

Netley Abbey Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116070
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	379194
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Joy Considine

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	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Dallimore
Headteacher	Jonathan Le Fevre
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2009
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 14 lessons taught by nine teachers and held meetings with school leaders, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work and looked at school development plans, pupils' assessment and tracking information and other documentation, including that relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They also analysed 81 questionnaires received from parents and carers as well as those from staff.

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

- How well teaching meets the needs of all pupils, particularly boys.
- The progress pupils make across the school, particularly in writing.
- The impact of the actions that school leaders have put in place to raise attainment and progress.

Information about the school

The school is a broadly average-sized infant school. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than in most schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. There is provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception classes. Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils on roll has increased and there have been several changes to the staff team. The school has gained the Healthy Schools award and Activemark. There is a pre-school on site which is not managed by the governing body and which will be inspected separately.

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

The school has improved since the previous inspection and it now provides a good quality of education. Under the dedicated leadership of the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body have successfully focused their priorities on raising standards and improving outcomes for pupils. School leaders have an accurate view of the strengths of the school and what more needs to be done to improve further. They are ambitious for the future as shown by the challenging yet realistic targets set for pupils. A comprehensive programme of monitoring and coaching to improve the quality of teaching has led to improvements in the quality of teaching so that a much greater percentage is now good or better. This means that pupils' progress has improved. The effective action taken since the last inspection demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to school. This good start is successfully built on and pupils continue to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. The rate of pupils' progress varies as they move through the school. Their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved and it is now broadly average, although lower in writing than in the other subjects. School leaders have introduced new initiatives to improve the quality of pupils' writing and a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that these initiatives are rapidly raising standards.

The quality of teaching varies across the school but it is good overall. In most lessons, teachers plan lessons that interest pupils and inspire them to work hard. However, in some lessons, teachers do not always make effective use of information from assessment to tailor activities more closely to the learning needs of all pupils. This leads to some variation in the progress that pupils make across the school. Questioning does not always challenge pupils sufficiently and pupils do not always know how much work is expected of them. The curriculum is good and enriched with imaginative experiences which add to pupils' enjoyment. The quality of art and design is a strength of the school and is exemplified by the outstanding displays of pupils' work.

Pupils' personal development is good and underpinned by good quality care, guidance and support provided by adults. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle and they say the school is a happy and safe place to be. They are adequately prepared for their next stage of education because they are reaching levels of attainment that are broadly average and their attendance is

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satisfactory. Although the school works hard to promote good attendance some parents and carers do not realise the importance of regular attendance in relation to their children's learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment, particularly in writing, by:
 - making better use of assessment information to match tasks more closely to pupils' individual needs
 - reducing the number of photocopied resource sheets so that pupils have more opportunities to record their work independently.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is all consistently good or better by:
 - making clear to pupils how much work they are expected to complete within the time available
 - improving the quality of questioning to probe pupils' thinking and to developing their understanding.
- Work closely with those parents and carers who do not ensure their children attend school regularly, in order to improve pupils' rates of attendance.
- Ensure that sufficient time is given to subjects other than literacy and numeracy to provide opportunities for pupils to study other subjects in further depth.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils start school with skills below expected levels for their age and most make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved and is broadly average. Boys have not done as well as girls and the school has recently put into place actions to address this. Data from assessment and scrutiny of pupils' work show that boys have improved their writing skills and they are quickly catching up with the girls. For example, a topic on space gave them a purpose to write and their letters to astronauts showed improving vocabulary, spelling and creative content. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points because they receive good support in lessons. Pupils enjoy learning and they are keen to respond to teachers' questions, particularly when they have to work hard. Scrutiny of pupils' work showed that in a minority of lessons, pupils complete photocopied worksheets. This limits their opportunities to record their work independently and slows their progress, particularly in writing.

Pupils are friendly and get on well together. They feel safe in school because they know that adults will listen to them and address their concerns. They say there is little bullying and that the school helps them to stay safe. Pupils behave well in

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lessons and in the playground and they are polite and well mannered. They have a good understanding of the need to make healthy choices and they enjoy the opportunities they have to take part in physical activities after school. The national Healthy Schools award and the Activemark further demonstrate pupils’ good awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles. Pupils make a good contribution to their school and local community. They have worked alongside members of the Friends’ Association to plan and raise funds for the outdoor musical classroom. They initiate collections for local charities and they recently produced over 75 filled shoeboxes in response to an appeal. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and they are developing a good cultural awareness through the stimulating arts curriculum.

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	3
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	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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most teachers use imaginative methods to capture pupils’ interest and inspire them to learn. In most lessons, the pace is brisk and teachers consistently provide additional challenge for pupils throughout by their skilful questioning. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and, consequently, pupils behave well. Teachers set clear learning intentions so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. However, they do not always make clear to pupils how much work they are expected to complete within the given time. Although most teachers are skilled at asking pupils questions that probe their thinking and develop their understanding, a few spend too much time talking to pupils with little opportunity for them to respond. Teachers mark pupils’ work regularly and they provide pupils with good guidance

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

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about what they have done well and what they need to do to further improve their work.

