

South View Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115975
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338697
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Beryl Richmond HMI

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Hicks
Headteacher	Patricia MacDougall
Date of previous school inspection	23 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 13 lessons and some small group sessions, taught by 14 different teachers and learning support assistants. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors looked at a range of documents including assessment data giving information about the progress of groups of pupils. Policies and procedures for safeguarding were checked, as was planning. Joint observations of lessons were carried out with senior staff. Conversations took place with some parents and carers before school. Account was taken of the 90 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and of 39 questionnaires completed by staff.

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

- the effectiveness of actions taken to improve the attainment of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the effectiveness of actions taken by the Early Years Foundation Stage team to improve children's skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing and to support their personal, social and emotional development
- the effectiveness of actions taken to improve attainment in mathematics and writing, particularly for more-able pupils.

Information about the school

South View is an average-sized infant school. The number of pupils on roll has increased over recent years. In addition to the Reception classes, there is provision for Early Years Foundation Stage children in a Nursery class. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is almost double the national average. About the same proportion of pupils as that seen nationally is of minority ethnic heritage and about three quarters of these pupils are learning English as an additional language. More than half of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is much higher than usual. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is almost three times the national average. These pupils mainly have speech, language and communication difficulties. If the children are of Nursery or Reception age they are fully integrated into these classes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught in the Language Unit in the mornings. The needs of other pupils include learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social needs, visual impairment and autistic spectrum disorder. The school provides a breakfast club, which is the responsibility of the governing body and was inspected as part of this inspection. The school has received the following awards in recognition of its work: Information and Communication Technology Mark, Investor in People and the schools Activemark. The school has achieved enhanced National Healthy School status.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to attainment, achievement and attendance.

Attainment has been consistently low over recent years and, although there are signs of improvement, this improvement is recent and not sustained nor rapid. Although many pupils make good progress from low starting points, particularly in their language and communication skills, they are not catching up to the expected levels quickly enough. Consequently, they are not well enough prepared for the next stage in their education. In 2009, pupils with statements of special educational needs, those identified as needing additional external support for special educational needs and pupils learning English as an additional language progressed well and attained standards above those of similar pupils elsewhere. Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs are very appreciative of the school's work and say that their children have grown in confidence and skills very well. However, in 2009, middle- and higher-ability pupils did not achieve well enough in reading, writing and particularly in mathematics. There is too little recorded work in books and pupils are not clear enough about what they need to learn to improve. Attendance is low and the proportion of pupils persistently absent is high, despite the school's efforts to reduce this.

The school has a fairly accurate view of its performance. Assessment systems are good and the local authority has confirmed that the school's data are correct. The school's records show that pupils are on track to attain more highly this year. There is a well-focused development plan with the right priorities for improvement. Teaching and learning are at least satisfactory which means that pupils make satisfactory progress over time but do not close the gap on the expected level for their age. Care, guidance and support are good and this leads to good outcomes in pupils' personal development. The governing body knows the school very well and checks regularly on progress of key areas for development. Because of all of these features, capacity to improve is judged to be satisfactory.

Children make a satisfactory start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage classes. Although attainment has improved, only about one fifth of children reach the expected level in both communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Reception Year. This is a much lower proportion than usual and means that the majority are not ready for the National Curriculum in Year 1.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance so that it is broadly in line with the national average by the end of July 2011, in particular by reducing the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.
- Increase the proportion of children attaining the nationally expected level by the end of the Reception Year in both communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development to at least one third by July 2011. Achieve this by:
 - giving children more opportunities for speaking and listening
 - prioritising the learning of vocabulary
 - providing more opportunities for children to initiate their own learning and giving them well-focused support to take their learning further.
- Raise the attainment and achievement of the middle - and higher-ability pupils in reading, writing and mathematics so that the proportions reaching the nationally expected level and above are in line with those achieved nationally by July 2011. Achieve this by:
 - providing pupils with more challenging work
 - giving pupils more opportunity to record their work and explain their thinking
 - ensuring that pupils know the next steps in their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils are well behaved and usually engage well with their learning in lessons, which they enjoy. There is too little difference between what pupils of different ability and prior attainment are asked to do. For example, on some occasions, more-able pupils participate in whole-class sessions, instead of being given opportunities to work independently on challenging tasks much earlier in the lesson. Alternatively, the whole class may be working in groups on similar tasks. On these occasions, there is support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who consequently learn well, but there is not enough challenge for those pupils who are capable of learning more. Where learning is good or better, pupils are often taught in small groups where the teacher pitches the work to match the needs of each group specifically. She then works with them in turn and by questioning knows what they understand and consequently can challenge them further. Although pupils learning English as an additional language achieve well, opportunities for language development in lessons are sometimes missed because teachers do not, for example, provide specific vocabulary to support small group work.

Pupils feel safe and know who to talk to if they are worried about anything. They know a great deal about healthy lifestyles. They contribute well to the community; they make sure that there is no litter and have collected money for the people affected by the earthquake in Haiti. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies contribute well to this aspect of pupils' development. For example, pupils learnt about responsibility in a meaningful way when they discussed the responsibilities of people in their school that they know well and related that to their own experiences. Although pupils develop good personal skills, their low level of basic skills means that they are not well enough prepared for the next stage in learning.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
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	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
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?

Relationships are good and pupils learn in a harmonious environment. In the best lessons, teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to learn to take decisions and also experience learning in a way that is appropriate to their development. The school has recently monitored and evaluated the quality of marking and a new policy has been put in place to address previous weaknesses. There is insufficient feedback to pupils on how they could improve their work and although pupils say that they have targets, these are not apparent in their books. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with speech and language difficulties but less well for middle- and higher-ability pupils. Recent improvements, like the Writers Caf for higher-ability pupils, are beginning to have a positive impact. The school has identified that pupils understanding of mathematical language is an area for development. However, there are missed opportunities in lessons for pupils to learn or consolidate new words and, on occasions, teachers do not assess rigorously enough to be sure which pupils really know these words.

Parents and carers are correctly very positive about the care that the school takes of their children. Specialist support for pupils with speech and language needs is very effective. Nurture groups support pupils with emotional needs and these are having a good impact on their personal development. Attendance is monitored regularly and outside agencies

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are involved, but improvements in attendance are not yet sustained over time. Pupils enjoy the well-organised breakfast club, which meets statutory requirements. It is run by staff who work in the Reception classes, who know well how to meet the needs of young children.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff are keen to improve the school. School leaders have established satisfactory arrangements to monitor the effectiveness of the school and this is embedding ambition and driving improvements satisfactorily. The headteacher and assistant headteacher work well together. As a result, the school is beginning to improve pupils' outcomes and promote equal opportunities. Discrimination is not tolerated. The school development plan has clear, measurable outcomes relating to appropriate priorities. Monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice are not sufficiently formalised. All teachers are held to account for each pupil's progress on a regular basis. The school is currently focusing on developing pupils' writing skills. Middle managers are taking an increasingly active role in the school's management and have action plans to develop their areas of responsibility. Safeguarding is good. All statutory requirements are in place and procedures are effectively carried out.

Good links have been established with other schools and agencies in the local area. Most parents say that communication is good and that staff are very approachable if they have a problem. The school provides a range of opportunities for parents to come into school so that they can meet the staff and learn new skills. For example, there are coffee afternoons and Cook and Eat sessions aimed at improving nutrition. There is a strong commitment to promoting community cohesion within the school, and in national and international contexts, so that pupils develop a better understanding of others' ways of life.

The governing body supports the school well and shares the vision for its future development. Members of the governing body regularly ask challenging questions and hold the school to account for its performance.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers are positive about the school's arrangements for the admission of their children, which ensure that children are well settled and routines are established. The staff are friendly and approachable. Children benefit from reasonably good-sized classrooms and a fairly large, satisfactorily resourced outdoor area. However, children cannot freely gain access to the outdoor space.

Teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Children usually engage well with their learning and make satisfactory progress. Staff provide a satisfactory range of activities that help children make choices and gain the confidence to investigate for themselves. For example, in discovery time, children enjoy exploring things that they are curious about and teachers give satisfactory support. Improvements have been made to the way in which literacy and language skills are taught and this is beginning to have an impact on attainment. Small group sessions, where children learn letters and sounds, are planned well to meet their needs and are having a good impact on their development. However, not enough children are catching up to the expected level in their language and personal, social and emotional development. Children are developing good computer skills and enjoy this aspect of the curriculum.

Determined leadership has set the tone for improvement so that children have the right experiences of learning for this stage of their development. However, on occasions, they spend too long sitting on the carpet in whole-class sessions. This can prevent children from being actively involved in their learning. Teamwork is good. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and children's records are kept diligently, using a range of evidence, including photographs. Welfare arrangements are good.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

There was a good response in terms of the number of questionnaires returned from parents and carers, who are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. They are particularly positive about the safety of their children. The area where the largest proportion of parents disagreed, although it was a very small minority, related to the good progress that their children make. The inspection team agrees that children are not making fast enough progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at South View 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.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	78	17	19	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	78	87	12	13	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	59	66	30	33	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	61	29	32	5	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	66	73	23	26	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	68	26	29	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	55	61	32	36	2	2	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)	53	59	33	37	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	62	31	34	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	51	57	34	38	3	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	50	56	35	39	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	68	76	21	23	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	70	78	18	20	2	2	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in the Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



16 March 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of South View Infant School, Basingstoke RG21 5LL

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed looking at your work, seeing you in lessons and talking with you.

Although some aspects of your school are good, in some areas it is not doing well enough and so we have given your school a notice to improve. This means that other inspectors will visit your school to check how well it is improving. Here are some of the things that are good about your school.

- You have a good understanding of how to stay safe, you know who to talk to if you are worried about anything.
- You do many good things for the community, like checking that there is no litter and sending money to the people affected by the earthquake in Haiti.
- Your behaviour is good and you are learning to get on well with each other.
- You know how to stay healthy and enjoy lots of physical activities.
- Adults in the school care for you well and know your families well.
- The governors check regularly on how well the school is improving.
- Those of you who have speech and language difficulties are given good support, which your parents value very much.

If you are someone who finds learning quite easy, we have asked your teachers to make sure you do as well as other pupils like you across the country in reading, writing and mathematics. We want teachers to always challenge you to do your best, give you more opportunities to record your work and to make sure that you understand how you can improve. We have asked teachers in the Reception classes to help you to learn to speak, listen, read, write and work well with other children more quickly. This will mean that more of you will be ready for Year 1 work.

We have also asked your school to improve attendance, particularly for those of you who are absent too often. You can all help by making sure that you come to school regularly and on time so that you do not miss lessons and have to catch up. We hope that you continue to enjoy school and do your best.

Yours sincerely

Beryl Richmond
Lead inspector

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