

# Porter Croft Sheffield Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107121
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	336814
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Pattinson

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	126
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Bentley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Linda West
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Pomona Street Sheffield South Yorkshire S11 8JN
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2662132
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<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@portercroft.sheffield.sch.uk

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## **Introduction**

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited six lessons, talked to a number of parents and held meetings with the Chair of Governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at (among other documentation), the school's development plan, the 'Raising Attainment' Plan, the latest School Improvement Partner's annual report to governors, the most recent national and school data on attainment and progress, the latest attendance figures and a sample of children's work from the Early Years Foundation Stage as well as pupils' books from Years 2, 4 and 6 in English, mathematics and science. Documentation on safeguarding was also scrutinised. In addition, 33 parental questionnaires were analysed, along with questionnaires returned by staff and pupils.

- how well different groups and individual pupils are making progress and how the school is seeking to raise standards
- how effective teaching is and whether weaknesses are holding pupils back
- how well the curriculum provides for the wide range of ethnicities in the school
- how well issues from the last inspection have been addressed
- how effective new and established leaders and managers are in driving forward school improvements.

## **Information about the school**

Porter Croft is a smaller than average Church of England school serving an inner-city area of Sheffield. It draws its intake both from the immediate vicinity and from further afield. The school has a very diverse population with pupils from 21 different ethnic heritages and a much higher percentage than nationally speak English as an additional language. Many more pupils enter and leave the school between Reception and Year 6 than in most other schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above what is typical. A well above average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has achieved Healthy School status, a Gold Sports Award and the Active Sportsmark since the last inspection. Since then, the acting headteacher has also become permanent and a new deputy headteacher and some new staff have been appointed.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Porter Croft Church of England Primary School is a good school, which has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is well regarded by parents who value the close links the school makes with them. 'Staff are always welcoming and supportive and work hard to improve the life chances of their pupils', is an apt parental comment. The school works increasingly successfully to meet the diverse needs of the school population and overcome the barriers to learning presented by many of its pupils. The new leadership team's good leadership, effective teamwork, mostly good teaching, and rigorous approaches to the care, guidance and support of pupils are other positive features. As a result, pupils' needs are well met and most achieve well. However, some pupils, such as some for whom English is a second language, mostly Black African pupils, and a few more able pupils, perform less well. This is because work is not always matched to their precise needs to help them make good progress.

Pupils like school and almost all behave well. All feel safe and know how to keep healthy. Achievement for all pupils, including the significant number with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is good. Children enter the Reception class with skills, knowledge and understanding that are below those typical for their age. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they have made up lost ground and attainment in English, science and mathematics is close to average standards. Nevertheless, the need to drive up standards remains the school's 'number one' priority. A strong feature of life in school is the way that pupils from many different ethnicities get along well. Community cohesion is strong. Local, national and global links help consolidate further pupils' multicultural understanding. Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins the satisfactory curriculum which, nevertheless, sometimes lacks excitement.

Improvements since the last inspection have been good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are 'the driving forces' behind the steady improvements and accelerating progress. Priorities are the right ones and are being pursued rigorously. New leadership roles have helped develop accountability and ownership of what the school needs to do to improve. The governing body supports and challenges the school satisfactorily, but has not been active enough in monitoring provision. Attendance is low, despite the school working hard to improve it.

The current capacity for sustained improvement is judged to be good. This is because:

- there is a strong ethos for improvement and growing strengths in many areas of the school's work
- data from national tests and assessments are analysed thoroughly and progress is

checked often so that teachers can give help as soon as it is needed

- senior leaders have a clear understanding of what are the school's strengths and areas for development and have established a rigorous agenda for continued improvement.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:
  - ensuring all groups, especially some for whom English is an additional language, mainly Black African, and some more able pupils, make the same good progress as most pupils
  - ensuring that teachers always challenge pupils and provide enough time for them to work independently
  - increasing the regularity of lesson monitoring and sharpening the focus on the learning of different groups
  - providing an exciting curriculum which is fully relevant to pupils' diverse needs and always inspires them to learn.
- Improve the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work by the governing body to enable it to more effectively contribute to school improvement.
- Raise levels of attendance.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

