



# Portway Infant School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112740  
**LEA** City of Derby LEA  
**Inspection number** 279004  
**Inspection dates** 3 October 2005 to 4 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. Martin Newell LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Woodlands Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		DE22 2HE
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 9		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 550 702
<b>Number on roll</b>	189	<b>Fax number</b>	01332 550 702
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs. Johanne Totman
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss. Claire Walker

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 9	<b>Inspection dates</b> 3 October 2005 - 4 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 279004
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who spent a total of four days in the school.

## **Description of the school**

This average sized infant school is in Allestree, close to Derby city centre. Most of the 189 pupils live nearby, although some travel from further afield. When the youngest children start at the school, their levels of knowledge and understanding are usually above average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The school has an average percentage of pupils with learning difficulties. Most pupils are from white British families, although a small percentage of pupils are from different minority ethnic groups. A small proportion of these pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for four weeks.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Portway Infant School is a satisfactory school that now has the capacity to improve. This is a view shared by the inspectors and the school. The newly appointed headteacher is providing strong leadership. She has very quickly and accurately established precisely what is needed to make the school a better place. Strengths in achievement, teaching and pupil behaviour, identified at the last inspection, have not been maintained. However, pupils, and parents in particular, speak well of the school. The school is providing satisfactory value for money. Standards are usually above average when children start school and remain so by the end of the Foundation Stage. By the time that pupils leave the school, standards in English, mathematics and science are again above average. This shows that progress and achievement are satisfactory but could be better. There are some instances of good or better teaching which makes learning fun, exciting and challenging. This good practice does not happen enough in the school. As a result, pupils, especially the more able, do not always progress as well as they could. This is most noticeable in mathematics. The school's strengths are in aspects of how well pupils are cared for, how pupils' learning is enriched through visits, visitors and after-school clubs and in how pupils are encouraged to keep fit and healthy. Whilst many pupils behave well, a minority behave in an unsatisfactory way. Some pupils are not ready to take responsibility for their own actions or learning. Good links have been established with outside agencies to support pupils with learning or behavioural problems. Plans are in hand to address the school's weaknesses in its monitoring of the progress it expects pupils to make and in how it checks the quality of teaching and learning in different subjects. Until recently, these have not been tackled well enough to have a positive impact on pupils' achievements.

### What the school should do to improve further

-Ensure that more able pupils do as well as they can, particularly in mathematics, by setting work that is always challenging and demanding. -Ensure that the best use is made of information to check pupils' progress and to set challenging targets for further improvement. -Ensure subject leaders play a stronger and more effective role in helping to improve teaching, learning and standards. -Improve pupils' ability to take more responsibility for their own actions, behaviour and learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children start at the school with skills and knowledge which are generally above average, apart from personal, social and emotional development, which is at an average level. By the end of the Foundation Stage, standards remain above average in all areas of learning except in personal, social and emotional development which remains at an average level. Progress and achievement for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but there is not always enough asked or expected of the more able children. Test results for Year 2 pupils over time show that pupils have attained standards that

have been above and on occasions well above the national average. The school has done less well when its performance is compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards for Year 2 pupils are above average in English, mathematics and science. This, however, does not tell the full story. Whilst achievement is satisfactory, there is room for improvement. The targets that are set for pupils are not always demanding enough. This is particularly the case for the higher-attaining pupils and more so in mathematics than in other subjects. The progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English is similar to that of their classmates. Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection and are now at an average level and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

The behaviour of the pupils is satisfactory. Although many pupils are polite and friendly there is a minority whose behaviour is unsatisfactory and lessons are sometimes slowed by disruptions. The pupils' conduct in the playground is satisfactory and pupils report that there is little bullying, although the behaviour of some boys is boisterous. Attitudes to school are generally positive and, when the teaching is good, the pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons. Some pupils become noisy and more disruptive when the work is less stimulating. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' knowledge of how to stay fit and healthy is good, and the school helps make them well aware of how they can keep themselves safe and avoid dangers. Pupils have some involvement in the community through such occasions as Harvest Festival. The school takes good account of pupils' views through the school council and questionnaires. Pupils are glad their views are listened to and feel they play a part in making the school a better place. Not enough is expected of pupils in requiring them to develop independence in their learning or at times to work together well as a team. There are adequate opportunities for pupils' spiritual and cultural development, but not for their understanding of life in a culturally diverse community. Moral and social development are promoted soundly but staff do not always tackle misbehaviour firmly enough or emphasise the importance of pupils taking responsibility for their own actions.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory overall, although there is some variation in the quality of lessons. When teaching is at its best, work that is set is fun and exciting and is never too easy, particularly for the more able pupils. The pupils are managed very well and left under no illusions as to what is expected of them. Pupils respond well, enjoy themselves and rise to the challenges set. These features are found most often in one of the Year 1 classes. Teaching elsewhere in the school is satisfactory, and occasionally inadequate, because these key features are not always present. Teachers across the

