

# Puriton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123694
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	327967
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul 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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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	174
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>	David Cather
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gina Harris
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 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>	Rowlands Rise Puriton Bridgwater TA7 8BT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01278 683630
<b>Fax number</b>	01278 683630

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school serves a medium-sized village and surrounding area. It has Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision for children aged four in the Reception class. Almost all pupils are of White British ethnicity. The proportion with learning difficulties is average. In the main these are moderate learning difficulties.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the standards attained and the achievement of pupils in writing and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.

Much of the school's work is satisfactory, and some is good. The EYFS (Reception class) provides a good start to children's education and they make good progress. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and in 2008 pupils at the end of Year 2 attained much improved standards in all areas.

In 2008, a school-wide emphasis on improving reading, including a more precise approach to the teaching of phonics, led to higher standards and good progress in this area by pupils of all ages. However, standards in writing and mathematics for older pupils were below average and did not improve, and progress in these subjects was inadequate, leading to inadequate achievement overall.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Much of the teaching in the EYFS and in Years 1 and 2 is good, with well-planned activities that pupils find interesting. Where teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT), their pupils make good progress. However, in Years 3 to 6 there have been some weaknesses in the teaching of writing and mathematics, which the school's monitoring systems have not until recently identified clearly enough. Lessons observed during the inspection show that the weaknesses are being tackled, but it is too early in the school year to evaluate the impact of this on pupils' progress. Marking, although satisfactory, is of variable quality. Teaching assistants are used appropriately to support pupils with moderate learning difficulties, hence these pupils make satisfactory progress. The most able pupils do well, due to the good support they receive.

The school is at an early stage in tracking each pupil's progress and the use teachers make of this information in planning work is variable. The previous targets set by the school, although challenging, have rarely been achieved because pupils' learning needs have not been precisely identified and met. There is evidence that this is changing. All staff have very recently been trained on the analysis and use of data. The targets set for 2009, while demanding, are more realistic and leaders and managers show an understanding of how they can be achieved.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their excellent understanding of how to keep healthy, noted at the last inspection, has been maintained. They behave well, following a period when behaviour was less good, and their attendance, satisfactory at the last inspection, has improved and is now good. A parent's comment that 'the children have gained a great sense of community from the school', is shared by others. Cultural development is a strength and pupils have good opportunities to mix in the community and with pupils from other schools, so the school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Pupils are cared for well by the school and are set targets to improve their work, but the variability in the quality of marking and in the identification of their precise needs means that care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall.

Leaders and managers have a broadly accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have taken successful action to improve some important aspects of the school's work, for

example in reading. Current plans have the potential to bring about improvement in writing and in mathematics, but it is still too early to see the results.

Middle leaders are generally effective, especially so in the EYFS and in Years 1 and 2. Some new appointments clearly have great potential, although the individuals concerned currently lack experience. Because of the weaknesses in writing and mathematics, there has been insufficient improvement overall since the last inspection, but recent improvements show that the school now has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children are given a good start in the Foundation Stage. They come to school with skills that are in line with expectations for their age and make good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they begin Year 1, most reach the expected levels for their age and a significant number exceed them. Good teaching and interesting activities focus on developing skills and building up children's self-confidence. Children enjoy their time in school and work and play well together. The curriculum is well planned and good use is made of outdoor provision and the environment to enrich learning. There are good links with parents, who are kept well informed of their children's progress. The school is rightly focusing on raising attainment in linking sounds and letters, in writing, and in the mathematical area of calculations.

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

- Raise standards and improve pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics, in Years 3 to 6, by the use of more precise monitoring and evaluation, to identify where teaching and learning needs to be improved.
- Improve the consistency of marking and the use of assessment to show pupils how to improve their work.
- Ensure that the strengths in leadership evident in the EYFS and in Years 1 and 2 are developed throughout the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Children start school with the expected levels of skill and knowledge. They make good progress in the EYFS. At the end of Year 2 in 2007, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly average. Preliminary figures for 2008 show considerable improvement, especially in reading where one third of pupils are attaining above average levels which represents good progress. At the end of Year 6 in 2007, pupils attained broadly average standards in English and mathematics and below average standards in science. However, their progress from Years 3 to 6 was slow. Preliminary data for 2008 shows a significant improvement in standards of reading, with an above average proportion attaining the national standard and nearly half of pupils attaining the higher level. However, this improvement was not reflected in writing or mathematics, where about one third of pupils did not attain the national standard. Pupils' limited progress in these areas is also reflected in the work that was available to inspectors for scrutiny. In ICT, physical education (PE) and in art, standards are above those expected. Overall, however, pupils' achievement is inadequate.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and safe, reinforced by healthy snacks and meals, and plenty of opportunities for exercise and sport. Their understanding of how to stay safe is appropriate to their age, older pupils knowing, for example, the dangers posed by Internet use and substance abuse. They behave well and show consideration to adults and other pupils. Their attendance has improved and is now above average. They enjoy school in most respects although they sometimes become bored in lessons, for instance when they spend too long listening to the teacher. They have good opportunities to take responsibility in school, as school council members or as play leaders for younger children, and in the wider community through productions and charity work. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils play a big part in thought provoking assemblies, and they have a good understanding of, and respect for, the range of cultures and beliefs in the world. The development of the skills they will need later is satisfactory. The skills of ICT, teamwork and cooperation develop well, but the development of literacy and numeracy skills, especially in Years 3 to 6 is less effective.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

