

# Shaftesbury Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113778
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	331189
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Townsend HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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)	313
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>	Howard Parfitt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Larter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 December 2007
<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>	Wincombe Lane Shaftesbury SP7 8PZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01747 852901

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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**Fax number**

01747 852901

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## Introduction

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector carried out the inspection.

## Description of the school

This primary school, which is larger than average, is situated in the North Dorset market town of Shaftesbury. It draws pupils from the local community, in which there is a mix of private and council owned housing. The majority of pupils are of White British cultural heritage. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. When the school was last inspected in December 2007, it was placed in special measures. The school was asked to make improvements in terms of achievement and standards, teaching and learning, academic guidance and leadership and management. Following a period in which the school had an acting headteacher, a permanent appointment was made. The headteacher took up his post in February 2008.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. It provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Focused leadership and effective management have led to key improvements. Close checks are being made on pupils' progress. Teaching, learning and the curriculum have been carefully evaluated and developed.

Such changes have led to standards rising from well below average to at least average levels. Pupils in Year 6 made good progress last year from their lower starting points and standards were average. Inspection evidence shows the oldest pupils are on track to meet challenging targets this year. Achievement, however, is satisfactory overall. Whilst teaching and learning have improved and are satisfactory, unevenness in the quality of classroom practice within year groups means that rates of progress vary. Intervention programmes for pupils at risk of not reaching expected levels are helping them make good progress this year. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also achieve well. An improving curriculum is helping all pupils apply their emerging writing skills to their studies in all subjects. There is an increased focus on practical learning, including investigative science. These initiatives are helping raise standards further, although their full impact is yet to be seen.

Pupils' personal development and well-being continue to be well supported and are good. Attendance and behaviour are good, as is spiritual, social and moral development. Pupils clearly enjoy school. They feel secure there and have a good personal awareness of how to keep safe and live a healthy life. They make a good contribution to life within school and in the local community. However, links with communities beyond this are more limited and pupils' cultural development is satisfactory rather than good. The pastoral care and support for pupils' welfare are good. Systems for sharing learning targets with each child are much improved and adapted to suit each subject and age group. Teachers implement the agreed approaches consistently and diligently.

The new headteacher is providing decisive leadership and has effective management skills. He has built upon the foundations for improvement established by the acting headteacher, creating a team that now shares his drive for improvement. Systems for self-evaluation are good and all leaders and governors contribute effectively to these and to improvement planning. The school recognises the need to involve subject leaders even further in identifying and sharing best practice in lessons in order to promote greater consistency in teaching. Parents have recognised that the school is focused on raising standards and continue to offer their full support. Since the last inspection, enhancements to the quality of provision have helped raise standards and eradicate underachievement. The staff team is increasingly leading change with less external support and has good internal capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Most children start in the Reception class with the skills typical for their age in most areas of learning. They make satisfactory progress and, by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, most reach broadly expected levels. They progress well from lower than average starting points in reading and writing to start Year 1 with average skills in these areas. The positive partnerships formed with parents and the good levels of care they receive help children to achieve well in

terms of their personal development. Their welfare is promoted effectively within a safe and secure environment. Careful assessments are made of each child's progress over time.

The provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Although a varied range of practical activities are on offer, too often these are adult led and tightly structured rather than child initiated. This reduces the potential for children to learn through play creatively and independently. The outdoor area, although attractive, lacks all weather protection and children's daily access to it is sometimes limited. The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactorily led and managed. The coordinator has clear plans to increase children's involvement in planning and the extent of child-led learning.

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

- Secure good achievement for all pupils by increasing the consistency of teaching and learning across the school.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders in evaluating and developing classroom practice.
- Raise pupils' awareness and understanding of different faiths and cultures within communities across the United Kingdom and globally.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of under-performance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Teacher assessments in Year 2 and national test results in Year 6 showed that attainment dropped to below and sometimes well below average in 2007. However, standards have risen since 2008 and the progress that pupils are making is accelerating. Pupils in Year 2 reached above average levels in reading and writing last year and average standards in numeracy. This year, standards are at least in line with those seen nationally in Year 2. Pupils in Year 6 reached average standards in English, mathematics and science last year at both the age expected and higher Level 5. This represents good progress in relation to their lower starting points. However, the pattern across other year groups is too variable, reflecting the uneven quality of teaching and learning that is still apparent. Although pupils in Years 3 to 5 currently make good progress in mathematics, achievement in English and science is satisfactory. Nonetheless, clear improvements are apparent in terms of pupils' attainment in these subjects too. Most pupils who had fallen behind in their acquisition of basic skills and those with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. This is due to the effective support they receive to help them improve their reading, spelling and number calculation skills. There is now a sharper focus on scientific enquiry work in lessons which is beginning to have a positive impact on standards in the subject.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend well. Their social, moral and spiritual development is good. In an assembly seen during the inspection, they were able to reflect on what heaven might look like and contribute to a painting of it. Behaviour is good. Pupils act in a safe and considerate manner in school. They feel safe, well cared for and confident they know to whom to turn with a problem. They have a good understanding of how to stay healthy, the importance