<b>2</b>
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Pupils enjoy most of their lessons. They are keen to learn when lessons interest and challenge them, and they have time to work at their own rate. However, a minority of pupils, especially some for whom English is a second language, most notably Black African pupils, and some more able pupils make satisfactory, rather than good, progress. This is because work is not always matched to their precise needs and there is not enough support for them, such as through the use of dual language prompts, to help boost their learning. Nevertheless, achievement is good for most pupils as they move through the school because of good leadership and teaching and mostly good provision. Attainment has been gradually rising over recent years from well below average levels in both key stages. As a result, the gap between the school's results and national averages is steadily closing. Standards are now broadly average by the end of Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science, an indication of the good progress many pupils are making, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils are well aware of the benefits of regular exercise and know about healthy eating. They feel safe because, 'teachers keep a close eye on you', and know who to turn to if they have a problem. Pupils have a voice in the school through the active school council and the work of its play leaders and peer mediators. Support for charities and for each other, help them to develop their knowledge of citizenship. Their average attainment in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and low attendance, which impacts on the

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learning of some pupils, mean that pupils are prepared adequately for the next stage of their education. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils know right from wrong, work well together, reflect in assemblies on important issues which concern them and usually get along happily. The development of cultural understanding is 'high profile' in the school's work. For example, pupils learn about Black history and culture, Rosa Parks and Mary Seacole.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Most teaching is now good which results in pupils making good progress. The best lessons are typified by short, sharp and focused activities, where there is a high level of active participation from all pupils. In all lessons, relationships and control strategies are good and all adults give pupils much encouragement and praise to help them succeed. All give good emphasis to the development of spoken language by ensuring they have regular opportunities to talk about their learning. Marking is thorough and acknowledges success as well as suggesting to pupils what they should learn next, through a 'three ticks and a wish' approach. Pupils have targets to help steer their learning. What pupils

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

are learning about is always shared with them so that they know what they must do to improve. Occasionally, pupils have too little opportunity to work on their own and work is not matched to their precise needs to enable them to make the best possible progress.

The curriculum contains all that it should and has a clear structure to help pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers are starting to link subjects together to make learning more relevant, but this work is in its early stages. Art and physical education are well represented and pupils have regular access to laptop computers to help them develop important skills in information and communication technology. However, opportunities to fire pupils' imaginations through exciting first-hand experiences to instil a love of learning are under-represented and sometimes worksheets, which do not inspire pupils, are overused. A good range of visits and visitors enrich pupils' experiences, and clubs, such as choir, cheerleading and football training, sometimes led by external specialists, help to extend pupils' learning and broaden their horizons.

Care, guidance and support are strengths of the school. Support for the pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is high quality and sensitive. The headteacher, learning mentor and all staff, including support assistants, play their parts to the full in ensuring that pupils are cared for well. Pupils benefit from effective links with other agencies that provide specialist support. Good emphasis is given to pupils' safety and security. Arrangements to keep pupils safe are rigorous. The school ensures a smooth transition for the many pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal times as well as for those who leave at the end of Year 6. The school does a great deal to promote good attendance, but is hampered in its efforts by the high numbers who attend religious festivals during school time.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The complementary skills of the headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that leadership and management are of good quality. In a relatively short time, the senior leadership team, extended to increase levels of accountability and ownership, has established a solid basis for continued improvement. As a result, morale in the school is high and teamwork is a real strength. The school has a largely accurate view of its

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performance and school leaders know what works well and what needs doing to help drive forward improvement. As a result, priorities for development are the right ones and correctly place raising attainment as the key focus of the school's work. An important outcome of the drive to secure higher standards is that there is an increased emphasis on data analysis and careful tracking of pupils' progress, which is having a positive impact on raising standards. This rigorous monitoring of the school's work is informing its strategic planning well. However, checking on the quality of teaching is not yet regular or sharply-enough focused on pupils' learning, especially of minority groups, to be of maximum benefit. The supportive governing body meets its statutory requirements, but is not yet involved enough in monitoring the school's work or setting its direction.

