



Trinity Church of England First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123758
LEA Somerset
Inspection number 281553
Inspection dates 20 September 2005 to 21 September 2005
Reporting inspector Christine Huard RISP

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

Type of school	First	School address	Nunney Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Frome
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		Somerset BA11 4LB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01373 461949
Number on roll	300	Fax number	01373 472594
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Katrina Johnson
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2000	Headteacher	Mr Phil Burner

Age group 4 to 9	Inspection dates 20 September 2005 - 21 September 2005	Inspection number 281553
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large first school on the outskirts of Frome. Nearly all the pupils come from white British backgrounds with a very small percentage of pupils having English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is just below average. Children enter the school having gained the experiences broadly expected for their age, although there is a very wide range of ability.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which provides good value for money, confirming the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. The school has made good progress since its previous inspection. It has maintained the overall good achievement and successfully raised standards in science at the end of Years 3 and 4. The pupils make good progress and leave the school at the end of Year 4 with attainment above that expected for their age. Children get a good start in the Foundation Stage, where a wide range of stimulating activities is provided for them. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and participate eagerly in the activities provided both in and out of school hours. Teaching is good, carefully planned and ensures that the pupils achieve well. Most of the pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well in relation to the targets they are set. However, a very few of these pupils do not make such good progress because work is not matched sufficiently closely to their needs. The leadership of the headteacher is strong and overall the leadership and management of the school are good. The school has strong systems in place to check the performance of pupils and teachers, although not for support staff which means they do not always provide the best support their pupils. The senior management team and governors are well aware of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. They know where improvements need to be made and have good action plans in place to deal with these.

What the school should do to improve further

- refine the procedures for checking how well provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties to ensure they are all able to make good progress
- include the support staff in systems that check performance to ensure the support they provide consistently meets the needs of the pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, they do so at a higher level than that expected for their age. The school supports pupils of all abilities well and higher attaining pupils achieve particularly well because of the extra challenges they are given by teachers. Pupils have challenging targets and, in Years 3 and 4, pupils are fully involved in the setting of these. This provides an extra stimulus for them to make good progress throughout Years 1 to 4, although progress is slower in writing. The school has taken swift action to improve writing, which is having a good impact on standards across all subjects. Children get a good start when they enter school and make good progress in the reception year. Most pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities also achieve well in relation to their starting points, but a very few make limited progress because tasks are not always matched accurately enough to their individual needs. The few pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well because of the effectiveness of the support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development of pupils is good. This contributes effectively to their learning because they have mature attitudes in lessons and around the school. They are developing good study skills and work sensibly in pairs or small groups. Behaviour is good and pupils fully understand the reasons for the few school rules. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a keen awareness of their responsibilities for each other in school and for the wider community beyond. They have had many opportunities to take on roles of responsibility – exemplified by their fund-raising efforts for Action Aid and the Tsunami appeals. They are prepared well for a life in an ethnically diverse society and are gaining a good understanding and respect for different cultures and beliefs.

Despite good efforts by the school, pupils do not always respond positively to leading healthy lifestyles; crisps and chocolate are still prevalent in lunchboxes. Pupils are gaining a good level of competence in the numeracy, literacy and computer skills that they are likely to need in the future for successful economic well-being.

Attendance and punctuality are both good. These reflect the strong parental support and the pupils' enjoyment of school, both of which have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Planning is good and ensures that pupils are challenged as learners because lesson tasks generally match their learning needs well. As a result, pupils are making good progress.

Pupils learn effectively because teachers are confident, have good teaching skills and know how to excite and inspire pupils to learn. For example, many teachers make very effective use of interactive whiteboards. In the reception classes, for example, children are already developing competent information and communication technology (ICT) skills through learning to put 'Humpty Dumpty together again' using the interactive whiteboard. Pupils like their teachers and teaching assistants and relate very well to them. Teachers have good questioning skills, which allow them to check the pupils' levels of understanding and also encourage the pupils to respond fully.

Teaching assistants are generally deployed well in the classroom and provide good support for the majority of pupils, including most of those with learning difficulties or disabilities. However, occasionally, a few pupils with learning difficulties are not supported well enough because tasks do not always match with pupils' learning needs. As a result, and as can be seen from the school's own data, these pupils do not make such good progress over time.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good, broad and relevant curriculum which meets the needs of its pupils well. The school has embraced initiatives such as the 'Forest School' whole-heartedly and this adds another exciting dimension to pupils' learning. There have been significant improvements in provision for science in Years 3 and 4. There is good coverage and teaching of all elements of the curriculum, enabling pupils to achieve well.

There is a wide a variety of interesting extra-curricular activities, many of which are run by parents – exemplifying their regard and support for the school. These are attended by a large number of pupils, who thoroughly enjoy, for example, the cross stitch and sewing clubs which run alongside those of a more traditional sporting variety.

Places of interest in the local community, such as Nunney Castle, are used well to bring learning to life and have meaning for pupils. In addition, the pupils use the facilities of the local town, such as the leisure centre to learn to swim.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares well for its pupils and its attention to their safety, welfare and healthy living is good. Particular care has been taken to ensure pupils' safety during the current extensive building works. Child protection procedures are fully established and staff are fully conversant with them. There are robust procedures in place to deal with any incidents of bullying or racial harassment that might occur. The school monitors most pupils' academic and personal development very well. Targets are sharp and clear and support is good, except for a few pupils with learning difficulties who then make satisfactory rather than good progress.

The school works successfully with a wide range of outside agencies such as the physiotherapist and educational psychologist to provide the best support it can for those pupils who need this specialist help.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The consultative and inclusive style of leadership of the headteacher has been warmly embraced by all members of the school community. In the governors' words, it has made the school 'a whole learning community' and, at the same time, has sustained the good standards of academic and personal development of its pupils.

The subject leaders have a sound and developing role to play in school improvement. Management of the Foundation Stage is good and shows a good understanding of the needs of young children. Governors are knowledgeable about how well the school

is performing and are fully involved in the school. They fulfil their statutory duties well and challenge the school management team effectively.

The performance of staff is checked regularly and any weaknesses are identified and acted upon quickly. For example, writing was identified as a weakness in the school improvement plan in 2004, and the success of actions taken is evident in the progress made by pupils in Years 3 and 4 in 2005. However, support staff are not included in the process and this means that the support for some pupils with learning difficulties has not been monitored rigorously enough. As a result, although teaching assistants regularly attend events designed to improve their practice, these are not necessarily targeted to the areas from which they, and consequently the pupils, would derive most benefit.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed our time and would like to thank you for all the help that you gave us. From talking to you, we know that you all enjoy being at Trinity First School. We thought you would want to know what we thought about your school.

What we think your school does well:

the youngest children quickly settle in and do well in the reception classes

you make good progress in your learning, because your teachers give you work which interests and inspires you

you behave well and are really keen to learn

you have many exciting and unusual things to do, particularly out of school time, which help many of you to become more confident and independent.

What we have asked the school to do to improve:

we think that the work for some of you who find learning rather difficult needs to be better organised, so that you make better progress

we think that the systems that the school uses to help teachers develop their own skills should be applied to the other adults who help you in school.