of a good diet and regular exercise. In a good lesson seen, pupils talked confidently on the issue of genetically modified foods. They make a good contribution to community. Pupils feel they have a voice in the school and can, and do, make their views known. For example, their feedback to the headteacher has led to an increase in the prevalence of healthy snacks. The recent Red Nose Day talent show, other fundraising initiatives and regular local performances by the school band and choir indicate their close involvement in the community. However, their cultural development is satisfactory rather than good because links with communities beyond the locality are limited. Pupils are satisfactorily developing workplace and other skills, including those in information and communication technology (ICT) and are appropriately prepared for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. The proportion of good teaching is increasing. Pupils show good attitudes to learning and they behave and concentrate well in lessons, with many now developing the skills to become independent learners. Relationships are good in class and pupils work well together. Teachers make the learning objectives clear to pupils in lessons. Work in books is carefully marked and pupils receive clear advice on how to improve further. Pupils requiring additional help, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, receive good support from teachers and their assistants which enables them to make good progress, especially with their basic skills. However, the quality of teaching within year groups across the school is too variable. In the stronger lessons seen, teachers use their subject knowledge confidently to involve all pupils with visual demonstrations using computer whiteboards, effective questioning, and tasks that are well matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities. Where lessons are less effective, the pace of learning drops because teachers talk for too long and cursory questioning limits opportunities for all pupils to respond in depth.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is enriched by well chosen educational visits, visitors to school, and an increased emphasis on practical learning. A good range of extra-curricular activities is on offer. Provision for the teaching of basic skills is satisfactory but improving. There are regular opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills in learning in other subjects, for example to write descriptions of their time on a visit to Swanage or to explain their science enquiry findings through extended reports incorporating tables and line graphs. Comprehensive schemes of work are in place for other subjects, such as geography and art. However, the progression of key skills, knowledge and understanding pupils need to acquire and develop in these subjects is not emphasised enough in the plans. Also, opportunities for pupils to learn more about world cultures are limited.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Great care is given to promoting all aspects of pupils' health and safety. Child protection arrangements are robust and the vetting of staff to ensure their suitability to work with children is thorough. The pastoral care of each individual pupil is good. Those with learning difficulties

and/or disabilities are identified early and supported well. Teaching assistants are specifically trained and provide effective one-to-one and group guidance for pupils with learning needs and physical and emotional difficulties. There is regular liaison with external support agencies and parents. Academic guidance is significantly improved since the last inspection and is good. Pupils know their targets and how to achieve them. Those in Year 6 also know about their current National Curriculum levels of achievement and those they are working towards.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by the senior management team. The staff team is united behind his vision for the school. Systems for tracking the progress of pupils, especially those who were previously underachieving, have been sharpened. The staff are working very well together to improve the quality of provision and have, for example, enhanced the accuracy of assessments and the usefulness of marking. Subject leaders have been closely involved in improving approaches to planning and establishing pupils' learning needs, although their involvement in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching is at an early stage. Governors are closely involved in the school's monitoring programme and are conversant with the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Community cohesion is satisfactory. The school recognises that its links with communities across the United Kingdom and globally are underdeveloped.



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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?	3
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?	3
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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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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>	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	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?	2

## 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	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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?	No

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

26 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shaftesbury C of E Primary School, Shaftesbury SP7 8PZ

Thank you for welcoming us when we came to visit your school recently to see how well you are doing. We are pleased to report that the school no longer needs the extra help called 'special measures'. It is a satisfactory and improving school.

Here are some of the best things about your school

- Standards have improved a lot and are now at the level they should be for children of your age.
- You enjoy school, attend and behave well and make a good contribution to life there and within the local community.
- You know a great deal about how to stay safe and lead a healthy life.
- Those of you who have difficulty in learning quickly are given good support.
- Your headteacher leads the school very well and, with other leaders, has a clear plan for how to make the school even better.

These are the things we think the school should do to be even better

- Ensure more lessons help all of you move forward in your learning at a good pace.
- Give teachers with particular expertise in each subject more time to visit your classrooms and help each other develop and use new ideas.
- Adapt curriculum plans so that you study in more depth the cultures and customs of different people across the country and world.

Thank you once again for your welcome and the help you gave us in our work. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours faithfully

David Townsend Her Majesty's Inspector