school are usually good at sharing with children and pupils what they are to learn in a lesson and then checking out what they have learnt at the end. There are some very good examples of the skills of teaching assistants being used well to support and enhance pupils' learning but they are not always deployed in classes where the learning needs are greatest. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is reviewed regularly. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for assessing how well pupils and children are doing. However, the information is not being used well enough to set challenging improvement targets for pupils or checking if they have been met. There is good practice in a Year 2 class where pupils are made aware of what they need to do to improve through simple but effective stickers in their books.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory throughout the school. However, more than the recommended time is devoted to English, and there is inconsistency between classes about the time provided for other subjects, particularly religious education. The headteacher plans to make the curriculum more exciting and innovative by making better use of pupils' literacy, numeracy and other key skills across different subjects. The provision made for pupils' health education is good. Pupils' learning is enriched well through an interesting range of visits and visitors. The good range of activities and clubs, at lunchtime and after school, add much to pupils' learning experiences. These activities are much appreciated by parents and pupils alike. The provision that is made for the more able pupils is satisfactory but these pupils are not always provided with difficult enough work. Provision for the pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and there are suitable procedures for identifying those who need additional support. However, adult support is not always allocated to where the need is greatest. The school is already tackling this issue. The small number of pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English are supported well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides satisfactorily for the pupils' well-being. Provision for their health, safety and security are good. Pupils say that they feel safe and there is always someone to turn to for help. All health and safety measures and child protection procedures are in place, have recently been reviewed and are well adhered to by all staff. The school works hard at developing pupils' awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils with behavioural and emotional problems or vulnerable children are given good support. The school has established strong links with many support agencies which enables these pupils to take a full part in the life of the school. Whilst staff know their pupils well, there is still much work to be done in tracking the academic progress of pupils more frequently, so that pupils can be better supported.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's leadership and management are strong and effective and she is supported well by the acting deputy headteacher. The head has only been in post for a short while but has very quickly, clearly and convincingly identified what is needed for the school to improve. Importantly, she has already started to tackle issues such as the need for better target-setting, to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' behaviour. Her efforts are reaping rewards but the headteacher is realistic and recognises that there is still work to be done. With the support of all the staff, the school is set to continue this upward trend of improvement. How well the headteacher has got to know the strengths and weaknesses of the school is reflected in the good quality school self-evaluation she has put together. It is honest and frank and offers a challenging but realistic appraisal of what is needed to make the school a better school. Key to this is the role played by subject leaders in knowing how good teaching, learning and standards are and tackling any weaknesses. This role has not been good or effective enough over time. The school is keen to promote a sense of equality of opportunity for all pupils but recognises there is room for improvement in how well the more able pupils are catered for. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the work of the school and some are regular visitors to the school. There are particular strengths in the role played by the chair and vice chair of governors. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very keen to support the headteacher and for the governing body to play its part to the full in moving the school forward. The school makes satisfactory use of its available resources to help it achieve satisfactory value for money.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	No
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Following our visit we would like to let you know what we found out about your school. But first can we say a big thank you for making us feel welcome and for talking to us about all the different things that you do at school. It was good to hear how you feel that all the teachers and other adults listen to you and take good care of you. You probably saw quite a lot of us as we came into classrooms, the dining hall and the playground. We have told the teachers that many of you behaved well and they are proud of you. We did think though that a few children were not as well behaved and kind to one another as the rest of you. But we are sure that they can do better - perhaps it was just an off day! We know how many of you like school and so we have talked with your new headteacher about how the school can look at ways of being better. Whilst some lessons are really good fun, there are times when work is a bit too easy for some children and the targets that teachers set for you to improve could be a little more difficult. Teachers are also going to look at teaching in different classes and at your books to see if you are finding learning fun and enjoyable. All the staff at school want you to do really well and your new headteacher has got some fantastic ideas to make the school an even better place. But you know what? All you children can play an important part in this by working as hard as you can and always being kind and helpful to everyone in school. We are sure you will do. All our best wishes. It was a pleasure to meet you all.