In most lessons, especially in Reception to Year 2, teaching is good and hence pupils make good progress. Here, teachers are now planning work that is better matched to pupils' needs, tasks are interesting and ICT is used well. However, there are some weaknesses in the teaching of writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. There is insufficient focus on developing the style and structure of pupils' writing, as well as their handwriting skills. In mathematics, pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply their knowledge and solve problems.

Where work is suitably demanding, pupils engage well, as when selecting numbers to complete sums to 1000 in Year 3. The quality of marking is variable, in the best examples it shows pupils how to improve their work but this is not always the case. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils who need help to complete the task, or in teaching a specialism such as ICT, but are less effective when pupils spend lengthy periods listening to the teacher. There is some evidence that the teaching of writing and mathematics has improved since the start of the current school year, but there is as yet insufficient evidence to show that this is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

## Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum has a number of strengths. These include the provision for the EYFS, the very successful work to improve phonics teaching and hence standards in reading, and the range of additional activities especially in sport, and of additional subjects such as Spanish. In some areas, good work has been done to link subjects of the curriculum, such as in Year 4 where an exciting classroom environment supports the study of the Second World War through a wide range of activities. Themed weeks, such as 'global week', are popular with pupils and parents. Weaknesses remain in some classes in planning the curriculum to meet individual pupils' needs

and in developing their skills of handwriting, and in the application of numeracy and literacy skills in their day-to-day work.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Most parents rightly feel their children are cared for well. All requirements for child protection and the safeguarding of pupils are in place. Pupils in the EYFS, and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, receive good care, guidance and support. The quality of academic guidance is satisfactory overall. There are variations in the quality of assessment and in its use to help pupils identify what they need to learn next. Pupils are set targets, but these are not always precise enough to be of help. Parents generally feel the school communicates with them well, but a small number believe that the school does not always listen to their concerns.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leaders and managers have correctly identified strengths and weaknesses and in a number of cases they have taken successful action to correct the latter. These include improving standards of reading, behaviour and attendance. While weaknesses in writing and mathematics among older pupils have been correctly identified, action to correct these has been too slow. Until recently, monitoring has not focussed with sufficient precision on identifying and correcting weaknesses in teaching or in the use of assessment to identify individual pupils' learning needs.

Middle leaders are generally effective, such as in the EYFS and in supporting gifted and talented pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Newly appointed leaders, such as for numeracy, have great potential but currently need more time to develop their roles. The headteacher has recently rightly delegated some of her many responsibilities and is now in a better position to provide strategic leadership. The governing body, following a year of development, is now in a satisfactory position to support the school and to hold it to account.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

<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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	3
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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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?	Yes

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Puriton Primary School, Bridgwater, TA7 8BT

We very much enjoyed meeting you and seeing your work when we visited your school recently. We want to thank you for spending time with us. We especially enjoyed talking to you as we found you confident, friendly and able to express your views very clearly. We also enjoyed Year 4's Second World War classroom.

- Much of the education you get at school is satisfactory and some of it is good, but the standards that older pupils reach in writing and maths are not good enough and the school needs some extra help to improve in this area. Here are some of the other things we found out:
  - Children in the Reception class get a good start to their school life.
  - Teaching is satisfactory. Many lessons are interesting and fun. Teachers use ICT very well. Those of you who need it get good help from the teaching assistants. Sometimes you spend too long listening to the teacher, or good ideas you have are not followed up.
  - Your reading has improved a lot recently.
  - You know a lot about how to keep healthy and safe.
  - You behaviour is good and we were particularly impressed by the way you listen to each other and to your teachers, and by the way you help other people.
  - Your attendance is good and it has improved recently.
  - You told us that you mostly enjoy school, especially all the different activities on offer, including sport and the residential visits.
  - You are cared for well and teachers give you targets, but there is room for improvement in the way these are used to help you learn.
  - The headteacher, other staff and governors lead the school in a satisfactory way.
- We have asked the school to improve three things:
  - To make sure you make as much progress in writing and mathematics as you have in reading.
  - To make sure that teachers assess and mark your work in a way that shows you how to improve it next time.
  - To make sure some of the successful ideas in Reception and Years 1 and 2 are used in other years.

You can also help by politely asking the teacher if you do not understand how to improve your work. Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler Lead Inspector