

Wimborne First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113679
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	338217
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Williams
Headteacher	Kate Curtis
Date of previous school inspection	13 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seventeen lessons were observed and 12 teachers were seen. Inspectors also held meetings with pupils, staff with key responsibilities and representatives of the governing body. In addition to observing the school's work and evaluating documentation such as policies, the school improvement plan and records of pupils' learning and progress, they examined 118 completed questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage and standards at the end of Reception
- evidence of pupils' current attainment and progress in Key Stage 1
- the extent to which pupils' rising attainment on entry to Key Stage 2 is maintained and built upon in Years 3 and 4
- the evenness of good teaching and learning from Reception to Year 4 and the extent to which provision meets the needs of all groups of pupils
- the quality of leadership and management at all levels and their impact on raising achievement.

Information about the school

This school, average in size, is situated close to the centre of Wimborne. It serves a mixed area from the town and the surrounding area and most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. These pupils' difficulties are mainly concerned with language, literacy and behaviour. The acting headteacher has been in post for the last two terms while the substantive headteacher has just begun to return to school after maternity leave.

The school's national awards include Basic Skills Quality, Healthy Schools and Activemark. The pre-school Wimborne First Kindergarten is on the same site but is privately managed.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school which has exceptional features. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and strikes the right balance between striving for academic achievement and promoting pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils flourish because the atmosphere is warm and nurturing, they feel very safe and the exciting and vibrant curriculum encourages them to love learning. Pupils do well academically and have excellent opportunities for developing their creative and sporting skills. Their behaviour is exemplary as a result of the school's outstanding care, support and guidance. Pupils contribute exceedingly well to the community, of which the school is very much a part. Excellent partnerships with parents support pupils' well-being and progress. Parents and carers think highly of the school. One parent echoed the views of many when saying, 'Wimborne First School is an extremely good school and I am very happy with the education provided.'

Since the last inspection, the school has improved all-round and is driving up pupils' attainment. There have been improvements in teaching, the curriculum and systems for checking pupils' progress. From starting points that are a little below those seen in most schools, children's good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage is built upon well in Key Stage 1 so that pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2. Good progress continues in Key Stage 2 and leads to above average attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and science by Year 4. By Year 4, pupils write fluently for many purposes and their story and poetry writing are particularly good. Their investigative science skills are very well developed and, throughout the school, pupils do very well in information and communication technology (ICT), sport, and art and design. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the well-coordinated support they receive.

The quality of teaching is good. Teachers provide very interesting lessons and are particularly effective in developing pupils' thinking and ability to solve problems. However, lower attaining pupils' learning occasionally slows when, during lesson introductions, teachers do not ensure their questions focus enough on these pupils. During group writing, there are also instances when teachers do not make the best use of assessment to ensure tasks draw securely on these pupils' reading and phonic skills. The school's vision statement, 'Learning for life is an enjoyable and exciting experience', is seen in many aspects of its work and helps to promote pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum enables pupils to gain an excellent appreciation of how to live a healthy lifestyle.

The sustained successful leadership of the headteacher, in close partnership with an able senior team and governing body and committed staff, is key to the school's

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success. The acting headteacher has led the school well during the absence of the substantive headteacher, ensuring it runs smoothly and maintaining the focus on constant improvement. The school's rigorous self-evaluation helps to set clear and achievable priorities for the future. Given the school's accurate self-evaluation, record of rising attainment and all-round improvement, it has a good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of lower attaining pupils' good learning and progress by:
 - ensuring that during lesson introductions teachers' questions focus more on these pupils
 - teachers always plan tasks during group writing which build closely on these pupils' reading and phonics skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Teachers cultivate pupils' love of learning through excellent relationships with them and by providing lessons which they thoroughly enjoy. A practical content often brings learning alive and adds meaning. For example, in a Year 2 outstanding literacy lesson when pupils learned to write instructions, the teacher's use of the term 'bossy verbs' fully captured the pupils' imagination and helped them to understand technical language very well. They also made rapid progress in understanding adverbs as they demonstrated 'running quickly' by running on the spot. All children were fired with enthusiasm and used interesting verbs and adverbs with very good understanding when subsequently writing their own instructions.

Pupils' rising attainment in literacy is also a consequence of the school's strengthened systems for teaching letters and sounds (phonics) as well as relevant opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum. The school does particularly well in raising attainment at higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Both boys and girls achieve equally well because their interests and needs are catered for.

From the earliest days in Reception, children are helped to develop their curiosity, interests and independent learning skills. Pupils become enthusiastic learners with confidence in their own abilities. They make great strides in developing their oral communication skills, including to live audiences when designing and presenting their own weekly assemblies. Pupils are keen to engage in the many opportunities to take on responsibilities and to become involved in helping the school make some decisions. They are proud school councillors and, as 'pupil governors', present the views of their schoolmates to members of the governing body. There are thorough systems to ensure everyone's voice can be heard. Their work on ecology is commendable and they gain first-hand experience of growing flowers, fruit and vegetables as well as recycling and energy conservation. Pupils show their excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles, recognised in national awards. They eagerly take part in the rich range of

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physical activities and are strong advocates of healthy eating. Pupils' good attendance and good achievement in basic skills means they are well prepared for the future

