

Shipham Church of England First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123812
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	340431
Inspection dates	23–24 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Ted Wheatley

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	65
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Davenport
Headteacher	Antonia Gwynn
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school planning, pupils' progress information, records of the headteacher's lesson observations and 31 parental questionnaires.

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

- how effectively the school works to raise standards in Year 2, and in writing and investigative science throughout the school
- how well teaching meets the needs of all pupils
- how well assessment information is used to give pupils guidance on how they can improve their work
- how well provision contributes to children's progress in Reception.

Information about the school

This is a very small village school. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and no pupils have statements of special educational needs. Children start school in Reception where provision follows national guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Almost all children entering Reception have attended a privately managed on-site nursery.

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 pupils really enjoy attending. They feel safe all of the time and say they are well looked after. Typically, they say they love the school, think teachers help them a lot and they enjoy all of the things they do. Pupils' achievement is generally good and for some is excellent. Standards are broadly average but fluctuate from year to year because classes are small and the range of ability varies considerably. In Year 2, where standards were lower on entry to the school than in other years, achievement is good due to challenging, lively teaching which captures pupils' imagination and helps them do as well as they can. Throughout the school, the most able pupils generally do well, some reaching very high standards because of good provision. Standards are best in speaking, reading and numeracy and a little lower in writing, which the school is working hard to address. It has been partially successful in this, but pupils are still not doing quite as well in writing as they are in speaking and reading. Spelling is occasionally inaccurate and writing not as detailed or careful as it should be. Standards in science are broadly average, but not quite so good in investigative activities. This is because there are not enough opportunities in the curriculum as a whole for pupils to initiate and carry out their own investigations and to report back on them. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. The least able pupils who underachieved in mathematics at the time of the previous inspection now achieve well. In the Reception class, children make good progress and often exceed expectations overall. However, in the outdoor area, they do not work as independently as they should, mainly because they do not have enough opportunities for free choice of activities.

Teaching is, more often than not, good, with excellent relationships that contribute significantly to pupils enjoying their learning. Behaviour is good. Occasional disruption is due mainly to pupils' exuberance rather than anything else. Lessons are challenging, usually fast paced and with work matched well to pupils' learning needs. The support from classroom assistants is effective and sensitive, supporting those pupils who need individual attention in order to succeed. Assessment information is used effectively to plan work to challenge pupils. Pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to make further progress. For example, one pupil said: 'I need to write longer sentences by using more connectives in my writing.' The curriculum is good with a wide range of activities to extend pupils' experience and a good selection of out-of-school clubs and activities. The quality of care, guidance and support is excellent. Pupils are confident that they will be helped when they need to be and they understand readily the school's behaviour code and what is expected of

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them.

The school is well led and managed. Staff and governors work closely together to evaluate school performance and to introduce improvement where it is needed. The headteacher provides clear direction and support for improvement. The school has responded well to the issues from the previous inspection and, as a result of effective self-evaluation, its capacity to sustain further improvement is good. Relationships with homes are excellent. Parents' and carers' opinions are sought and acted on and parents feel the school gives their children an excellent start to their education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards of writing by:
 - ensuring pupils have sufficient opportunities to write at length
 - ensuring spelling is accurate
 - more obviously encouraging pupils to take pride and more care with their writing.
- Improve pupils' independent learning skills by providing planned opportunities for pupils to initiate and carry out their own investigations and research.
- Ensure that children in the Reception class use the outdoor spaces fully, especially to develop their independent learning skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' achievement is good, and sometimes outstanding. In lessons, pupils make good progress to reach broadly average standards by the time they leave and thoroughly enjoy learning. They take part in activities with enthusiasm and work hard to make sure they do well. Their speaking skills are good. They have a wide vocabulary and are encouraged to speak to each other about what they understand and know and this contributes significantly to their learning. Writing occasionally lacks detail and care, and spelling is careless, partly due to pupils hurrying their writing. Numeracy skills have improved overall in recent years and all pupils make good progress. Pupils work well individually and in small groups, although through lack of opportunity they do not engage in independent research or follow through their own investigations in enough depth. Girls and boys of all abilities make similar progress and where there have been differences in the past, or where the school has identified differences, these have been resolved.

Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of school are positive and their attendance is excellent. Pupils are very considerate towards each other and are tolerant of the differences between people and of each other's opinions. They have an excellent grasp of how to stay safe, the importance of having a healthy diet and of exercise. They thoroughly enjoy the 'Wake-up, Shake-up' activity at the start of every day. The links with the local and wider community are good with pupils visiting the church and

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raising funds for charities. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This is partly due to assemblies in which they take an active part and also due to the opportunities for pupils to marvel at nature, to work together and to find out about other cultures. The frequent visits to a school in Bristol, for example, lead pupils to understand and respect the values and beliefs of children from other ethnic backgrounds. School council pupils take their responsibilities seriously and are fully aware that they must represent their classmates’ opinions sincerely. Along with good progress in literacy and numeracy, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

