

Solent Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116199
Local Authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	357903
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Denise Morris

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kay Boshier
Headteacher	Sylvia Hunter
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2008
School address	Eveleigh Road Hampshire Hampshire PO6 1DH
Telephone number	02392 371073
Fax number	02392 382606
Email address	sdhunter@solent-inf.portsmouth.sch.uk

Age group	4–7
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2010
Inspection number	357903

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. During the inspection 13 lessons were observed and 13 teachers were seen teaching. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, governors, staff and senior leaders. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, planning documents, the school improvement plan and the minutes of the most recent governors' meetings. The inspection questionnaires were responded to by 182 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well the curriculum and teaching cater for boys.
- The progress made by boys and those pupils who are more-able.
- The effectiveness of the school's community cohesion strategy.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average infants school with a three-form entry. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is low. These include pupils identified with moderate learning difficulties and speech and language difficulties. The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club that are not managed by the governing body and therefore were not part of the inspection.

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

Solent Infants is a good school. Pupils thrive in its warm and caring ethos. Parents and carers are right when they say that their children enjoy school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all aspects of learning and take part eagerly in the wide range of additional activities offered. The school provides outstanding care, support and guidance and as a result pupils feel extremely safe, behave exceptionally well and their already above average attendance is rising. Their social and moral development is excellent and is evident in the way pupils work very well together, share their learning and help others whenever they can.

The school has maintained above average standards since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. They make the best progress in reading. Girls make better progress than boys, especially in writing. Pupils who are more-able do not always achieve their full potential because on occasions too little is planned specifically to challenge those pupils of higher ability. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because of carefully focused targets and high levels of individual attention. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well during their time in the Reception classes. They benefit from high quality care and good teaching so that by the time they enter Year 1 most attain the levels expected and many exceed them.

Teaching has improved since the last inspection because of high levels of training and good systems to promote joint observations to share best practice and peer group support. As a result, teaching is almost always at least good with some that is outstanding. Teachers provide some exciting activities which along with the good quality curriculum enhance children's learning. These are mostly successful in promoting pupils' good achievement and their strong personal development. For example, the very high focus on recycling and sustainability shows that pupils are concerned about their environment and take on simple responsibilities to improve it.

Good leadership and management are key features of the overall good provision. This is evident in the way that the new headteacher, appointed for the start of next term, has been working in partnership with current leaders to ensure a smooth transition. Excellent links ensure that parents and carers are kept fully informed about their children's progress and that they are fully involved in the life of the school. Safeguarding, including child protection procedures, are good. The school has made a sound start to its satisfactory strategy for community cohesion although links and activities to strengthen pupils' cultural development are limited. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Through effective self-evaluation leaders, including the governing body, have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Good quality leadership and management, sustained good achievement and improvements to the overall good provision show that the school has a good capacity to continue improving.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of boys in writing, of those who are more-able in all subjects, and the abilities of more able children in the Early Years Foundation stage by:
 - raising expectations of what they can achieve in lessons so that the pace of their learning improves
 - providing tasks and resources that are closely linked to their interests and abilities
 - ensuring that planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is linked more closely to individual abilities.
- Develop the school's strategy for community cohesion so that actions have a positive impact beyond the school and on pupils' awareness of other cultures and lifestyles.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, as reflected in their above average attendance. They achieve well so that by the end of Year 2, pupils' skills are above average in reading, writing and mathematics and have been so for the past few years. In a mathematics lesson in Year 2, for example, excellent understanding of how to gather, interpret and present data was exhibited by pupils because of the high quality resources used and because of the teachers' very good planning, questioning and skill in engaging them all in the task. Occasionally, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. This is particularly evident in writing where pupils are not always encouraged to write enough in the time available. As a result, some boys as well as those pupils who are more-able do not do quite as well as they might and too few pupils attain the higher levels in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from specifically tailored tasks and support, resulting in their good achievement. Pupils achieve particularly well in music because of some specialist provision.

Pupils behave exceptionally well and adhere to the school's ethos so that there is a harmonious atmosphere in all lessons. They say that they feel extremely safe and secure at school and that there is always someone that they can talk to. Their 'Healthy School' award is reflected in the many special events that help them to keep fit and healthy. This is exemplified in the high number of pupils who take part in the 'walk to school on Wednesday' programme and in the school's travel plan which includes spacious storage for bicycles and scooters. Their good contribution to the local community is shown by the way they talk eagerly about the work of their 'energy and sustainability' group and how they worked to achieve the targets needed to have solar panels fitted to the school roof. They regularly undertake projects to ensure that the best possible use is made of every used item. Older pupils take responsibility for daily recycling. Pupils themselves initiated fundraising for Haiti and to support endangered animals at the local zoo. Outstanding social and moral development is evident in the exceptional way that pupils play together in harmony and support each other, with older ones taking good care of younger children. Their spiritual development is good but their cultural development is more limited and there are too few opportunities for them to learn about lifestyles that are different from their own. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

The rich and varied curriculum is having a good impact on pupils' enjoyment and on their achievement. Enrichment through visits, sports, music activities and visitors is good and helps to keep pupils excited about their learning. For example, themed weeks provide exciting opportunities that pupils really value. They talked excitedly about the annual 'shooting stars' week and the regular sports activities taught by specialists through the school's sports partnership with other local schools.

The effective range of approaches used in lessons ensures that most pupils make at least good progress. Relationships are strong, helping to extend pupils' confidence and self-esteem. In a few lessons too little is planned or expected from the more able pupils, including in the Reception classes, and sometimes planned tasks do not engage boys in particular. For example, a group of boys in one class were busy measuring liquids in different containers. They really enjoyed the activity and talked excitedly about how some containers held more liquid than others. However the lack of time planned for the session was too short and as a result they were confused about their measurements and unclear what was expected. Assessment is used well to provide a clear view of pupils' progress and to plan the next steps and marking is helpful and supportive. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the learning of all groups.

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

Parents and carers rightly believe that their children are very well cared for and safe at school. Staff work exceptionally well to support pupils, drawing on a wide range of other professionals to involve and engage families. Procedures to improve attendance are very effective and have a positive impact. Transition is very well planned so that older pupils transfer smoothly to junior school.

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 headteacher's clear vision is evident in all aspects of the school's work. She has embedded her ambition and desire for improvement by rigorously reviewing all aspects of the school's work and by working closely in partnership with the newly appointed headteacher who takes over the role in January 2011. Recent improvements that they have worked on together include embedding the new leadership team, developing and enriching the curriculum, increasing links with local schools and the community, and improving teaching through modelling and peer support. Leaders have set a clear agenda and direction for the future and are ably supported by the assistant headteacher, staff and the governing body. Since the last inspection roles of middle and senior leaders have been clearly defined so that they are fully involved in evaluating and improving the school. Accurate self-evaluation and rigorous monitoring have resulted in leaders, including the governing body, having a clear view of what is working well and what still needs improving. Excellent links with parents and carers have been forged through regular contact, frequent invitations to school, thorough parent letters and information and parent workshops all of which are highly valued. Leaders value equality and are rigorous in eliminating any discrimination caused by differences in the progress of different group of pupils.

Governance is good. The governing body is both supportive and challenging and fully meets its responsibilities. Safeguarding procedures fully meet current government guidelines. The site is secure and procedures to keep pupils safe are rigorously applied. The school's satisfactory community cohesion strategy has resulted in extended links locally, and ensures pupils' very good social and personal development. Links to promote their cultural awareness are developing but are more limited.

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

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	1
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their time in the Reception classes. They quickly settle and take part in the good range of activities provided. Children behave very well and get on well together. They are happy to share their activities with their peers. They show good understanding of healthy foods and regularly choose fruit for their snack and know that it is good for them. Their skills on entry are as expected for children of this age. They make good progress so that by the time they enter Year 1 their skills in reading, writing and mathematics are above expected levels. Mostly good teaching was seen during the inspection where children had high levels of attention and a good range of learning opportunities. For example, good use of talking partners was used in one class to help children remember words they had made with magnetic letters. Because they were able to share their ideas with their peers, children remembered how to build three letter words and showed good levels of determination to succeed. Occasionally, there are missed opportunities to extend children's learning because tasks are not linked closely enough to their abilities and at these times the pace of their learning dips. The curriculum provides a good range of exciting activities in the classrooms but the outdoor areas are sometimes underused.

Good leadership ensures that children are well looked after and that their welfare needs are effectively met. Photographic and annotated evidence is used well to assess how well children achieve.

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

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

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are exceptionally supportive of the school's leadership and very pleased with the quality of education offered to their children. 'My children have always excelled, been encouraged and been happy' and 'we feel very lucky to be part of such a great school,' are typical comments from parents and carers. Every parent and carer who responded to the questionnaire said that the school keeps their children safe and helps them to lead healthy lives.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Solent Infants 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 182 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 270 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	127	70	42	23	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	134	74	39	21	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	111	61	60	33	2	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	122	67	47	26	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	130	71	43	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	127	70	44	24	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	129	71	44	24	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)	101	55	55	30	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	117	64	51	28	2	1	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	98	54	65	36	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	103	57	61	34	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	133	73	37	20	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	138	76	32	18	1	1	1	1

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). 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">■ 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.



5 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Solent Infants School, Portsmouth PO6 1DH

On behalf of the inspection team, thank you for your help in our recent visit 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 good education and here are some of the things your school does well.

- You behave very well and get on very well with all your friends at school.
- You understand how important it is to keep fit and healthy and how to stay safe.
- Most of you achieve well and make good progress in your lessons.
- Those of you who find learning difficult are trying hard to improve and you achieve well.
- Your teachers give you lots of exciting things to do and you really enjoy your learning.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased with the school.
- You are achieving well in music.

We have asked your school to do two things to help you do better, by:

- improving how well boys and those who are more-able achieve in lessons by giving you activities that match your abilities.
- developing a wider range of activities to help you learn about cultures and lifestyles that are different from your own.

You can help by continuing to work hard and making sure you do enough work in your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Denise Morris
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.