improvement. She is supported well by the team of staff, who together provide clear direction for the school. Teamwork is good, with staff being mutually supportive, and morale is high. Teachers with subject responsibilities carry them out well. They help and support other staff in their areas and also make a good contribution to the school's accurate self-evaluation processes. For example, the science subject leader has led a successful improvement project to strengthen pupils' investigative skills. This was undertaken because analysis of work and the curriculum showed that too little opportunity was being provided for practical work. This is not now the case. Governance is good, with governors maintaining regular and purposeful contact with the school. Their close monitoring of the school's provision enables them to ensure that they meet their responsibilities well. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. One particular feature is the new hall. Not only has this enabled the school to meet statutory requirements for the teaching of the physical education curriculum, but it has also been a focus for linking with the community. The school community raised over £50,000 to build the hall,

which can now be used as a focus for the community. This has aided staff and governors in being able to strengthen community cohesion, which is now good.

The inspection confirms the school's view that the quality of teaching is most often good. There have been improvements, particularly in the quality of pupils' learning, since the previous inspection. This has led to pupils being clear about not only what is being taught, but also what they have to do to meet lesson objectives. Teachers ensure that there is always a positive climate for learning because they manage the pupils' behaviour exceptionally well, so that relationships are consistently positive. This atmosphere leads to classrooms being quiet and purposeful. Teachers' questioning skills are of good quality, and this enables them to ensure that activities are matched well to pupils' learning needs. Although some teaching is outstanding, on occasion lessons are not always conducted at a suitable pace and pupils are not sufficiently well engaged in their learning, so their progress slows.

There have been clear improvements in the care, guidance and support provided for pupils. These areas are now outstanding. All child protection procedures and safeguarding arrangements are in place and meet current regulations. Pastoral support is excellent because the staff know the pupils' needs well and care for them particularly well. The very positive atmosphere, based on the school's positive Christian ethos, enables the school to provide a safe learning environment for pupils. Taken together, these factors promote good personal development. Behaviour is good both in classes and around the school. Pupils enjoy school, and they have a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. They are given a good grounding in citizenship and in contributing to the school community through taking on responsibilities, such as being members of the influential school council, team captains, and 'huff and puff' monitors. Within the local and the wider communities, pupils make good use of the many opportunities provided for them to make a useful contribution. These range from regular charitable fundraising to supporting and developing links with a school in Uganda. Pupils are prepared well for their move to secondary school.

There has been a marked improvement in the curriculum since the previous inspection which was limited previously due to the lack of a hall. The curriculum is well organised and enriched by a wide range of additional activities, including residential visits and many extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport. This is recognised in that the school holds the Sports Activemark. Subjects are generally linked together well to make learning meaningful. However, work in information and communication technology (ICT) is not consistently planned for across other subjects, although the school is working to improve this.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class with levels of skills and knowledge that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. The commitment and care shown by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and her staff, including home visits and the early links established with parents, ensure that children settle quickly into school. Children have good opportunities to visit the school and meet staff before they start, which helps them to feel extremely secure. As a result, they get off to a good start. The special needs coordinator visits pre-school providers where children with specific learning needs have been identified, so ensuring that provision is immediately made for them when they start school.

Children achieve well. At the end of Reception, the majority are working securely within the learning goals expected of them, with a considerable number fully meeting or exceeding them.

A particular focus on sounds and letters and more opportunities for role play and writing are helping children to quickly master the early stages of literacy. Activities that encourage fine motor skills are further aiding children's control of writing implements. Children are very happy in the setting, get on well with each other, and quickly grow in confidence.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. There is a good range of resources. Over the last year, the outdoor area has been developed to provide further opportunities to enhance children's learning, especially with regard to independent play. Planning shows that there is a good balance between teacher-directed learning and opportunities for children to explore and play independently, generally linked to themes, such as 'The Jungle'. It shows what children are expected to gain from these different activities, but assistants do not always assess this well enough in relation to the different areas of learning and the progress that children are making.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the pace of learning by making sure that all lessons are lively and engaging.
- Ensure the use of ICT is effectively enhancing learning across all subjects.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 2 |
| 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? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress | 2 |

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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 2 |

The quality of provision

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|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 2 |
| 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? | 1 |

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| 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 Dogmersfield Church of England Primary School, Hampshire, RG27 8SS

I am writing to let you know what we found when we visited your school. Thank you for helping us so well and making us feel welcome. We really enjoyed talking with you and finding out about your school. We can see why you enjoy school so much, because yours is a good school. These are the things that are best about it.

- You make good progress in your learning, enjoy school, behave well and want to do your best.
- The staff take excellent care of you and make sure that you are safe and very well looked after.
- You know the importance of eating the right things and staying fit and healthy.
- Your teachers do a good job. Teaching is good and you enjoy learning.
- Your headteacher is doing a good job, too. She is supported very well by all the other adults in the school.

We have asked the school to continue to focus on two particular things in order to get better.

- Improve the pace of learning by making sure that teachers make all lessons lively and interesting.
- Plan to use ICT much more in all the subjects you are learning.

You can help by making sure you work as hard as possible to meet your targets.

With best wishes.

Yours faithfully

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector