

Chickerell Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113708
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	311345
Inspection dates	15–16 April 2008
Reporting inspector	David Shears

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clive Dibben
Headteacher	A E Mockridge
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2004
School address	Rashley Road Chickerell Weymouth DT3 4AT
Telephone number	01305 783876
Fax number	01305 789330

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Chickerell Primary is a larger-than-average two-form entry school. There are an average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The numbers of minority ethnic pupils and of those with English as an additional language are low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. Pupils begin with skills and knowledge that are broadly average for their age. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage, which ensures that they leave with above-average attainment. This good progress continues in Years 1 and 2, maintaining above-average standards by the time they enter Year 3. In Years 3 to 6, however, progress slows down so that by the end of Year 6 they leave having attained broadly average standards.

Leaders and managers at the school have correctly identified that not enough progress is being made, particularly in Years 3 and 4, and have put in measures to improve the provision. This has resulted in the current pupils making good progress, an example of the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. Nevertheless, teaching and learning throughout the school remain inconsistent and more needs to be done to support teachers in improving their practice. Although the teaching is satisfactory overall, there is a strong percentage of good teaching that needs to be shared more widely so that all can benefit from the expertise of these good teachers. In particular, teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, where children make good progress in all areas of learning. Both pupils with learning difficulties and more able pupils generally make satisfactory progress, although some lessons do not challenge the more able enough. The small number of minority ethnic pupils make good progress.

The senior management team has correctly identified that pupils do not make enough progress in mathematics and writing. They have focused on raising standards in writing and this is beginning to have a good impact on the progress pupils make, although the improvement in mathematics is, as yet, limited. Leadership and management are currently satisfactory. Subject leaders, although having clear roles and responsibilities, do not have enough opportunities to monitor and assess the impact of developments in their subjects. Girls are making better progress in English and a number of initiatives are supporting the raising of standards for boys. Writing is being well supported through the good curriculum that provides enriching and exciting experiences for pupils both in and out of school hours, an improvement since the last inspection. It also supports the very good personal development of pupils, enhancing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. However, it does not sufficiently support the development of pupils' mathematical skills to ensure better progress.

The pastoral care and support for pupils is very good. The committed and enthusiastic staff, led by a caring and thoughtful headteacher and deputy headteacher, ensure that the well-being of pupils is a high priority. This results in pupils feeling safe and happy in school and parents feeling confident that their children are looked after well. All pupils are fully included in school life and when they feel sad or cross there are opportunities to talk through their feelings with a pastoral support worker in the school. This effective care results in the personal development of pupils being good. They enjoy school and are keen to learn. They know how to keep safe and healthy and the vast majority behave well. Effective procedures are in place to support the few who find this difficult. Attendance is currently satisfactory, although the school is working hard to improve this. Pupils are making a good contribution to the community and, as a result of the standards reached in English and mathematics, their preparation for economic well-being is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage as a result of good management of this area. This ensures that all children are experiencing every area of learning whilst enabling them to make independent choices as part of their 'plan, do and review' sessions. The partnership with parents is good, with many acknowledging the effective support they receive in ensuring their children settle well into school. Links with the nursery are improving, including sharing parts of the good curriculum such as the social and emotional aspects of learning. The outdoor environment is used well to enhance the provision for children, who enjoy learning. However, there are limited opportunities for them to think about their learning experiences and express what they have learnt to others.

What the school should do to improve further

- ?
- Raise standards in English and mathematics by improving the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in mathematics and writing, so that all pupils make good or better progress. ?
- Ensure that subject leaders have sufficient opportunities to identify, monitor and assess the impact of developments in their areas.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils arrive at the school with average skills and knowledge for their age and make good progress in both the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, resulting in standards that are above average. In Years 3 to 6, however, progress is less secure so that pupils leave with standards that are broadly average, representing satisfactory progress overall. Nevertheless, initiatives have supported learning for the current pupils in Years 3 and 4, demonstrating an improving picture of progress. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and more-able pupils is satisfactory, and the progress of ethnic minority pupils is good. Girls currently achieve better in English, although new initiatives are supporting the progress of boys. It is too early to assess the impact of these. Pupils currently make more progress in English than mathematics as a result of a clearer focus on target setting and the review of work. However, pupils' work in art and in design and technology shows that they make good progress in these subjects and attain standards above those expected.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and have a good attitude towards their learning, one pupil commenting that 'teachers make us learn in fun ways and not just boring ways'. Attendance is currently satisfactory. There are high levels of unauthorised absence, although the school has procedures to try and improve this, success is limited due to parents who take term time holidays. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy such as by eating healthy foods and taking regular exercise. They generally feel safe and know who to talk to when they are unhappy. Pupils generally behave very well, although a small number find this difficult. There are

