



Inspection report

# Netley Marsh CE Infant School

**Better  
education  
and care**

Unique Reference Number 116302  
LEA Hampshire  
Inspection number 273490  
Inspection dates 26 and 27 January 2005  
Reporting inspector Mrs J Ward HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

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Type of School	Infant	School address	Ringwood Road
School category	Voluntary Controlled <i>Diocese of Winchester</i>		Woodlands
Age range of pupils	4 to 7 Years		Southampton
			Hampshire
			SO40 7GY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	023 8086 2009
Number on roll	70	Fax number	023 8086 2009
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Miss L Dawson
Date of previous inspection	January 2004	Headteacher	Ms L Dickson

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Age group 4 to 7 years	Published 8 March 2005	Reference no. 273490
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## Introduction

When Netley Marsh CE Infant school was inspected in January 2004, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) subsequently visited the school on two occasions to monitor its progress, and reinspected the school in January 2005.

### Description of the school

Netley Marsh CE Infant school serves its local village community and a number of families from further away. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average and reflects the high level of employment in the area. With 70 pupils from reception to Year 2, the school is smaller than most others. Most pupils come with some pre-school experience and are used to handling books and counting objects. Attainment on entry is higher in mathematics than in communication, language and literacy, but is average overall. Nearly all the pupils are of white British origin. Nine pupils have special educational needs, representing a proportion close to the average.

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## Overall effectiveness of the school

In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils.

Netley Marsh CE Infant School has been beset by difficulties for some time, largely as a result of staffing changes, and there have been several interim acting headteachers over the past year. However, with very good, focused leadership from the recently appointed headteacher and hard work from the teachers, the school is now providing at least a sound education for its pupils. The youngest pupils are working at levels above those expected for their ages. Standards at Key Stage 1 are in line with national averages, but below what they should be; they are rising rapidly as a consequence of good or better teaching. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good; they have become responsive and enthusiastic learners. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the pupils benefit from some exciting extracurricular opportunities.

### Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of January 2004 required the school to address key issues concerned with the leadership and management, the quality of teaching and learning, and the overall breadth and range of the curriculum. There has been good progress in relation to all three key issues; the leadership and management of the headteacher are very good, the quality of the teaching and learning is at least good, and the pupils are making good progress throughout the school. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and there are many creative cross-curricular links being made between subjects.

### Capacity to improve

The school's capacity to improve is good. The headteacher and assistant headteacher are very skilled teachers, leaders and managers, and have developed a strong team of staff committed to further improvement. Monitoring and self-evaluation procedures are well established and accurately inform the next steps for improvement. Although new to the post, the headteacher has a good grasp of budgeting and development planning. The co-ordinators for different subjects have contributed to the developments in their subjects, but they all have several subjects to lead and manage and most of their roles are in the early stages of development.

## What the school should do to improve further

The school's development plan recognises where improvement is needed. However the key priorities are to:

- continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science and eliminate underachievement;
- continue to develop the teachers' skills in using day-to-day assessment to set tasks which fully challenge all the pupils;
- develop further the roles of the subject co-ordinators;
- successfully manage the proposed building project to ensure the school continues to make progress.

## Achievement and standards

Standards in English, mathematics and science are rapidly improving throughout the school. The pupils enter the school with a wide range of skills; overall their initial attainment is average. The pupils make a good start in the Foundation Stage. The pupils in reception are working at levels which are above those expected for their ages; for example, most make creditable attempts to write captions and sentences unaided. The pupils' progress at Key Stage 1 has been good since September 2004, but weaknesses in past provision have led to some underachievement. This is reflected in results in the national tests that, for the most part, have been below the national average and well below the performance of schools with a similar intake. However, significant improvements in the quality of the teaching since September 2004 have enabled most pupils in Year 2 to make good gains in English and mathematics, and they are on course to exceed the very challenging targets set for them in the 2005 end-of-Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests.

The school is well aware that, despite improvement, standards remain too low and has established a detailed programme to boost the pupils' attainment, with a high focus on reading and writing.

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved considerably throughout the school and most pupils are achieving standards similar to age-related expectations. There is an increasingly good range of ICT experiences provided for the pupils.

Provision for the pupils who have special educational needs is well organised and appropriately monitored. The progress they make is good and carefully recorded. The quality of the pupils' individual education plans is also good.

## Personal development

When the school became subject to special measures in January 2004, the pupils' approach to work was unsatisfactory and there was some misbehaviour. As a result of higher demands and more consistent routines, the pupils' response in class is good and sometimes very good. The pupils have learnt good work habits; they are attentive, persevere and sustain their concentration. In all the lessons observed the pupils co-operated well and showed interest in their work. Overall, the pupils behave well and are learning to work sensibly and independently of adult support.

