

# Clarendon Infant School

Ordnance Road, Tidworth, Hampshire, SP9 7QD

**Inspection dates** 24–25 April 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The school provides a haven of tranquillity for pupils and sensitive practical support for parents, the majority of whom have regular periods of separation due to deployment with the armed forces.
- Pupils achieve well. Whatever their starting points, they make good progress because staff quickly identify where pupils are at and plan accordingly.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and plays a pivotal role in driving improvement. School leaders, governors and staff share her relentless determination to do the best they can for all pupils.
- The school is held in high regard by parents.
- Classrooms are a buzz of purposeful activity because teachers are skilled in engaging pupils. As a result, pupils behave well and are keen to learn. They are extremely friendly, welcoming and inquisitive.
- Support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is very well managed and helps these pupils to make good progress towards their learning targets.
- The painstaking collection of information about pupils' learning is used well by leaders to assess and improve the quality of teaching.
- All the school's leaders and managers know exactly what to do to improve the school further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Boys do not do as well as girls in writing and they are not always precisely sure of what they need to do to improve. They do not routinely draw on the vocabulary and sentence structure they come across in their reading in their own written work.
- Teaching is not yet having an outstanding impact on all pupils' achievement. Teachers sometimes spend too much time introducing lessons, leaving insufficient time for pupils to work on their own. During lessons, pupils of different abilities are not always clear about what is expected of them.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher. They listened to pupils read and discussed their reading habits and preferences with them.
- Inspectors discussed various aspects of the school with pupils and looked at a range of their work. They took account of the school’s data on pupils’ attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- During the inspection, inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the on-line Parent View survey and a recent parental survey conducted by the school to which there were 175 responses. They had informal discussions with parents and took account of the 29 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including plans for improvement, teachers’ plans, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body and records of the school leaders’ monitoring of lessons.

## Inspection team

Rob Crompton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Colin Lee	Additional Inspector
Mary Usher-Clark	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British, with around 20% from a range of minority ethnic groups. A below average proportion of all pupils speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium is well above average. While very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, 85% of pupils have parents serving in the armed forces. (The pupil premium provides additional funding for looked after children, children of parents serving in the armed forces and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average. These needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication problems or moderate learning difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school during the school year rather than at the usual times is well above average. For example, only a third of pupils currently in Year 2 started at the beginning of Reception. Many pupils have attended more than one school before starting at Clarendon.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage includes a morning Nursery class and three Reception classes. There is also one mixed class with children from Reception and Year 1.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2012, following the retirement of the previous headteacher.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve boys' writing by:
  - helping the boys to see the small steps they need to take to improve
  - drawing on their suggestions when planning what to teach
  - encouraging boys to include, in their own written work, some of the vocabulary and sentence structure they come across when reading.
- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring pupils have sufficient time to work independently
  - involving pupils in deciding what is expected of different groups before setting them tasks to complete.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- As children enter the Nursery or Reception classes their social development and their language and number skills are generally very low. Skilled teaching enables them to progress well, but children's attainment by the end of Reception is generally below average.
- Although pupils make good gains in their learning through Years 1 and 2, the school's performance compared with the national picture is typically below average. However, the figures need to be treated with caution because of the high level of movement in and out of the school. Pupils remaining at the school since Reception reach broadly average levels, reflecting the good and often very good progress they make.
- A strong emphasis on teaching phonics (the sounds letters make) helps children to make a good start in reading and writing. Pupils in Year 1 used their phonic knowledge well to blend letters and split words into syllables, making a really good stab at reading unfamiliar words.
- Many pupils in Year 2 are very confident and read widely. One girl said, 'Daisy Meadows is my favourite author. She writes books about fairies. I have the whole collection of her books at home.' A boy commented, 'I love Star Wars books, anything to do with space.' He described how he had searched the internet for information.
- Pupils, particularly boys, are generally much better at reading than writing. Some pupils' writing is clearly influenced by what the pupils read. For example, having been introduced to the diaries of Samuel Pepys, one boy wrote, 'My mum came upstairs shouting "Fire! Fire!" furiously, so I climbed out of bed sleepily and opened the window.' Such effective use of adverbs and punctuation does not feature strongly in pupils', especially boys', writing, even in that of the more confident readers.
- Through effective support, both within lessons and during small group sessions, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Although pupils with difficulties in communication, speech and language often find it difficult to distinguish between letter sounds, effective support by school staff and visiting therapists means that most quickly gain confidence and develop essential phonic skills.
- The very few pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make similar progress to their peers and reach similar levels of attainment. The pupil premium funding for pupils whose parents serve in the armed forces is used very well for its primary purpose of ensuring children's well-being. This has a knock-on effect on their learning and, together with skilled teaching, means they achieve well.

