

# Cumberland Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116192
<b>Local Authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	357901
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 November 2010–1 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eileen Chadwick

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	140
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Lindsey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Beverly Naylor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Methuen Road Southsea PO4 9HJ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited seven lessons and five teachers were observed. Inspectors also held meetings with pupils, staff with key responsibilities, representatives of the governing body and a local authority officer. In addition to observing the school's work and evaluating documentation such as policies, the school improvement plan, pupils' work and records of their learning and progress, inspectors examined 38 completed questionnaires from parents and carers and 11 members of staff.

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

- How consistently well children develop their key skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How effective are the steps being taken to improve pupils' attainment and progress in writing and mathematics?
- Whether teaching and the curriculum consistently meet the learning needs of different groups, especially more-capable pupils.
- How well the new leadership team has settled and the quality of the new structures and systems for managing the school. ♦♦

## Information about the school

This small infant school serves the immediate local community and its surrounding area. Although most pupils are White British, the proportion of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds is a little larger than in most schools, with the majority originating from Eastern Europe. Few speak English as an additional language and very few are at early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is above average. As is the proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils' difficulties relate mainly to emotional and behavioural and/or speech, language and literacy. Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils attending the school has risen. The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up post one year ago.

The Early Years Foundation Stage has two single-age Reception classes while the ♦three classes for Key Stage 1 comprise pupils of mixed ages. The pre-school, ♦ breakfast club and after-school clubs on site are privately managed and were inspected separately. The children's centre on the school's site is managed by the local authority and was also not part of this inspection. The school holds Activemark and Healthy Schools awards. ♦♦

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Cumberland Infant School provides a satisfactory education. It is a friendly, nurturing school where pupils and their parents are made to feel very welcome. Pupils are well cared for and kept very safe and these strengths, together with an interesting curriculum, underpin pupils' enjoyment of school, their good behaviour and strong sense of personal safety. Leaders and managers have created a team of hard-working, enthusiastic staff who are all committed to improving pupils' learning. Parents and carers are pleased with the way the school is moving forward and one echoed the views of many saying, 'The headteacher and her team have transformed the school.'

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children begin school with skills that are below those levels expected for their age. From this starting point, good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage lifts attainment to average by the time they enter Year 1. Improvements to provision enable children to become more confident and independent learners and to do better in writing. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and, by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, fewer reach higher levels in writing and mathematics than they should. Leaders are taking effective steps to improve writing. For example, a more exciting curriculum for writing has led to pupils enjoying writing activities. However, weaker spelling and punctuation prevent writing standards rising more quickly. The strong emphasis given to developing pupils' speaking helps to lay a secure foundation for all pupils' learning

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and they contribute well to the community in which the school plays an important part. Their good understanding of how to stay healthy and fit is recognised in national awards. Much has been done in the last year to improve attendance but this remains below average. Pupils' attendance targets are rigorously shared with parents and the school is refining pupils' individualised targets so they clearly understand their own contribution.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Although there is some good teaching throughout the school, there are inconsistencies in Key Stage 1 when teachers make inconsistently effective use of assessment information to plan lessons. As a result, at times, the challenge for more-capable pupils slows or work is too hard for the lower attaining ones. This prevents these groups making consistently good progress.

Leaders are driving the improvement in teaching and learning satisfactorily. The headteacher has tackled some of the outstanding issues with urgency and vigour. For example, systems for checking pupils' progress and setting targets have been strengthened and staff are more accountable for pupils' progress. Roles and responsibilities have been reviewed so that leadership is shared. But, because middle leaders are often new to their roles, they are still developing their ability to lead their

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subjects. Senior leaders' accurate self-evaluation means the school has appropriate priorities for moving forward. The governing body recognises the school's strengths and weaknesses and, under the well-informed leadership of the chair, they are strengthening their role in challenging the school. All this, alongside much improved opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning, indicates the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning to at least good and raise attainment by July 2011 by:
  - developing teachers' skills in using assessment so they can plan and teach activities which consistently meet pupils' needs and build well on their existing skills
  - raising expectations and challenge for the most-able pupils so that the proportions of pupils reaching higher levels in writing and mathematics increase
  - developing a systematic approach to teaching spelling and punctuation.
- Improve attendance by July 2011 by:
  - working more closely with families to improve attendance to ensure they appreciate the impact of irregular attendance on their children's learning and progress
  - refining pupils' individual attendance targets so that pupils themselves take more responsibility.
- Develop systems for more effective shared leadership and management by:
  - developing the roles of middle managers so they can play a full part in raising pupils' achievement.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils say they enjoy learning best when they are involved in practical and problem solving activities. The school's new curriculum for teaching mathematics draws on this approach well. In a good lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils eagerly worked out the value of different coins through practical tasks. The teacher's good use of assessment meant that pupils of all abilities learned well because of the careful match to their learning needs. For example, more advanced Year 2 pupils applied their understanding of simple multiplication facts when working out money while the younger lower attaining ones counted simple coins. However, this good match is not yet consistent across all classes, which prevents pupils making consistently good progress.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and minority ethnic pupils, including those with English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily. The school has recently reduced the high proportion classified as having special educational needs. A significant number had literacy and numeracy needs because of earlier underachievement. The school is providing helpful extra support through intervention activities for these pupils so they catch up. Pupils are also helped to learn how to work independently. Those

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with emotional and behavioural difficulties are helped well and the incidence of poor behaviour is unusual.

Pupils are proud of their school and help to promote its ethos of respect well. The school has correctly identified that pupils' cultural understanding, while satisfactory, is an area for development. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, for example as playground leaders and members of the school council. They feel the school listens to their views and enjoy helping the school to make some decisions, for example about the curriculum or improvement to premises.

The school's hard work with both pupils and parents to emphasise the importance of good attendance has had a positive impact in reducing the number of persistent absentees. However, a minority of pupils from all backgrounds and of all abilities do not attend as regularly as they should and this restricts their progress. Not all parents and carers appreciate the detrimental effect of taking time out of school for non-urgent appointments and occasional days. The extent to which pupils apply their basic skills prepares them satisfactorily for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

Adults' good relationships with pupils mean that learning takes place in a supportive classroom atmosphere. They manage their pupils well. Teachers' enthusiasm, good use of

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practical resources and whiteboard technology engage pupils' interests and there are good opportunities for pupils to share their thinking with a 'talk partner'. This was seen to extend pupils' vocabulary and thinking before they settled to their independent writing or mathematical tasks. However, in a few lessons, insufficient use is made of assessment to ensure pupils' learning fully matches their existing skills. On occasions, lesson introductions are hard for lower attaining pupils to follow and sometimes there are insufficient extension activities for more-capable pupils. The recent organisation of pupils into ability groups within their classes for phonics ♦ sounds and letters ♦ enables teachers to match this work more readily to pupils' learning needs.

The curriculum satisfactorily develops pupils' basic skills. Cross-curricular links are developing and the school has strengthened systems for teaching literacy and numeracy, for example through a systematic approach to guided reading, and introduced stronger systems for promoting pupils' mathematical calculation and mental skills. There are good opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes, for example, as seen when pupils used interesting adjectives to describe different characters from the Nativity after acting out scenes on this theme. The school has correctly identified the need for more rigorous guidelines for teaching spelling and punctuation. Enrichment through after-school and lunchtime clubs, special events weeks and visits and visitors are strengths in an otherwise satisfactory curriculum. ♦

Adults work successfully to support and include pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. As a result, they fully participate in learning and the life of the school and make similar progress to the others. Good partnerships with a range of other schools and agencies help support pupils well. For example, the school works well with external agencies to ensure those who speak English as an additional language or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with challenging behaviour, receive maximum support. Staff can identify striking examples of how pupils have been helped to overcome difficulties. Considerable support is given to parents to enable them to help their children learn and the school works hard to assist families and pupils in difficulties. ♦♦♦

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides good leadership. She is ambitious for pupils and staff and this is driving improvement well. School leaders and staff share her vision and are clear about the actions needed to bring about improvement. The new leadership structure is well thought through and the headteacher has begun to create effective systems for leaders to

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work together in developing and evaluating the work of the school. The headteacher rigorously checks the quality of teaching and staff say they feel encouraged to develop their skills. The collection and evaluation of data have been strengthened and all staff are accountable for evaluating the impact of their provision on pupils' progress.

