

Longfleet Church of England Voluntary Controlled Combined School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113782
Local Authority	Poole
Inspection number	338239
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	480
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mandy Durdle
Headteacher	Jacqui Good
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 April 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 17 lessons, observing 17 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and the local authority. A small minority of parents and carers were also spoken to. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at analyses of pupils' progress, governors' meeting records, development planning and monitoring, local authority reports, a range of policies and procedures including those associated with safeguarding, curriculum planning documents and a sample of pupils' work. They also scrutinised questionnaires returned by 110 parents, 100 pupils and 42 staff.

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

- the extent to which progress is improving and helping to raise attainment
- the quality of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the effect of the contribution made by middle managers to monitoring and development work
- the work of the governing body in supporting and challenging the school.

Information about the school

This is a large combined school which admits pupils up to the age of 12. The very large majority of pupils are from a White British background and few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. These cover speech, language and communication, learning, and emotional and behavioural needs together with sight impairment and autistic spectrum disorder. The school holds The Artsmark, Sportsmark, School's Environment, Healthy School and Eco School awards. There have been considerable changes in the senior leadership team and the governing body over the last two years.

Governors provide a breakfast club which is managed and run by a teaching assistant.

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

Longfleet Combined is a good school. Pupils very much enjoy going to school and this is reflected in their very high attendance levels. The school's success is a result of the exceptionally strong and determined leadership of the headteacher and her senior leadership team. They have been instrumental in halting the decline in attainment and progress as seen in previous years. The quality of teaching has been improved and an exciting and challenging curriculum introduced. These now enthuse and motivate pupils well. Pupils' achievement is now good and attainment is above average. Pockets of inadequate progress, for example amongst some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have been fully eradicated. All pupils have equal opportunity to achieve well and do so, including those who have learning, language, physical or social and emotional needs.

After a period of great change a stable governing body is now in place. Under the exceptionally good leadership of their very experienced chair, governors support the school well and are becoming increasingly effective in contributing to monitoring and development work. The re-organised phase and curriculum teams are providing greater opportunities for middle leaders to support self-evaluation and improvement although their skills and experience in this area are not as effective as those of senior leaders. The team approach has engendered a strong focus on future improvement, with staff committed to ensuring that the school does not rest on its laurels. For example, they have identified that, although the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected levels has improved, attainment could rise further by setting more challenging activities and learning objectives, especially for the higher attainers. Effective self-evaluation means the school has already put in place plans to address these aspects. This, together with the school's track record in addressing its weaknesses during the last 18 months, gives every confidence that it is well placed to improve further and has good capacity for improvement.

The outstanding care, guidance and support is significantly under-pinned by an effective team of individuals. They have forged excellent relationships with a range of agencies and strong liaison with families in order to provide especially good support for the most vulnerable pupils. The school's Christian ethos is clearly evident in the care shown to all pupils and the excellent relationships staff have with them. Another strong feature of this aspect is that staff are continually seeking ways to raise the standard of care even further, hence the new induction procedures for Reception children are of especially high quality. Such features help ensure pupils do well in all aspects of their personal development and feel exceptionally safe and secure in

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school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the improvements in pupils' progress through ensuring all have challenging learning objectives and activities, especially for the higher attaining pupils.
- Ensure that the very successful strategies used by senior leaders in monitoring and evaluation work are implemented by all staff, particularly those with a position of responsibility.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pockets of inadequate progress have been completely eradicated due to effective teaching and a curriculum which enhances learning. As a result pupils make good progress throughout the school. Reception children do well, with most exceeding the level expected for their age. Last year attainment in the other year groups was broadly average but it is now above average by the end of Years 2, 6 and 7. Inspection evidence indicates attainment is poised to rise further. In writing, where progress had been slower, there has been a dramatic turn around, with pupils making very good progress throughout the school this year. This is evident in the way that Year 2 pupils regularly use words like 'suddenly' or 'just then' to enliven their writing. Pupils in Years 6 and 7 are skilled writers in a variety of styles and formats. Sentences like, 'The beast made an ear drum bursting cry of pain' make their writing very effective. The accuracy of younger pupils' calculations and good understanding of different shapes and measures is built on well, with older pupils becoming very confident mathematicians. They use their skills effectively to solve a variety of problems, for example in the high quality graphs they produced when investigating the favourite habitat of woodlice in science.

Pupils' great enjoyment of school is evident in their hard work and enthusiasm for learning. They are well aware of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, and are exceptionally clear with regard to keeping safe. Moral and social development is especially strong, so that behaviour is generally good despite a few pupils finding this difficult. Good quality assemblies help pupils develop a very good spiritual awareness. The new curriculum greatly enhances pupils' cultural awareness especially that of different countries, although the full impact of this has yet to be seen. Pupils embrace the many opportunities to take part in school and local community life. From a young age they are very keen to take on responsibility and develop into mature and thoughtful young people well placed for their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2

How effective is the provision?

Improvements in teaching and assessment have been underpinned by a greater willingness to share expertise. This has helped engender a reflective culture amongst staff, focused on ensuring that their practice is continually re-evaluated and enhanced. It is seen in the consistent approach to important features of teaching and learning. Of these the most notable is the high expectation of how pupils will work and behave in lessons, significantly supported by the excellent relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are very keen to please their teachers and this supports good achievement. Other very effective methods evident in all lessons are the way resources are used, the contribution of teaching assistants in supporting learning and the use of assessment information to help plan the next steps for pupils. There is, however, some variation, especially in the level of challenge in tasks and the quality of advice regarding how pupils can improve their work. This limits greater progress, especially for the higher attaining pupils. The school's thorough monitoring of teaching has already identified this, with plans in hand to address it.

