



# Cranborne Middle School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 113853  
**LEA** Dorset  
**Inspection number** 285598  
**Inspection dates** 14 June 2006 to 15 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Anne Looney HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary	<b>School address</b>	Cranborne
<b>School category</b>	Community		Wimborne
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9 to 13		Dorset BH21 5RP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01725 517348
<b>Number on roll</b>	394	<b>Fax number</b>	01725 517984
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs P Rex
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 February 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Chadwick

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Cranborne School is a smaller-than-average middle deemed secondary school situated in a rural part of Dorset. The headteacher has been in post for just under two years and there have also been a significant number of new teachers appointed in that time. The number of learners eligible for free school meals is well below average and the number who speak English as an additional language is very low. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is broadly average. Whilst the majority of learners move on to a local upper school at the end of Year 8, the proportion leaving the school to start secondary school in Year 7 in neighbouring authorities is higher than average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school judges its effectiveness as good. The inspectors agree with this judgement, as well as identifying a considerable number of outstanding features.

Standards and achievement have improved considerably over the last three years, culminating in high standards in English, maths and science in 2005 and good achievement for all pupils. The school's detailed data on the progress of pupils in Year 6 indicates that this trend of improvement will be continued. The headteacher and his leadership team, supported by a committed governing body, provide outstanding leadership, giving a clear direction for improvement. Subject leaders show equally strong commitment to this drive for improvement, although not all have yet been trained for the broader responsibilities of subject leadership and management. The school shows a good awareness of its responsibilities to develop its staff. Partnership, both with other schools and other outside bodies, is well developed and the school has the overwhelming support of parents and carers.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. This, together with its high quality self-review and the rigour of its monitoring processes, shows that it has the capacity to be an outstanding school.

The school has an inclusive approach to its pupils, ensuring that the needs of all are met. The contribution the school makes to the pupils' personal development is outstanding. Behaviour is very good, pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and they exhibit confidence and respect for others.

Classroom teaching is good overall. The school has shown a determination to continually improve its teaching and is supporting teachers well to help them develop their teaching expertise. The curriculum is broad, balanced and flexible, and activities outside the classroom provide well for pupils' cultural and sporting needs.

The school is strongly committed to keeping pupils safe and to preventing bullying and promoting good behaviour. Their welfare is a very high priority for the school and pastoral care is exceptionally strong. Monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress are also excellent and pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to meet their targets.

The school provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to monitor and evaluate teaching and provide support to teachers to improve the quality of their teaching further.
- Ensure that all middle managers are fully prepared for the responsibilities of leadership and management.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well and standards are above average. Standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved considerably over the last three years in English, mathematics and science so that by 2005, standards in all three subjects were above average. A significantly higher percentage than average attained the higher Level 5. This is good progress for the cohort as a whole as their attainment on entry to the school was broadly average. The school's very detailed data analysis indicates that the present Year 6 are in line to meet the challenging targets set for them this year, continuing this trend of good progress over Key Stage 2. This improvement is due in no small part to the school's careful and regular analysis of data on individual pupils and the implementation of an intervention strategy to fill the gaps in their knowledge.

Judged by the outcomes of a range of assessments over Years 7 and 8, pupils continue to achieve well so that by the end of Year 8 they are making good progress towards the targets set for them for the end of the key stage. They are making particularly good progress in mathematics in Years 7 and 8. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make equally good progress as compared to their peers.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted, for example, through the excellent well-planned personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme. The school is characterised by very positive relationships throughout. Pupils show a very strong moral sense and respect for individuals and appreciate the respect shown to them by their teachers. Their views are sought and attended to, taken seriously and improvements in the school effected as a result.

Behaviour in the school is very good, as systems for managing behaviour are consistently applied, with sensitive responses to individuals and situations. Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively. Pupils use the confidential bully boxes well to report incidents, which are then promptly followed up by teachers. Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent, and this is reflected in above-average levels of attendance. They enjoy being at school, and participate enthusiastically in the rich programme of extra-curricular activities. They are exceptionally confident, articulate and friendly.

The school is doing much to promote healthy lifestyles: its work to accredit the school as a Healthy School is already having an impact. Pupils report that they are encouraged to eat healthily, but do not always do so. There is a wealth of opportunity to participate in sport and physical activities both in and outside school.

Pupils successfully develop skills which contribute to social and economic well-being through PSHCE, their achievements in literacy and numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), and through the way they relish the responsibilities they are given. Year 8 pupils in particular respond positively to their additional

responsibilities: they 'buddy' Year 5 pupils, act as 'language leaders' in French to support younger pupils, and serve as school bus monitors to help secure good behaviour.