The governing body provides satisfactory support to the school. Governors have high ambitions for the school and, under the good leadership of the chair, are increasing their understanding of how to monitor the school's performance. As a result, they are in a better position to hold it to account. ♦

The governing body have worked closely with the school to improve safeguarding arrangements, which are now good. Enhancements to site security have done much in this respect. Safeguarding is firmly established in policies, working practices and the ethos of the school. This is affirmed by the high degree of endorsement from parents in the questionnaires returned.

There was no evidence of discrimination at the time of the inspection and the similar rates of progress of different groups of pupils as they move up through the school mean that equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Leaders are keen to lift these features to become good in the future, as such, they are well aware of the need to ensure that the most-able pupils do as well as possible in all lessons and that those who find learning more difficult always have suitable work throughout all lessons. Work has begun on this but occasionally there remain inconsistencies in provision.

The school promotes cohesion in its own community well. It has evaluated that further work is needed to reach out beyond this and has clear plans in place for promoting and extending pupils' understanding from national and global perspectives.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Close links with the pre-school on site, a warm welcome from staff and strong links between home and school ensure that children settle very well. Care and welfare are given a high priority and this helps children feel safe and secure. Children make good progress and, by the end of Reception, their attainment is average, including in language, communication and literacy and in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. The strong focus on developing their language and personal skills and thorough systems for teaching phonics and reading give children a good start. Children explore and learn well through a range of activities which they greatly enjoy. Role play, for example in the Post Office, supports their creative development as well as their language, mathematical and personal skills. Adults strike a good balance between more formal, adult-led activities and those that children select for themselves. Activities are carefully planned for learning indoors and outside and the large outdoor area is used particularly well for physical development. Good leadership and management ensure that the procedures for assessing children's work and monitoring their progress are very effective. Leaders rigorously evaluate the impact of their provision on children's progress and they quickly make improvements where necessary. All staff work closely together and share their expertise. They provide good information for parents, who are delighted with how well their children are progressing.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

A very large majority of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaires agreed that they were very happy with their children's experience at school and that their children enjoy coming to school. Inspectors endorse their views that the school keeps their children safe, listens to their concerns and that the headteacher and staff are working hard to improve the school and pupils' progress. A few parents expressed concern that pupils do not always behave well enough. The inspection team find that pupils' behaviour during the inspection was good and well managed. A minority of parents of reception -children wrote to say they could not yet comment on the extent to which their children were prepared for changing year groups as they had only started school at the beginning of this term. ♦

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cumberland Infant 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 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 140 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	89	3	8	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	66	12	31	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	68	11	29	0	0	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	79	8	21	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	76	9	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	66	13	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	63	14	37	0	0	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)	15	39	15	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	71	10	26	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	39	19	50	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	58	14	37	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	66	13	34	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	79	7	18	1	3	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



2 December 2010

Dear Children

**Inspection of Cumberland Infant School, Southsea PO4 9HJ◆◆◆◆**

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

The school provides you with a satisfactory and improving education and here are some of the things your school does well.

- You make a good start in Reception.
- You enjoy school and help to make it a special place because you are polite and helpful and behave well.
- Your spiritual, moral and social education is good.
- You understand how important it is to keep fit and healthy and know you should not eat too many cakes and sweets.
- Senior staff, teachers and governors are working hard to make your school even better.

We have asked your school to help you to do even better by:

- helping your teachers◆ plan activities for you that are not too hard and not too easy so that you can do even better
- making sure those of you who are more capable reach even higher standards in writing and mathematics and all of you improve your spelling and punctuation
- making sure you all attend school as often as you should and help your families to realise how important this is for your learning and future
- making sure all school leaders contribute equally to making the school better and check how well things are going.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and you can help by working hard in all you do.◆

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick  
Lead inspector

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