The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good; they play well together, often organising games. The teachers manage the pupils fairly and consistently and provide regular opportunities for them to learn about cultures other than their own and to deepen their awareness of the world around them.

The ethos of the school is a strength: good links with the parents and the community have been established and pupils speak very positively about the school. The parents are consulted and actively involved on many issues, for example through a meeting to consider numeracy, and they are kept very well informed about the programme of work for each class.

The pupils' attendance is rigorously monitored, and follow-up procedures to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality are well established.

## Quality of provision

The quality of education is at least good overall; in almost a third of the lessons observed on the past two monitoring inspections the teaching was very good or excellent. There were consistent strengths in all lessons, reflecting the successful coaching and help provided by the headteacher and assistant headteacher. The programme of support and guidance for all teachers has been a key factor in the considerable improvements in the quality of the teaching and learning.

The lessons were well planned, prepared and organised, and based on appropriate learning objectives that were shared with the pupils. The teachers planned and reviewed their work conscientiously. Expectations of the pupils were higher than found a year ago, in terms of their conduct and their anticipated levels of achievement, and the best lessons were briskly paced. Work was carefully structured but sometimes took too little account of the needs of pupils with higher abilities; in the main this is due to very recent staffing changes and the teaching becoming familiar with the levels of ability of the pupils in the class. There were some good examples of teachers using a wide range of strategies in their lessons, but this is an area for further development.

The teaching assistants made an important contribution to lessons, particularly in leading groups. They are skilled in supporting pupils' learning, and committed to the further improvement of the school.

Assessment procedures are beginning to be effective in raising the teachers' understanding and expectations of the levels the pupils can attain. The school has sound systems for tracking the pupils' attainment and progress. This helps the teachers to set targets for the pupils to improve their work and senior managers to monitor and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision. There are appropriate arrangements for the longer term assessment of pupils' progress, but there is room to develop day-to-day assessment as a basis for setting tasks that fully challenge all the pupils. The targets for individual pupils and the school as a whole are well considered and challenging. They have contributed to the raised expectations and higher standards, and close attention will need to be paid to amending the pupils' targets to continue to match their capabilities in the light of the rapid progress made by some of the older pupils. The teachers have improved the quality of their marking, and there are examples of excellent guidance given in pupils' books to help them improve, but this practice is not yet consistent in each class.

The curriculum is organised effectively and managed efficiently; it is broad and balanced and based on national requirements. Proper emphasis is paid to the pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The teachers plan together, provide support for each other and for new or temporary staff. There are well-considered cross-curricular links between subjects. For example, work in design and technology was combined with reading *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* in literacy; the pupils investigated what type of sandwich the seagulls might prefer to steal.

The school pays due regard to the pupils' safety, health and general well-being. The pupils are confident to turn to the adults for help, routines and supervision at playtimes have been tightened and there are procedures, for example, to ensure that medicines are secure.

## Leadership and management

The recently appointed headteacher gives very clear educational direction to the work of the school. She has led the staff very well in implementing the school's action plan at a brisk rate. Her leadership and management have been strong and sensitive; she has successfully developed a team of teaching and support staff who are committed to the school's further improvement, including a much sharper focus on pupils' learning and achievement.

The assistant headteacher is a very effective subject manager; the remaining subject co-ordinators are in the early stages of leading and managing their subjects.

Some intensive work has gone into planning and writing the curriculum, determining school policies, providing training for teachers, and establishing effective monitoring procedures. The headteacher's evaluation of teaching, through checking lesson plans and from regular classroom observations, is now well established and accurately identifies the key points for improvement.

The governors have a much clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The chair and vice-chair of governors work well together and they have focused the full body on school improvement. The governors evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses with greater understanding, including interpreting and analysing performance data.

The local education authority (LEA) ensured that there were experienced temporary headteachers placed in the school preceding the inspection of 2004 and for the following two terms, to stabilise it and to support the governors in drawing up an effective action plan. Consultants have given good support over the teaching and are continuing to provide guidance to subject co-ordinators. The LEA has confirmed that the school will continue to receive the agreed, higher level of support for 2005 to 2006, despite being removed from special measures much earlier than originally anticipated.

## Appendix – Information about the inspection

Netley Marsh CE Infant School was inspected in January 2004 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act, the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in June and October 2004 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of January 2004.

In January 2005, one HMI returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Eight part lessons and one assembly was inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the school and on the playground at break and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the headteacher, all teaching staff, the chair of governors, and representatives from the LEA and diocese, and informally with other staff. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of January 2004 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.





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