Since January an exciting curriculum has been in place which makes learning relevant and very interesting. Although the full impact of this is not yet apparent it has already been spectacularly successful in priority areas. For example, the new writing programme which includes excellent assessment procedures has brought about very good progress in writing. There is a strong focus on providing learning activities which interest and support different groups, such as boys, ensuring they are motivated to achieve as well as other pupils. Pupils' welfare is of paramount importance at all times, with supervision in the grounds at playtimes being exceptionally good. Both pupils and their parents and carers appreciate the high

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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quality care, including that provided in the breakfast club. The extra support and guidance for pupils with specific needs has improved significantly over the last 18 months. In particular, there are many opportunities for pupils themselves and their families to contribute to evaluating progress and making suggestions for what needs to be done in the future.

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 success of the headteacher’s excellent drive for improvement, together with the exceptionally strong support she receives from the senior leadership team and Chair of Governors are clearly evident in the rapid development seen over the last 18 months. A great deal had to be done in a relatively short time to address weaknesses in the quality of provision that were accounting for the slowing progress and declining attainment. That teaching and the curriculum are now good, attainment above average and all pupils achieving well, are testaments to the success of senior managers. This, together with the effective focus on providing opportunities for all pupils to do equally well, ensures that none are discriminated against and the specific needs of pupils are effectively met. Much has also been done to achieve a shared commitment to driving forward improvement amongst staff and governors. For example, cross-phase curriculum teams with governor links to these are achieving a consistent approach to evaluation and development work. New measures introduced for monitoring teaching and pupils’ progress are much more regular and robust, with staff well aware of their need to ensure that progress in their class or area of responsibility does not slow. There is a real culture emerging of continual reflection on the impact of provision on pupils’ progress, with staff more willing to accept suggestions for how they can improve their practice.

Good arrangements, for example with regard to health and safety checks, staff vetting and child protection, help ensure pupils’ welfare is paramount. Procedures are extremely robust, with the school aware some policies need a slight adjustment. Community cohesion is good as a result of effective curriculum enhancement. Pupils’ awareness of different groups is developing well, with effective plans in hand to extend this further. The school works well with parents and carers and a range of other schools and agencies to enhance pupils’ education and welfare. Senior leaders are aware of some parents’ and carers’ concerns regarding recent changes and are doing all they can to allay these.

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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	2
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

Attainment on entry although broadly average is lower in some key language and communication skills. Children progress well because of effective teaching and activities well matched to the needs of young children so that most exceed the level expected by the time they move on to Year 1. Their good personal development is evident in the way they work and play happily together, confidently choosing activities and working independently. Staff are skilled at planning activities which help children discover new things for themselves as well as helping them gain important skills. As in the rest of the school the new writing programme ensures children make especially good progress in this area. Children’s individual needs are well provided for, exceptionally so for those with specific learning or physical needs as was evident in the way these children are so well included in all activities. New induction procedures last year have helped staff set up excellent relationships with parents and carers who are totally confident in the school’s ability to care for and educate their children. A typical comment was ‘I’ve been really impressed by the school – they make a genuine effort to ensure we’re kept up to date with progress.’ The Reception team lead this phase well, clearly recognising how they can continue enhancing the quality of provision.

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

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The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Views of parents and carers

A large majority of parents and carers have positive views, with those spoken to raising very little of concern. A typical comment was, ‘I wouldn’t send my child anywhere else because he has done so well at Longfleet and everyone at the school, teachers and staff are brilliant.’ This is largely the view of most parents and carers who agree that the quality of education is good and that their children are especially well cared for and are doing well.

Some parents and carers are unhappy about the way they have been consulted about the changes made over the last 18 months. Evidence shows that parents and carers are provided with a range of information about the school’s work and pupils’ progress; they are consulted well and their views are fully taken into account, with appropriate decisions being taken where these cannot be accommodated. Strategies to improve teaching and the curriculum have raised attainment well whilst also maintaining strengths in other areas like pupils’ health, safety and environmental awareness which some parents were concerned had been neglected. Whilst a small minority of parents and carers feel the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, both inspection evidence and the vast majority of pupils do not find this to be the case.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Longfleet Church of England Combined 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 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 480 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	48	52	47	5	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	52	47	52	47	5	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	32	66	60	7	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	31	60	55	12	11	3	3
The teaching is good at this school	47	43	57	52	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	29	61	55	17	15	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	32	66	60	7	6	2	2
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)	21	19	63	57	11	10	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	23	67	61	12	11	3	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	25	53	48	14	13	6	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	13	72	66	15	14	4	4
The school is led and managed effectively	28	25	48	44	22	20	6	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	35	58	53	9	8	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 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 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.

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.



27 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longfleet Church of England Voluntary Controlled Combined School, Poole, BH15 2HF

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We very much enjoyed our time talking to you and seeing all the things you do. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their lunchtime to talk to us. We think your school is good and are very pleased that you and your parents and carers agree.

Here are some of the things we found out were especially good about the school.

- You enjoy school very much and feel safe and happy there. We are really impressed that attendance levels are very much better than in most schools.
- Staff take excellent care of you, especially those of you who have special behavioural, language, learning or physical needs.
- Your progress is good, exceptionally so in writing, and attainment is better than in most schools.
- Teachers plan interesting activities for lessons which help you to work hard and do well.
- You are learning lots of skills that will help you in the future. In particular behaviour is good; you get on well together and are really good at taking on responsibility.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors have worked really hard to help your school improve and are continuing to do so.

Here are some of the things we have asked the school to improve.

- Although you have made good progress this year we have asked teachers to set you really challenging tasks so you can do even better.
- Senior leaders have especially good skills that help the school to improve and we have asked them to help other leaders develop these skills too.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wilkinson
Lead Inspector

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