Workshops for parents and carers, regular communication with them and an 'open door' policy ensure that there are strong links with the community. Partnerships with a range of institutions and agencies, such as with the local church, sports' clubs, and with a nearby Performing Arts school, make a good contribution to pupils' learning and well-being. The school works tirelessly and successfully to ensure that it is fully inclusive, and tackles discrimination seeking always to treat all pupils fairly and equitably. Safeguarding arrangements are high profile and rigorous, with vigilance from all adults ensuring that pupils are safe and secure. Community cohesion is strongly and successfully promoted to ensure there is respect and understanding among the many different faiths and backgrounds represented in school. The mostly good outcomes for pupils indicate that the school provides good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>



## Early Years Foundation Stage

Small numbers, individual attention and high levels of care ensure that children have a good start to their school lives. As a result, the Reception class is successful in laying down secure foundations for future learning. Children's skills and understanding are usually below what is typical when they begin school, especially in their knowledge and understanding of the world. What they know and understand often depends on their pre-school experiences and this varies widely. However, the good leadership and often good teaching and high quality support ensures that children's very diverse needs are well met. Relationships between adults and children are warm and friendly and teamwork is strong. As a result, children are happy, feel safe and are keen to learn. Nevertheless, they are still below average when they move to Year 1. Improving and accurate assessment arrangements inform planning and ensure that learning is usually matched to children's needs. Learning journals provide good evidence of children's development in all required areas of learning. The teacher skilfully ensures there is a good balance between activities led by adults, such as daily reading and language sessions, and those chosen by children. However, some organised activities lack excitement to stimulate children's imagination and enthuse them with a love of learning. Some areas of the classroom are not 'language rich' enough, both in English, and in the mother tongue of children for whom English is a second language, to help boost their often limited language skills.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly happy about the way their children are educated and nurtured in school. Inspectors agree with this positive picture. All parents feel that their child enjoys school, is kept safe and that a healthy lifestyle is promoted. Inspectors found no evidence to support the negative views of a very small number of parents that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Porter Croft Sheffield Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 33 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 126 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	61	17	37	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	61	18	39	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	52	19	41	3	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	63	13	28	4	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	72	11	24	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	54	20	43	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	35	29	63	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	10	22	30	65	3	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	48	20	43	3	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	26	29	63	5	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	52	20	43	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	57	18	39	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	67	14	30	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



25 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Porter Croft Sheffield Church of England Primary School, Sheffield, S11 8JN

Thank you for being so friendly and talking to the inspectors when we visited your school recently to find out how well you are learning. We very much enjoyed being in your school, visiting your lessons and listening to what you had to say. Many of you told us that you think you go to a good school. We are pleased to say that we agree with you! There are lots of good things about your school.

- We like the friendly atmosphere and the way in which all adults take good care of you so that you feel safe and happy.
- There are lots of visits, visitors and clubs to help make your time at school interesting.
- We saw that you work hard and behave well.
- You know about the importance of staying healthy and keeping safe.
- Most of you make better progress in English, mathematics and science than pupils in most other schools do.
- Your headteacher and all staff work hard to give you the best education they can by teaching well and checking often on how you are learning so that they can give you extra help if you are falling behind.

We have found just three things that your headteacher, teachers and governors could do to make your school better than it is now.

- I have asked them to continue the push to raise standards in English, science and mathematics.
- The governors should check often on the school's work so they can help improve things even more.
- You must come to school every day to join in with the fun of learning because the numbers who come to school each day are not as high as in most schools.

Thank you for being so helpful when we inspected your school. It was really good to find that you are happy and doing well.

Yours sincerely

Mr Derek Pattinson

Lead inspector

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