

# Curry Mallet Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123751
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	327978
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Steffi Penny HMI

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	76
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>	Paul Jervis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Whitman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 June 2006
<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>	Lower Street Curry Mallet Taunton TA3 6TA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01823 480421

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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**Fax number**

01823 480421

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated: pupil achievement; how well pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being; pupils' awareness about how children and their families from other backgrounds and heritages contribute to life in Great Britain; the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision.

Evidence was gathered from the analysis of pupils' test results, observation of lessons, parents' questionnaires, discussions with the senior leadership team, staff, governors and pupils, and scrutiny of samples of pupils' work. 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, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a very small village school. There are three classes each having a mixed-age range. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and none is learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities varies annually and is around average. The vast majority of these children have moderate learning difficulties.

The school has achieved the International School Award, Healthy Schools status and the Sports Activemark. It was a regional winner in the 'Total Green School Awards' this year and is recognised by the RSPB as a 'bird-friendly school'. It is currently working towards Eco-Schools silver status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Parents say 'This is a very open school with a great community spirit that is at the heart of village life', and they are right! The exceptional care, guidance and support given to all pupils by this good school results in their outstanding personal development and well-being.

Year groups are small. In the round, pupils start with broadly average knowledge, understanding and skills. Throughout the school, pupils make at least good progress and reach standards that are above average. Some pupils make outstanding progress, in particular those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are vulnerable to underachievement. This is because pupils who might struggle with their learning are quickly identified and highly effective support is provided by the adults in the school. The school uses the services of other providers and agencies exceptionally well to help them do this. For example, all adults have been trained in signing techniques that in turn contributes to the school's outstanding inclusive practice. Other highly effective partnerships help smooth the transition for pupils to the next stage of their education.

Teaching is well planned with activities that encourage independent learning and prepares pupils extremely well for their next school and for living in the modern world. This was clearly evident in the lesson observed where pupils took on the real-life roles of planners and accountants when designing a fairground. In other lessons observed, pupils frequently used the interactive whiteboards themselves to enhance their understanding or used real money to improve their counting and negotiating skills. This also increased the levels of enjoyment and achievement in lessons. Pupils told inspectors that learning is always made fun but that they understand the serious purpose behind lessons and that they come to school to learn.

Pupils know their group and class targets well. Older pupils are clear about how well they are performing in relation to National Curriculum levels and what they needed to do to improve. Staff frequently share individual targets with pupils verbally. However, there are missed opportunities for these to be recorded more often so that pupils can reflect on their learning and for the targets to be shared with parents.

Pupils have an outstanding understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. As one parent aptly wrote, 'Pupils learn to respect each other, all people, and indeed other creatures and the environment.' The pupils respect other people's property and ideas having a clear sense of right and wrong; they appreciate opportunities for quiet reflection. A good example of this is on Friday mornings where they engage in free writing in classrooms gently lit by candlelight with soft music playing in the background. The Arts are an essential feature of school life. Working with a local artist, pupils celebrated their local community and life on the Somerset Levels through the production of beautiful ceramics. In assembly, pupils sang sweetly and melodiously and, in the music lessons observed, whole classes of pupils engaged in vibrant Japanese 'Taiko' drumming directed by the specialist music teacher.

Pupils play a big part in school life. The school council has control of its own funds, some of which came from their enterprising victory in the Total Green School Awards. When children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, they have a buddy partner from Year 5. This helps new children feel welcome and gives older children responsibilities that they are proud and eager to take on. Pupils all speak of their sense of security in the tightly knit learning community which also provides a home from home.

Parents are also actively involved in the school by running a healthy tuck shop which supports pupils to make healthy choices. The school provides extensive outdoor activities and dedicated

specialist areas including: an area equipped for music making; gardens for each class; a full size authentic tepee, a wildlife area with pond, a bird hide, bug and beastie homes, and a pod (created by the pupils with a local artist using recycled materials), as well as general playing and sitting areas.

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher has ensured the school continues to develop and spearhead new initiatives. This is clearly demonstrated in the improved physical environment including an excellent newly built library. Leaders at all levels of the school strive for further improvement and all staff work together as a unified team. The systems to support and safeguard pupils are robust. There are very strong elements in the school's contribution to community cohesion, particularly in the school's own, local and global communities. Prime examples are the work it does with the village, with local schools and also with one in Zambia. Pupils' understanding of how children and their families from other areas, backgrounds and heritages contribute to life in Great Britain is less developed. The school is well aware of this and has already initiated activities that will resolve this relative weakness.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children make good progress and develop their competence as learners well in all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly in line with typical age-related expectations. Teachers and learning support assistants regularly assess their needs and their progress and know the children well. This enables staff to tailor support and guidance where it is needed most. This was clearly evident in the sessions that were observed during the inspection. Staff provide stimulating activities which mix play and learning in an engaging way. The curriculum, resources and pleasant learning environment, indoors and outdoors, offers plenty of scope to develop skills. Approachable adults and caring older pupils foster children's positive relationships, and consequently they talk and interact well. Good leadership and management secure a good start for all and are outstanding in including children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage is carefully and sensitively managed through a judicious balance of time spent exclusively and time integrated with Year 1.

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

- Ensure that individual targets are recorded more often so that pupils can reflect on their learning and also so that they can be better shared with parents.
- Ensure that pupils have greater awareness about how children and their families from other backgrounds and heritages contribute to life in Great Britain.

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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?	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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### 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?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	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>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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	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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Curry Mallet Church of England Primary School, Somerset, TA3 6TA

Thank you for your very warm welcome when we came to inspect your school. This letter is to let you know what we found out. We very much enjoyed seeing you in lessons, looking at your work and hearing your melodious singing and vibrant drumming. A big thank you to those of you who talked and shared with us what makes your school so good.

- You all work hard, make at least good progress and leave school with higher than average standards.
- Those children who find learning difficult make excellent progress. This is because of the support that the adults provide. Just as important is the help and comfort you give to each other.
- You behave extremely well both in lessons and around the school. We were very impressed at how the older children were looking after the younger ones.
- All the staff really work well together and as a result, your school is very friendly. As you told us, this has also helped make sure that you feel safe and secure.

You have such wonderful adults who are always looking for ways to make your school an even better place to be! We have asked them to do the following two things to make your school even better.

- Ensure that your individual targets are recorded more often so that you can reflect on your learning and also so that they can be better shared with your parents.
- Make sure that you get to better understand the lives of other children and their families from different backgrounds and heritages who live in Great Britain.

I know you have a great website so if you want to see the full report please go to ours which is at this link: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Thank you for being so polite and helpful during the visit. I hope that you continue to enjoy your learning and do your best. Please thank your parents for the helpful comments they made on the questionnaires.

With my very best wishes for your future.

Yours faithfully

Steffi Penny

Her Majesty's Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills