

Mill Rythe Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115914
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	363841
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Tim McLoughlin

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	298
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lisa Charlton
Headteacher	Jenny Queripel
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty-three lessons were observed, 12 teachers seen and discussions were held with representative groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a sample of the pupils' work, both in books and on wall displays, as well as school documentation which included the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe, minutes of governing body meetings and the school development plan. Inspectors analysed 136 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

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

- The attainment and progress of pupils currently in the school, paying particular attention to the quality of pupils' writing.
- The impact of the school's focus on teaching and learning, particularly on planning and assessment, on outcomes for pupils.
- The contribution of middle leaders in driving school improvement.

Information about the school

Mill Rythe School is a larger than average-sized junior school. Most of the pupils are from White British heritage, with few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is about average but does fluctuate. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low.

The school has gained accreditation for Investors in People and Activemark.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Central to its success are the strong and visionary leadership, a nurturing ethos and the emphasis placed by all staff and pupils on promoting extremely positive attitudes towards learning and high aspirations. Pupils get on very well together, are keen to do their best and enjoy being active members of a cohesive school community. Almost all parents and carers are very pleased with the school and recognise the value it adds to the lives of their children. One wrote, 'This is an excellent school; I am so impressed with both the leadership and the teaching' and another wrote, 'We consider ourselves very lucky to have such an excellent school in our catchment.' These comments were very typical of many others.

Staff know the pupils very well and actively encourage them in their learning. Children get off to a good start when they enter the school at Year 3 and make accelerated progress as they move up through the school. Pupils' achievement is outstanding by the end of Year 6; their attainment is high in English and mathematics. Attainment has risen since the previous inspection and pupils' progress has steadily improved to its current level. The school's focus on improving progress in writing in Years 3 and 4 has paid dividends and resulted in attainment in English being high, with pupils now taking much greater pride in their work. Teaching in most lessons is at least good, and often outstanding. Target setting and marking procedures are contributing most effectively to raising attainment, particularly in the pupils' writing portfolios. Pupils really enjoy the school's very interesting curriculum and the diverse range of opportunities for enrichment. This supports their learning and also contributes to their excellent understanding of healthy living and their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The level of care for all pupils, including the most vulnerable, is excellent. Early identification of learning difficulties and carefully targeted support enables pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress from their various starting points and needs.

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy, provides very strong leadership. She works well with staff and governors to identify and evaluate the school's strengths and areas for development with great accuracy and precision. Middle managers are becoming increasingly effective and are clear about strategies to promote their subjects and areas of responsibility. The governing body is very supportive and provides good challenge to the leadership team, especially on financial and health and safety matters. Governors monitor pupils' attainment and progress systematically but do not always challenge leaders as rigorously in this area and in raising pupils' awareness of lifestyles experienced by pupils in other United Kingdom settings and internationally. This is because the governors are over-reliant on information provided to them from the school rather than undertaking their own independent evaluation. Nevertheless, given the improvements made since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching and rising standards, the school has an excellent capacity to continue to improve.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the strategic role of the governing body in driving school improvements by:
 - establishing a more rigorous system for evaluating actions taken by the school in its school development plan and their impact in terms of pupils' progress
 - developing the school's provision across all strands of community cohesion to ensure that pupils have greater opportunities to compare their lifestyle with others in the United Kingdom and internationally.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The large majority of pupils enter the school with attainment broadly average for their age. Throughout the school, pupils speak very highly of their teachers and support staff. They work very hard in lessons, are motivated and respond well to challenge. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to work in pairs and larger groups. They are able to write for a range of purposes and audiences. In a Year 6 English lesson, for example, pupils worked in pairs to check each other's work and modify it to make improvements, with very good reference being made to a set of minimum standards adopted by the school. Pupils displayed confidence and integrity as they responded very politely to each other and to comments from the class teacher who guided their work. In a parallel class, pupils explored fractions as part of their work in mathematics. They consolidated and extended their learning and the teachers used very effective pupil groupings to really target pupils' individual needs to make the very best use of their time. Pupils' attainment in mathematics remains high and rose sharply last year; attainment in English remains high.

There are no significant differences in performance between groups, although progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies slightly from year to year. This is due to the nature of the individual needs that these pupils have. Girls and boys do similarly well and this is because procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are well established. Pupils of all abilities are challenged and support is quickly provided when difficulties are encountered.

Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is exemplary. They are keen to take responsibility, undertake tasks around the school and to become members of the school council. Pupils raise funds for national and international charities and take part in local events. For example, some pupils identified as potentially vulnerable on entry to Year 3 are paired with a senior citizen from a nearby housing association as part of a mentoring system that tracks the child on his or her journey through the school. Other pupils and their parents formed a committee to raise funds through a series of car boot sales to make improvements to the school environment. Nearly all of the pupils adopt a healthy lifestyle. They have an excellent understanding of the importance of taking regular physical exercise and evidently make informed choices when selecting healthy options from the school lunch menu. This has contributed to the school being awarded the Activemark award in recognition of this. Pupils demonstrate a very accurate awareness of safety issues, especially when outside of the school grounds. Pupils are very reflective and have an excellent understanding of right and wrong, though they have a less well developed understanding of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage. Their attendance is high and behaviour around the school, both during lessons and at less structured times, is excellent. Pupils' high attainment, their very positive

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attitude to learning and their ability to work together provide them with a firm basis for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
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	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
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?

In all lessons, teachers identify a good range of activities that capture the interest of the pupils. They share the purpose of the lesson so that pupils are clear about the intended outcomes. In most lessons, questioning strategies are used effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and to consolidate learning. There is a good balance between teachers' and pupils' contributions and lessons proceed at a lively pace. Very good use is made of opportunities to promote subject-specific vocabulary and teachers' subject knowledge is very secure. The sharing of ideas with a talk partner or collaboratively in small groups is a regular feature and this helps the pupils develop their social skills and their ability to communicate with others. The most experienced and skilled teachers are very able to use assessments effectively to plan their lessons and pupils' work. There are some very good examples of developmental marking, especially in writing, and the marking in all subjects is clearly compared against the intended learning outcomes for those individual lessons.

The curriculum supports pupils' learning in mathematics and English very well. It is modified effectively to meet the needs of pupils who find learning difficult, and well-deployed teacher assistants give invaluable support. The approach to the delivery of the curriculum is skills-based but, wherever possible, links are made between subjects. For

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example, a Year 6 class used information and communication technology to research the differences between the school's location and a nearby town which they recently visited. They then collated their information in a tabulated format. The provision for sport, music and drama is enhanced by specialist teachers, who visit on a regular basis. Collaborative art displays, such as the large mural in the school hall, are of a high quality and reflect the care pupils take with their work. The school showed innovation and a keenness to respond to the wishes of parents by teaching Spanish to all pupils instead of French. This language is now clearly embedded in the culture of the school. Partnerships with other schools and organisations contribute most effectively to accelerating pupils' progress, for instance the annual 'Campus Day', when the older pupils organise and run events for the feeder infant school which adjoins the site. Pupils are keen to take part in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, such as drama, gardening and cookery. These contribute much to pupils' personal development and their enjoyment of learning, and result in an excellent overall experience.

Systems and structures to offer support and guidance to pupils are very well embedded in the work of the school. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils know they can turn to staff if they have any concerns and that any issues will be followed up. They are encouraged to become independent, respect each other and take responsibility. Attendance is carefully monitored and analysed to inform future action and as a result has steadily improved to its current high level.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together to drive school improvement. They are clear about their respective roles and responsibilities and have a clear view of actions needed. This is based on an accurate evaluation of the school's performance. They have introduced changes to the assessment procedures and the monitoring of teaching and learning. These have made a significant difference to pupils' learning and their rate of progress. The school development plan is set out clearly and the measures by which its success can be evaluated are sufficiently clear and precisely linked to pupils' attainment and progress. To this end, senior leaders at the school work very effectively with the staff at the nursery and infant school which share the same campus. The development of staff at all levels is taken very seriously, as recognised by the school achieving the Investors in People award.

The governing body monitors the work of the school well for the most part. Governors ensure that the school's safeguarding checks on recruitment and child protection

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procedures are robust and procedures to ensure that pupils are kept safe are firmly established in school routines. Governors ensure equality of opportunities very well. They address possible discrimination by investigating any discrepancies between groups of pupils and ensure that swift action is taken. A good example of this is how the attainment gap seen between girls and boys has been eradicated by the school in recent years. However, governors are less secure in their monitoring and evaluation of other academic performance of areas within the school development plan. Community cohesion is promoted well and the governing body is in contact with local religious leaders and has taken steps to promote understanding between different religions such as a recent 'Faith Day'. Nevertheless, plans to establish links with other schools in the United Kingdom in a contrasting location and with schools in other countries are at early stages.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

The return rate of questionnaires from parents and carers was higher than in most primary schools. The vast majority of respondents were entirely supportive of the school. Almost all stated that their child felt safe, enjoyed school and that the school helps their child adopt a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors found that pupils enjoy school, and have an excellent understanding of healthy living and of their own personal safety. Inspectors found that the school works well with parents and carers and is keen to listen to their views. Pupils are making excellent progress in their learning and behaviour in the school is also excellent.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mill Rythe Junior 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 136 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 298 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	57	56	41	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	94	69	41	30	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	65	48	70	51	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	45	70	51	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	76	56	58	43	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	65	48	61	45	6	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	66	49	66	49	4	3	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)	75	55	56	41	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	61	45	70	51	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	74	54	57	42	3	2	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	43	63	46	7	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	86	63	43	32	4	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	83	61	48	35	1	1	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mill Rythe Junior School, Hayling Island, PO11 0PA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school and for completing the questionnaires. We enjoyed our visit and talking to you. We were pleased to find that you have an excellent understanding of healthy living and make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community.

Mill Rythe is an outstanding school. The staff and governors work very hard to provide you with an outstanding education. They take very good care of you and make certain you are safe. Teachers plan their lessons very well so that you make excellent progress as you move up through the school. Your attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is higher than that expected for your age. Your behaviour is excellent in lessons, at assembly and on the playground at break time. Well done! It was good to hear how much you enjoy school and this was very clear in the way you showed respect for one another and the adults there. In order to build on the success of your school and make it even better, we have asked the school to do these things:

- We have asked the governors to look more closely at the work you're doing in lessons so that they can help the headteacher and the senior staff to be sure you are all doing your very best.
- We would also like the school to help you to find out even more about what life is like for children of your age in other areas of the United Kingdom and internationally.

Please remember, to make your school even better, you must play your part by always trying your best. Continue to be proud of your school and of each other. After all, it is an outstanding school.

Yours sincerely

Tim McLoughlin

Lead inspector

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