### The quality of teaching is good

- In the Nursery and Reception classes, staff take every opportunity to engage children in conversation and develop their language and understanding. As Nursery children examined the beans they had planted, for example, the teacher drew out their ideas. 'I know that plants need water!' exclaimed one child proudly. 'What might we find up the beanstalk?' the teacher asked. 'There's a giant up there,' was the child's response.
- Stimulating role-play areas generate lots of imaginative conversation. Answering the 'telephone' one child in Reception said to an inspector, 'It's your mummy calling for you!'
- Alongside activities which children choose for themselves, adults teach specific things at timely intervals, using their comprehensive knowledge of where children are in developing their skills and understanding. For example, a teaching assistant skilfully drew on children's ideas as she introduced concepts of heavy and heavier, light and lighter through practical balancing activities.
- Teaching across the school is underpinned by warm relationships, teachers' skilful management of behaviour and their consistent 'can do' approach. Classrooms are welcoming and well resourced. Attractive displays provide prompts for learning and celebrate pupils' achievements.
- Most lessons move at a lively pace and achieve a good balance between introductions by

teachers and time for pupils to get on with their work. Among the many examples of this was a lesson in Year 2. Pupils delighted in 'star jumping' the answer to quick fire number questions. The teacher went on to explain what she had found from marking their previous work, checked that pupils were clear about what was expected, pitched tasks to match pupils' abilities, and lost no time in setting them off to work independently.

- Occasionally, teachers spend too long talking to the whole class. This means that teaching assistants, although they come into their own when supporting small groups, do not contribute as much as they might at the beginning of lessons. Most lesson introductions include 'WALT' (what are we learning today?) and 'WILF' (what I'm looking for), but the tasks for different ability groups do not always offer an appropriate level of challenge.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers deftly draw up lists of 'what makes good work' with the pupils. This sense of ownership has a powerful impact on their self-esteem, at the same time making the expectations very clear.
- The lack of consistency in ensuring that pupils have sufficient time in all lessons to work independently and involving them in clarifying what different groups are expected to achieve means that teaching is good rather than outstanding.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning owe much to the way staff consistently manage behaviour. They do not simply demand good behaviour; they teach children how to behave by continuously providing excellent role models, drawing up class rules with pupils, using examples of good behaviour to illustrate expectations, and judiciously using rewards and sanctions.
- Parents value the school's efforts to promote their children's enjoyment of school and their positive attitudes. They are confident that their children feel safe in school.
- Several parents said how pleased they were with the newly developed outdoor play areas. These were partly financed by pupil premium funding and include zones for ball games and a wide range of equipment to stimulate creative play. As pupils played in these areas during the inspection, their behaviour was excellent.
- Pupils understand that bullying can take different forms, including cyber bullying, and recalled what they had learnt about e-safety. They were adamant that bullying in school was very rare and said they felt very safe.
- Although behaviour is usually good, pupils mentioned some silly behaviour and occasional swearing. Also, pupils are sometimes not as attentive as they might be because lesson introductions are too long. For these reasons, behaviour is not outstanding.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The school's unswerving commitment to promoting equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and tackling discrimination is seen in its success in supporting different groups. Some school leaders, staff and governors have direct experience of military life. They are acutely aware of the potential impact on children and families of having a parent away from home, particularly when on active service.
- Every effort is made to ensure that pupils, whatever their circumstances, make the best of their time in the school, however short. Pupils are assessed as soon as possible as they start and, where appropriate, 'bespoke' support is immediately provided. Pupil premium funding is used very effectively in this regard, for example to provide additional teaching staff, play therapists and family support.
- School leaders keep a sharp eye on the quality of teaching and are quick to step in when necessary. Staff are unanimous in their appreciation of the feedback they receive following

lesson observations and the opportunities for additional training.

- Careful planning enables pupils to build up their basic skills systematically through the school. At the same time, the curriculum promotes pupils' personal development extremely successfully. Pupils learn to express their feelings at the 'bluey club', often writing moving messages to their parents on active service. They are encouraged to appreciate the wonders of nature through direct experience. During the inspection, for example, pupils were spellbound and increasingly confident as they touched, stroked or handled a wide range of reptiles and other animals.
  - Themes linking different subjects, such as the current knights and castles topic, are often planned with boys in mind. The school is, rightly, looking at ways to involve boys in suggesting their own ideas to promote their interest and engagement further, particularly regarding incentives and opportunities for them to practise, consolidate and extend their writing skills.
  - Progress in literacy is good rather than outstanding and there is room for improvement in the way the curriculum is modified to help ensure high quality learning for all pupils. This means that leadership and management are good rather than outstanding.
  - The local authority provided useful information for the headteacher immediately following her appointment, but is confident that the school needs only light touch support.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors make decisions and provide challenge to the school's leadership team that is firmly rooted in an understanding of the needs of the school and its community. Governors are establishing close links with 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery in an effort to enhance liaison and mutual support, particularly with regard to coordinating support for pupils and families facing difficult circumstances. Governors understand the data about the school's progress well. For example, they understand the impact on the data of pupils joining or leaving the school at different times during the year. They are clear about the purpose of pupil premium, suggest ways in which funds might be used and seek assurances that they have a positive impact. Governors demonstrate a secure knowledge of the school's systems for improving teaching and managing the performance of staff. They support the headteacher's work in ensuring that any underperformance is challenged. They ensure that safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.
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## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	126493
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	413416

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	310
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Claire Underwood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Claire Beazley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9–10 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01980 843381
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