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	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers track pupils’ progress closely and accurately and use this information to make sure that work is tailored to pupils’ needs. Work is planned carefully, and mostly successfully, to engage pupils’ interest. Lessons are generally fast-paced and the quality of questioning and discussion makes sure that pupils develop a good understanding of what they learn. Pupils gain the confidence to speak because teachers establish excellent relationships and firm, friendly discipline. The work of teaching assistants is effective, with good planning of activities to help the pupils they work with. Learning progresses well. Marking gives pupils a good grasp of how well they perform and what they need to do next, although occasionally teachers do not follow up on guidance given, and for example, in terms of writing, this leads to pupils taking insufficient care in the finished article. Information and communication

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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technology (ICT) is used increasingly effectively to support teaching and to provide a resource for pupils. The range of activities, visits and visitors to enrich pupils’ experience is wide and the sports, arts and other clubs are good for a school of this size. Pupils participate with enthusiasm. The programme to develop pupils’ social and personal skills is effective and evident in the way pupils deal with each other, and in their attitudes to adults and learning.

Links with external services are used extensively to support pupils experiencing difficulties of any kind. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are monitored closely and supported carefully. Strategies to deal with bullying and harassment are very effective, to the extent that pupils say there is none, and that if there was they would know how to deal with it themselves or how to obtain help. The school provides excellent care, guidance and support within a strong, Christian ethos which pupils welcome and blossom in.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school evaluates itself accurately and under the effective leadership of the headteacher has set itself ambitious priorities and targets. Senior managers recognise the need to further improve self-evaluation, particularly to observe more lessons in the main school and provision in the Reception class than it currently does. The drive for improvement is well established. Governors are very well informed about how effective the school is and track improvements closely. They face up to relative weaknesses openly and take an active part in planning development. There is a strong focus on ensuring all pupils have equality of opportunity and to see that they achieve equally well. The school promotes community cohesion well. It has established good links with the local and wider communities that contribute effectively to pupils’ understanding and valuing of different beliefs and cultures and is in the process of extending this further through church links and links with other schools.

The school has excellent relationships with parents and carers. Communications are informative and effective. Parents are encouraged to contact staff if they have queries or problems and their views are sought and acted on. The partnership is excellent with the school providing very good help and guidance on how parents can support their children’s learning.

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At the time of the inspection, all safeguarding requirements were fully met. Governors are quick to respond to identified risks in the school grounds and buildings.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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 make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1 standards are usually above average. This has been the case in recent years and is an example of the positive impact of good provision. Children settle into the routines of the Reception class quickly and they are well supported by adults. Their personal, social and emotional development is particularly good because they are encouraged to express and share their feelings with others. Their behaviour is outstanding, they enjoy their learning experiences and show confidence in the way they work and play. Literacy and numeracy skills develop quickly and children use ICT well. Children are eager to show their understanding and they support each other well. Provision is good and adults assess children effectively to plan the next stages of learning. A wide range of activities ensures that all of the areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum are covered. Children really enjoyed role play with puppets in which they put letter sounds to songs they had learned. However, the opportunities to develop independence and to choose activities themselves are less well developed, especially in the use of the outside area. The welfare arrangements for children are good. There are very good links with the feeder Nursery, with parents and carers,

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and also with special educational needs support staff where necessary. Children’s views are taken into account when planning activities. Children are well looked after, although occasionally children are not reminded to wash their hands before they eat snacks. Leadership and management are good and the leader has a clear grasp of the strengths of provision and where it needs to improve.

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

Parents are predominantly pleased with the school and say that their children enjoy school. They feel that their children make good progress which they are kept well informed about. A very small number feel that the most able children are not challenged enough, but inspectors found that work is generally challenging and well matched to all pupils’ learning needs. Parents feel that children are taught well, are well cared for and that the school is safe. The great majority feel that the school deals with unacceptable behaviour well. Parents say that children learn about healthy lifestyles and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shipham Church of England 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 65 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	77	7	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	77	6	19	0	0	1	3
The school informs me about my child’s progress	22	71	7	23	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	58	11	36	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	74	8	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	21	68	9	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	61	10	32	1	3	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)	22	71	9	29	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	19	61	10	32	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	68	9	29	0	0	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	58	11	36	0	0	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	23	74	6	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	22	71	8	26	0	0	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 all 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

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>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 pupils' 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.



25 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shipham Church of England First School, Winscombe, BS25 1TX

Thank you for making us welcome when we inspected your school. We spoke to many of you and you told us a lot about what you think of your school. Yours is a good school.

- You make good progress and really enjoy learning. Your attendance is brilliant!
- You know how well you are doing in school work and how to do even better.
- Teaching is good and makes sure that work is interesting and challenging.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work hard to make sure you do well and enjoy school.
- You behave well and are kind and considerate to each other.
- You know how to stay safe and have an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and physical exercise.
- Those of you who have responsibilities carry them out well.
- The school takes excellent care of you and makes sure you are absolutely safe.

In order for the school to be even better, we are asking your teachers to do the following things.

- Improve your writing by making sure you have more opportunities to write at length, that you spell carefully and present your work more neatly.
- Make sure that you have more opportunities to plan and carry out your own investigations and research.
- Make sure that children in the Reception class have opportunities to choose the activities they do in the outdoor spaces so that they are helped to become independent learners.

You can help by working really hard with writing, trying to make sure it is neat and that your spelling is accurate. We wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Ted Wheatley
Lead inspector

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