

Langstone Infant School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	116207
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	379215
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	Ann Henderson HMI

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Cornish
Headteacher	Victoria Page
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 January 2011
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

Inspection team

Ann Henderson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ken Bryan

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons taught by 11 teachers, of which three were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors carried out short visits to classes to focus on behaviour and safety and the quality of pupils' learning in lessons. Discussions were held with parents and carers, pupils, staff, including senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and the education improvement officer from the local authority. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school, which included the school development plan, safeguarding documents, information on pupils' attainment and progress, external monitoring reports and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors analysed 67 questionnaires from parents and carers and other questionnaires from staff.

Information about the school

This school is a larger than the average-sized infant school with three classes in each year group including three Reception classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils are White British and a small minority have minority ethnic heritage. A few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is average. The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school other than at the usual times is lower than the national average for primary schools.

The headteacher was seconded temporarily to the school from September 2011 for four days per week. She was permanently appointed for four days per week from January 2012. In April 2012 the headteacher will be in post full time. An experienced deputy headteacher has been seconded to the school for one day a week. An assistant headteacher was appointed and took up post in January 2012.

There is an independently run pre-school, after-school club and breakfast club on site.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Langstone Infant School is satisfactory. It is rapidly improving. The newly appointed headteacher has shown outstanding leadership. Since September 2011, very positive and secure improvement has been effected in addressing long-term issues which resulted in underachievement in the past. Throughout this challenging period, the headteacher has shown drive and ambition, which have already motivated others. As one member of staff commented: ‘This school is virtually unrecognisable from what it was a year ago, and in a positive way. There is clarity in what is expected from staff and pupils with consistency in all areas.’
- There is strong teamwork between staff and a commitment to improving the school. As a result, significant improvements have been made in a very short time to address weakness identified at the last inspection and in the subsequent monitoring inspection.
- Pupils feel safe and behave well. They enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in their above-average attendance.
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching. Teachers are increasingly using the tracking information on pupils’ attainment and progress to plan lessons to meet the learning needs of all pupils. However, not enough teaching is good or better to enable pupils to attain standards above the national average by the time they leave. Teachers do not always use ongoing assessments of pupils’ learning to accelerate progress, adjust tasks or use questioning skills to promote learning during lessons. Consequently, some lessons provide insufficient challenge and the pace is slow. Additional adults do not always actively support learning during whole-class teaching.
- The headteacher, new senior leaders and the governing body provide strong leadership with a clear focus on further development. Recent improvements to the curriculum successfully engage boys in their learning. Overall, the quality of

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the curriculum is not yet good enough to secure good achievement.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement, by improving the quality of teaching so that at least 80% is good or better by the end of July 2012, by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment within lessons to reshape tasks to support pupils' understanding and provide more challenge
 - teachers' questioning skills effectively accelerate learning in lessons
 - lessons always proceed at a brisk pace with an appropriate balance of teacher input and opportunities for pupils to work independently
 - additional adults are carefully deployed to support learning during whole-class teaching.
- Develop the curriculum to provide more imaginative opportunities and a broader range of memorable experiences to secure better achievement and strengthen pupils' spiritual and cultural understanding by the end of July 2012.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children arrive in the Reception classes with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age, and they make good progress. There has been significant underachievement in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2, attainment has been below average for the last five years. Since September 2011, the school has acted swiftly to address underachievement. The quality of learning and progress in lessons is generally satisfactory, and in some it is good. This is reflected in the school's attainment records and in pupils' books, which show that attainment is rising rapidly this academic year.

Strategies, such as daily guided reading sessions and the phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make) programme, are taught systematically, successfully helping pupils to decode words and enjoy reading. As a result, pupils, including the disabled and those with special educational needs, make good progress in reading. Year 2 pupils' current attainment in reading is broadly average and rising. The school is successfully narrowing the gap between boys' and girls' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.

In lessons, pupils from all ethnic heritages show a positive attitude to learning and work well together. In one mathematics lesson, pupils demonstrated an eagerness to solve problems, and were able to articulate well the methods they used to

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successfully arrive at the correct solution. Pupils are eager to please and show enjoyment in their learning. They are increasingly involved and positive about their learning. The consistent use of feedback in marking – using 'green is great and pink for think' – enables pupils to know how to improve their work.

The very large majority of parents and carers agree that the school meets their children's needs. One comment reflected the views of many: 'Since September, my child has grown in confidence and her learning needs have been met well.' Most parents and carers agree that the school helps them to support their children's learning. One comment echoed many: 'There have been noticeable improvements at the school. Homework is set regularly, and is always marked and up to date. The support has been brilliant.'

Quality of teaching

The majority of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory; this is in line with the school's own judgement on the quality of teaching. Effective monitoring of teaching and the promotion of good practice have raised the quality of teaching and much is now good. There is a consistency in the quality of planning of learning. 'Learning walls' and displays in classrooms support pupils' learning in lessons. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Their increased understanding of assessment data enables them to plan lessons to meet the learning needs of pupils of all abilities. There is a clear focus on what pupils will learn in lessons and opportunities are increasing for them to assess their own learning. However, teachers do not always use their ongoing assessments of pupils' learning in lessons to adjust tasks or to focus questions to enable pupils to make good progress. At times, during the whole-class part of lessons, teaching assistants are not actively involved in supporting pupils to progress in their learning. During work in small groups, teaching assistants provide good support for pupils.