These positive contributions to the community of the school are extended to the community beyond. Pupils contribute through, for example, charity fundraising, supporting neighbours in need, and the orchestra entertaining the local public.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good and leads to good progress.

Teaching is well planned and structured. There is a good environment for learning and resources are used effectively to improve teaching. Data projectors and interactive whiteboards are routinely used to improve presentation and to increase the engagement of the pupils. Behaviour in lessons is well managed. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and, as one pupil said, 'Teachers know us really well'.

Pupils with additional learning needs achieve well, with teachers making good use of individual educational plans. They also have good support from well-deployed teaching assistants.

Teaching and learning are further enhanced by the school's involvement in using 'assessment for learning' approaches to raise levels of achievement. Lesson objectives and outcomes are routinely shared with pupils. Feedback in lessons and in books often helps pupils to identify what they need to do to improve. Pupils know the levels they are working at.

In a Year 6 music lesson seen during the inspection, clearly defined outcomes, accompanied by an engaging opening activity and developed through skilful questioning by the teacher, led to all pupils making good progress. This was an example of teaching at its best. In a small minority of lessons, inappropriate levels of pace and challenge limited the extent of pupils' progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and serves the needs of all pupils. It is enhanced by a wide and varied range of extra-curricular activities which serve to enrich the learning experiences of the pupils.

Transition arrangements are good. Strong partnerships exist between schools. This encourages the development of a common understanding over assessment and promotes discussion about appropriate teaching and learning styles. Pupils arrive at the school well aware of what is expected of them and make a good start to their learning.

There is good provision for numeracy and literacy, and ICT skills are developed well through a separate programme. There are, in addition, many opportunities for pupils to apply these skills in other subjects but these are not yet part of a coherently planned programme of ICT across the curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils enjoy outstanding care, guidance and support. Their welfare is a very high priority for the school and pastoral care is exceptionally strong. Pupils are safeguarded well, and procedures for child protection are robust, well understood and supported by appropriate staff training.

This focus on the pupils' well-being contributes to their personal development and high standards; their needs are individually known and supported. The monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress are excellent, and teachers confidently use assessment data to enable pupils to reach challenging targets. Vulnerable pupils are carefully identified; thorough and detailed provision is made to ensure they are included and their needs are met. As a result, they make good progress.

Pupils are well prepared for their transition to upper school. The school works very well in partnership, for example, in the way it effectively employs the support of outside agencies. Parents support their children's progress through regular two-way communication with the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and his leadership team provide outstanding leadership and a clear direction. This has led to the marked improvement in standards and achievement, culminating in the success of 2005. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has good capacity to develop further. The school is well supported by the governing body and enjoys the overwhelming support of the parents.

Day-to-day management is efficient and effective. Very good use is made of a range of adults other than teachers to enrich learning and support pastoral care.

The quality of improvement planning and self-review is high at all levels of management and provides a coherent identification of priorities.

The systems for monitoring, evaluating and improving teaching and learning and their impact on achievement are outstanding and involve subject leaders fully in the process. Good support has been provided for teachers to improve their practice and this has already had an impact on the quality of teaching.

Subject leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in provision and achievement in their curriculum areas. Some, but not all, middle managers have received the training which would prepare them for the broader role

of leadership and management. The school is aware of the need to develop its staff and plan for succession.

The school's involvement in the relatively newly established East Dorset Educational Partnership is significant in the development of coherent provision in the area. Partnership with the local authority is strong. School staff have been identified as leading practitioners who will work with other schools. Local authority advisers have worked with subject leaders and the headteacher and the governing body has worked well with the local authority to minimise the impact on pupils of budgetary pressures.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	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	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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	Yes
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**

I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to let you know the judgements we made about your school. Thanks for making us so welcome and for being so keen to talk to us. We valued what you had to say.

•We believe that Cranborne Middle School is a good school with a large number of features which are exceptionally good. •The school helps you make good progress by teaching you well and by providing you with a broad range of subjects to learn. •Your headteacher and other teachers with responsibility in the school lead the school extremely well. They are very clear about what the school does well and about what it needs to do to improve, and are making good plans to bring that about. The school involves you well in the way it makes improvements. •You tell us that you enjoy school and value the time your teachers give you, both in the classroom and outside it. You also appreciate the good choice in after-school clubs. •You behave very well and work hard in lessons. You show really positive attitudes, respecting each other and your teachers. •The school cares for you very well and makes sure you are safe. The school is also very good in the way it keeps track of your progress, setting you targets and suggesting how you might improve your work.

In order to become even better we have asked your school to:

•continue to work with teachers to make teaching even better •make sure that all teachers are well prepared when they take on new responsibilities.