procedures in place to help these pupils to improve, with good signs of success. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good, supported well by an emphasis on the social and emotional aspects of learning that is recognised by the local authority for its strength. Pupils understand each other well, knowing that 'even though people are different, we are all the same'. They make a good contribution to the community both in school, such as by acting as play leaders, and also outside, such as through the Christmas party for the elderly and by raising money for a number of charities. Their preparation for economic well-being is satisfactory because of their levels of attainment in English and mathematics.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are inconsistent across the school. Nevertheless, there are a number of strengths that permeate all lessons. The relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils respect their teachers, resulting in good behaviour in lessons. The pupils work well together, supporting each other's learning. The high numbers of teaching assistants are used effectively to support both individual pupils with particular needs as well as working in groups. Lessons are planned well with interesting activities for the pupils to enjoy. The teaching is clear and work is differentiated well, although in some lessons the more able are not challenged sufficiently. In English, pupils know their targets but not in mathematics. Although the assessment of pupils is secure, teaching does not consistently make good use of this information to support pupils' learning, resulting in limited progress being made in some classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum ensures that all pupils receive a broad range of activities that support their learning well. It is enriched both by a number of visits out of school and visitors who share their expertise. Planned activities are engaging and fun and these are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. Residential visits have a big impact on pupils' personal development, with one saying that 'they help us to grow up'. Pupils take the opportunity to take part in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. In particular, there is a good emphasis on the teaching of art and design and technology, recognised by an Artsmark award and physical education for which the school has received an activemark. The school environment both inside and out provides an inspiring focus for learning that is used to its full potential with lively, interesting displays and purpose-built outdoor classrooms. There are a number of links between subjects, including some that support pupils' progress in writing, although there are not enough opportunities for them to practise their mathematical skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care of pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils are kept safe through a robust system of safeguarding and risk assessments. There are effective procedures to support pupils' ongoing medical needs and first aid. The school has gained healthy school status for its provision in promoting healthy lifestyles. Opportunities for pupils to access personal support from a pastoral worker enhance the care of pupils. Those with learning difficulties benefit from a well-managed system that ensures that their specific needs are met. These plans are regularly

reviewed. Outside agencies, such as the educational psychologist and the speech and language therapist, are well used to support the progress of individual pupils. However, all pupils are not consistently given enough help to show them the next steps in learning, particularly in mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leaders and managers have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need to be developed. In particular, they correctly identified, through the use of a good tracking system, the lack of progress in writing and that boys were achieving less well than girls in English. Governance is satisfactory overall with governors giving practical support alongside the school in promoting initiatives that encourage boys to read for pleasure and develop an interest in writing. This includes a boys' club for reading that involves boys of all ages, where they gain points for completing challenges. Writing is being effectively supported through the curriculum. This is an example of the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. However, more effective use of resources needs to be made so that there is a link to clear priorities that result in raised achievement. For example, subject leaders, although having clear roles and responsibilities, do not have enough opportunities to monitor and assess the impact of developments in their subjects. The quality of teaching needs to improve and planned support and challenge given to secure improvements in the progress of pupils. Challenging targets are set, although those for mathematics and the more able in English were not achieved in 2007.

However, there are elements of good leadership. Leaders and managers promote the very good pastoral care of pupils, creating a positive ethos of enjoyment and safety where all are welcomed. Effective leadership of the Foundation Stage has made a good impact on the provision for the youngest children the provision of support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is managed well and all staff display high levels of commitment to the pupils in their care.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Chickerell Primary School, Chickerell, Dorset DT3 4AT

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and finding out about your lovely school.

You told us that you enjoyed school and we can easily see why. Your teachers make the lessons interesting and fun for you and you have lots of opportunities to go out on trips and enjoy listening to visitors. You told us that you particularly enjoy the range of activities on offer after school. You have a beautiful school with many interesting displays inside to show off your work, particularly in art and design and technology, and lots of outdoor space for you to play in as well as learning in the outdoor classrooms.

Your teachers care a lot about you and look after you very well and this helps you to feel safe. You were able to tell us how to be healthy and keep safe. You are also learning to understand and appreciate how others feel and this is helping you to behave really well.

We have asked your school to make sure that all your lessons help you to make good progress so that you are well prepared for your future. We want you to focus particularly on improving your mathematical skills and being able to write more effectively. Your teachers have some good ideas on how to make things better and we have asked that they have more opportunities to put them into practice and see whether they help you to make better progress. You could also help by making sure that you come to school every day and ask your teachers what you can do to improve your work.

Thank you for an enjoyable two days. We would like to wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr D Shears Lead Inspector

17 April 2008

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