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is consistently good and occasionally outstanding. Classrooms are rich with imaginative activities and displays which capture pupils' interest and build on their learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and carefully plan lessons so that pupils learn through listening and watching as well as through discussion and solving problems. Teachers' explanations are confident and they ensure pupils are clear about their learning purposes. New technology and practical resources are used well to make lessons interesting. The teaching of mathematics in ability groups helps teachers to match pupils' learning to their wide range of attainment and promotes good learning. Occasionally, during lesson introductions, teachers do not address enough questions to lower-attaining pupils and this prevents them being more actively involved in this part of the lesson. There are also instances when teachers do not make the best use of assessment information about lower-attaining pupils' reading and phonics skills when

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

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planning writing tasks. Support staff are very effectively deployed and make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

The curriculum is broad and enriched by an outstanding range of out-of-school clubs from gardening to yoga, guest speakers and visits that widen pupils' experiences. These, together with excellent cross-curricular links, including opportunities for art and design, underpin academic learning, bring enjoyment and make significant contributions to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is greatly enhanced through themes such as 'Mexico days' and subsequent practical art work. Very strong partnerships with the community, including other schools, enhance the development of the curriculum.

Pastoral support, guidance and care are outstanding with the well-being of every child being paramount. Adults provide excellent support for the social and emotional development of all pupils, including those with challenging behaviour. The school has excellent links with parents and carers and other agencies to ensure pupils' welfare needs are well met.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a very clear direction and has communicated her vision for improvement very well to her staff. Her energetic, enthusiastic leadership and highly developed personal skills have created confidence and a strong sense of purpose in the school. Senior leaders have worked successfully together to create an ethos where all staff have high expectations for all pupils to do well. The school sets high but realistic targets and, in most cases, meets or exceeds them. Senior leaders' rigorous analysis of data and teaching ensure that provision is inclusive and often adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils. Middle leaders are developing their roles well and they have recently enhanced their ability to evaluate data, although staff changes mean that several are still receiving training to equip them to play their full part in observing teaching. Staff are valued as the best resource and the school ensures expertise is shared and their skills are kept up-to-date.

Governors are very well led by a knowledgeable chair. They support the school very well, fulfil all statutory duties and ask challenging questions. They evaluate assessment data but are aware they need to probe the progress of different groups more rigorously. Systems for safeguarding and risk assessment are exemplary and receive the highest

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priority. The school is active in tackling discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity well. It makes an excellent impact on promoting community cohesion locally and pupils of all backgrounds get on extremely well together. Global links are also well established and the school has clear plans to widen pupils' understanding of the different communities in Britain today.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly because of the excellent induction processes. Parents and carers really appreciate this. Children's attainment on entry is wide ranging but, overall, just below the levels expected because a minority have weaknesses in their speaking and listening skills. Staff provide excellent standards of care and give a strong focus to developing children's language and personal skills. Children's literacy and numeracy development is well supported in the context of a broad and practical curriculum. They make good progress, and by the end of Reception, their attainment is average in speaking and listening and above average in all other areas of learning, including literacy and numeracy. Attainment on entry to Year 1 has risen in recent years due to improvements in provision, for example in the teaching of sounds and letters. Adults strike a good balance between more formal, adult-led activities and those children select for themselves. Topics, such as 'Under the Sea', really interest the children and provide some exciting learning opportunities. For example, children develop their creativity well when they design and make pictures related to this theme or when playing together in their 'Crab Cafe'. Adults intervene well during outdoor role play, for example in the 'Dive Centre', to extend children's speaking, thinking and social skills, but occasionally miss

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such opportunities during indoor role play. Good use is made of the outdoor learning area but this is small and due to be enlarged and improved when the privately-managed pre-school locates soon to a different part of the site. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good with very close and effective teamwork between all staff. Assessment is thorough and carefully analysed to check the impact of provision on children's progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

The school enjoys the support of the great majority of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaires. Parents and carers particularly appreciate how much their children enjoy school and how they are kept safe. Almost all parents and carers think their child is making good progress. They feel that 'My child has a wonderful time at Wimborne First School.' Very few expressed concerns and none of these could be supported by inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wimborne First 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 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 241 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	78	66	37	31	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	82	69	35	30	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	58	49	54	46	4	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	50	53	45	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	74	64	42	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	70	59	43	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	75	64	38	32	2	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)	57	48	50	42	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	66	56	48	41	1	1	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	47	54	46	2	2	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	41	61	52	4	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	71	60	41	35	2	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	80	68	34	29	1	1	2	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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.

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



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4 March 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Wimborne First School, Wimborne BH21 1HQ

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed finding out about the interesting things you do.

First, you need to know your school is a good one. Here are some of the many things your school does well:

- You make good progress and your attainment is above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Those of you in Reception get off to a good start.
- Your teachers are good at making your lessons interesting.
- You make your school such a special place because you are kind, friendly, work hard and behave extremely well.
- You have many exciting opportunities for investigative science, art, ICT and outside visits.
- Your headteacher leads you all extremely well and all the staff and governors think very carefully about what is best for you.
- Staff take very good care of you and you told us how safe you feel.

This is what we are asking your school to do to improve:

- Help those of you who find learning more difficult to learn better by teachers involving you more at the start of lessons, and making sure your writing builds on what you can do in reading and sounds and letters.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and carry on working hard in all you do. Well done for doing so much for the community! Please keep this up!

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick

Lead inspector

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