The school has recently reviewed the curriculum and introduced topics such as 'Space' and 'Astronauts'. This enthused the boys and gave them a purpose to write. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched with a good range of activities to add to pupils' interest and enjoyment. It is good overall, although in a few classes, not enough time is spent on subjects other than literacy and numeracy. This means that there is not always enough time for pupils to study other subjects to any depth. The strategy to introduce themes through a focus day is effective. Pupils were instantly inspired after dressing up as astronauts as a forerunner to the topic. Pupils visit local places of interest such as the theatre and the local country park. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, such as French, gardening and football, to add to pupils' interest and enjoyment. The school works in close partnership with the adjacent junior school to develop the curriculum and to ensure that pupils continue to make good progress when they transfer there.

Parents, carers and pupils appreciate the good quality care, support and guidance provided for pupils, especially for those whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. One parent wrote, 'Netley Abbey provides my child with a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment for her to learn.' Arrangements for child protection are good and all staff receive up-to-date training. The school works in close partnership with external agencies and actively seeks additional support for those pupils who find some aspects of school difficult to manage from time to time. Despite efforts made by the school to improve pupils' attendance, a small minority of parents and carers do not ensure that their children attend school regularly. The good partnerships with the adjacent junior school provide a smooth transition for pupils as they move to the next stage of their education.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders, including members of the governing body, are enthusiastic and ambitious and they share a determination to drive further improvements. Staff morale is high. Effective teamwork means that new initiatives, such as the reviewed curriculum and recently introduced scheme for writing, are quickly embraced and embedded. Leaders have focused their efforts on improving the quality of teaching through a systematic programme of monitoring and professional development to

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improve teachers’ skills. However, they know there is more to be done to secure the high level improvements to pupils’ learning and progress that they are seeking.

The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors regularly visit the school and are provided with good quality information which they effectively use to monitor and challenge the work of the school. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. All staff and visitors to school are carefully checked and the school site is safe. Equal opportunities are promoted well. School leaders analyse information rigorously to ensure that no group of pupils is disadvantaged and they have put into place actions to overcome any remaining variations. As a result, gaps between different groups are closing. Planned provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been particularly effective. Discrimination is not tolerated and pupils respect each other and get on well together. Community cohesion is effectively promoted. The school has strong links with its local community and is developing an awareness of the lives and backgrounds of others through its fund-raising events and additional challenges such as ‘Harvest Around the World’ in which pupils had to research how people in different countries celebrate harvest time.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are welcomed into a bright attractive environment which is well resourced with good quality resources both indoors and outside. One parent wrote, ‘My child absolutely loves school!’ Staff plan activities through a thematic approach to draw on children’s interests and enthusiasm. The current topic ‘Space’ enables children to use their

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imagination to develop their language, physical and creative abilities. They have dressed as spacemen and made rockets and this has inspired them to write. Systems to record and track children’s progress are meticulous and adults use this information well to plan the next steps for individual children as well as groups. This enables children to make good progress in many areas of learning.

Staff care well for children and have good regard for their safety and well-being at all times. Children behave well and get on well together. They are able to share and to take turns and they enjoy the opportunities they have to work and play indoors as well as outside. Although there is a good balance of activities that are led by adults and those that children select for themselves, there are occasions when children spend too much time without adult direction and intervention and this slows their learning. There are strong links with parents and carers and good induction arrangements ensure that children quickly settle into the routines in the Reception classes. The leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the requirements of Early Years education, and has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement.

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

Most parents and carers who responded to the survey were positive about the school. They agreed that their children were safe and that the school helped their children to have a healthy lifestyle. They felt that their children made good progress and that teaching was good. Most agreed that the school listened to their concerns and that their views were taken seriously and that the school was well led and managed. A very few parents and carers felt that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour but inspectors found that pupils behave well in lessons and in the playground and that there was little evidence of poor behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Netley Abbey 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 218 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	80	11	14	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	75	19	23	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	35	43	43	53	2	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	56	30	37	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	65	24	30	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	56	69	22	27	1	1	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	52	64	25	31	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)	43	53	27	33	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	46	57	30	37	5	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	53	31	38	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	46	36	44	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	52	64	25	31	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	59	73	19	23	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



6 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Netley Abbey Infant School, Southampton SO31 5EL

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you all and listening to what you had to say about your school. You told us that you enjoy school and that you feel safe because your teachers care for you. You also said that you enjoy lessons because teachers make them fun. Some of you told us that you particularly enjoyed your topic on 'Space' and that you wanted to be astronauts when you grew up.

We found that your school has improved and is now a good school. Most of you make good progress in your lessons and you behave well in school and in the playground. Your school leaders have a good understanding of what the school does well and what could be improved further. We have asked you school leaders to:

- make sure that you all do as well in writing as you do in reading and mathematics
- plan lessons that are always matched to your learning needs, so that you make even better progress
- make sure that you all attend school regularly.

You can all help your school leaders by asking your teachers how you can make your writing even better and by asking them how much work they expect you to do in lessons.

I wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine
Lead inspector

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