Overall, the quality of guidance and marking pupils receive to help them to improve their work is good. However, marking is better in writing than in mathematics. A new target-setting system has been implemented in writing and mathematics, with targets linked to the varying levels of ability within the class. Pupils know their targets and find these helpful in supporting them to improve their learning.

Teachers work well together to plan topics and themes which are designed to engage all pupils in their learning. Recent themes include space and planets, castles and dinosaurs, which have been particularly effective in engaging boys. As a result, the gap in attainment between boys and girls is narrowing. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual understanding during assemblies. Their joy in singing during assembly was clearly evident. Teachers have high expectations of pupils when cooperating and working with each other, which contribute effectively to their moral and social development. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the themes are planned for indoor and outdoor learning. However, the links between the themes and the experience offered in the outdoor

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learning area are too limited. The use of questioning to promote learning is underdeveloped.

Most parents and carers think that their children are taught well. Some recognise that there have been inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in the past. Many parents and carers who made comments on questionnaire returns recognise the recent improvements in the quality of teaching. Inspectors found that teaching is satisfactory, but improving.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and typical over time. Pupils are polite to one another and to adults. They are courteous and respectful. Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaires agree. A very small minority expressed concerns about the disruptive behaviour of some pupils. Nevertheless, they say that adults deal with the isolated incidents of poor behaviour well. One parent who acknowledged her own child's behaviour difficulties stated, 'The school has dealt with my child's behaviour sensitively and supportively.' Inspectors agree and the school's behaviour records confirm this. The small numbers of incidents of inappropriate behaviour are managed well and cause a minimum of disruption to the learning of other pupils. The school's behaviour policy is consistently implemented, although in most classes pupils manage their own behaviour well. Pupils have a good understanding of the consequences of poor behaviour and the rewards for good behaviour through the colour-chart system displayed in classrooms.

Pupils say they are happy to come to school and feel safe. This is evident in the much improved rates of attendance since the last inspection. Pupils know that if they experience a problem, there are plenty of adults available to help them. They say that bullying of any type is rare, and should it occur, it is dealt with effectively.

Leadership and management

Following the last inspection, the rate of improvement stalled. Evidence from the monitoring inspection in September 2011 confirmed this. Since the initial secondment of the new headteacher, the pace of improvement has accelerated. New members of the governing body, including a new Chair of the Governing Body, have high expectations and a commitment to further improve the school. Improvement planning is concerted and effective. It is sharply focused on the most important areas for development and has clear timescales. The governing body systematically monitors the progress the school is making towards achieving its goals. The quality of teaching is improving and attendance rates have been raised. These improvements, together with the shared vision and commitment for further improvement demonstrated by all staff, show that leaders and managers have the capacity to continue the drive for further improvement.

Senior leaders have implemented a rigorous system for tracking the attainment and

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progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Regular meetings with teachers to discuss pupils' progress ensure that teaching is evaluated to identify the progress made by pupils. Any underachievement of individuals or groups is quickly detected and effective strategies are swiftly implemented. The school is successfully narrowing the gap in achievement between boys and girls, particularly in reading. The school is strongly committed to promoting equality and tackling discrimination.

The monitoring of teaching is clearly focused on pupils' learning in lessons. Effective training and support are provided to teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that all adults develop the expertise and skills to accelerate pupils' progress. The effect can be seen in the improved progress pupils have made since the start of this academic year in reading, writing and mathematics.

The curriculum is satisfactory. A number of improvements have been made since the last inspection, including the introduction of themes and topics which are of interest to pupils, covering a range of different subjects. The school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is satisfactory. This is reflected in pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. There are opportunities for learning about cultures other than their own, for example, pupils learnt about the Chinese New Year. They are also provided with opportunities to develop their understanding of other religions. Nevertheless, the spiritual and cultural aspects of the school's work are limited in their impact on pupils' personal development.

Systems to safeguard the welfare of pupils are well understood by staff. The school's record of suitability checks meets current government requirements. The maintaining of accurate records is well organised and staff are all suitably trained.

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	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



9 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Langstone Infant School, Portsmouth PO3 6EY

Thank you for welcoming us to your school, and special thanks to those of you who took the time to talk to us. We found you extremely interesting to talk to and very polite and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about your school and how much you enjoy learning.

Your school has improved recently and is now satisfactory. You behave well and feel safe in school and know there is always someone to talk to if you have a problem. You enjoy learning, which is reflected in your improved attendance. Your teachers support your learning well through their very clear marking of your work, although marking is better in writing than in mathematics. However, not all teaching is as good as it could be. We have asked the school to always make sure that teachers help you to make good progress by checking on your learning during lessons and then adjusting tasks if necessary to provide some of you with more support and others more challenge. We have also asked that teachers use questions to help you to make better progress in lessons and to make sure that the pace of the lessons is appropriate for your learning. Sometimes, at the start of the lessons, adults do not always give you enough support to help you learn.

You told us you enjoy many of the things you learn about in school. Your headteacher, the staff and members of the governing body are doing many good things to make your school even better. We think your curriculum could be more exciting and interesting for you. We have asked your teachers to make sure that your learning in lessons and at other times of the day is imaginative and memorable, to enable you to make good progress in all your learning.

It was a real privilege to visit your school. Continue to work hard and, most of all, enjoy your learning. Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector

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