



Liss Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115925
LEA Hampshire LEA
Inspection number 279702
Inspection dates 21 September 2005 to 22 September 2005
Reporting inspector Peter Thrussell AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hillbrow Road
School category	Community		Liss
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Hampshire GU33 7LQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01730892292
Number on roll	243	Fax number	01730892292
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Caroline Pritchard
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr A Burford

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is an average sized junior school set in the large village of Liss. It benefits from a modern, spacious open plan building. Most of its pupils are white British with very few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. The majority of pupils transfer from the adjoining infant school; a few pupils transfer at the end of their time in neighbouring first schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges itself to be excellent. Although there are some extremely strong features, for example the high quality, broad and enriched curriculum, inspectors judge it to be a good and effective school which provides good value for money. Pupils make good progress because teaching is good. In addition, pupils are cared for and supported well. Staff pay close attention to their personal development and well-being, which is outstanding. This enables them to become confident learners and responsible members of the school community. Pupils take care of each other, are respectful to all and look after the school environment. The head teacher, supported effectively by the deputy head teacher and senior management team, provides good leadership. The school has made good progress on the areas for improvement reported at the last inspection. It demonstrates a good capacity to get even better. The leadership and management check and evaluate the school's performance well. Through self evaluation, key areas for improvement are identified and determined action taken to improve standards. However, ways for measuring the success of planned improvements are not always clear. Information from assessments is not used as fully as it might be to identify trends in pupils' progress, assist teachers with their planning and keep pupils informed about how well they are doing.

What the school should do to improve further

* Make full use of assessment data to identify trends in pupils' progress, and keep pupils better informed of the progress they are making.* Ensure the ways of measuring the success of planned developments are clear to all.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry in Year 3 is generally above average but this varies from year to year depending on the knowledge, skills and understanding of pupils in the year group. This variation, as well as a high number of pupils joining the school in Year 6, accounts largely for a dip in overall standards between 2002 and 2004. The falling trend was not recognised fully by the school. That said, standards are above average and national test results in 2005 are better than in the previous two years. Determined action is being taken to enhance pupils' skills in writing and bring about higher standards in English. The school sets challenging targets for pupils to reach by the time they leave the school. They usually meet them, but need more information from teachers about how to make faster progress. Pupils make good progress because of good teaching, sound assessment procedures and a very broad curriculum that meets their needs effectively. Higher attaining pupils work hard throughout the school to maintain their high levels of achievement. They have good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills throughout the curriculum to consolidate and extend their learning. The strong support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities enables them to gain the essential skills they need for learning and to access the full curriculum.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Social development is excellent, based on mutual respect and understanding. Children enjoy school very much, cooperate really well with each other and benefit from opportunities to build relationships with those older and younger than themselves. One parent said that their child had really grown up and developed their personality since coming to the school. The majority of pupils attend regularly and behaviour is good. As a result, pupils learn quickly in a happy atmosphere. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. They know that a clear moral framework underpins their life at the school and helps them to make a positive contribution to the community. They also know that they have the scope to make decisions for themselves and must take responsibility for their actions. One pupil said that being allowed to use the library scanner to withdraw reading books was a 'privilege'. The school is aware of the importance of developing pupils' ability to live harmoniously in a multi-cultural society and has introduced activities to support this successfully. The school provides a safe environment for children's learning and encourages them very strongly to lead healthy lives, for example by providing organic food and enabling many of them to participate in sports. A charity walk around the school's beautiful grounds, was supported very well by parents and grandparents and promoted real enjoyment of physical exercise. The school's links with local groups enable many pupils to contribute to their community. They all learn about decision making and democratic processes through the active working of the school council. Pupils in Year 6 explained that this helps them to become 'mini adults'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall, although some is outstanding. A particular strength is the way in which planning, deployment of support staff and pupils' responsible attitudes combine to support very good management of learning in classes where ages and abilities are mixed. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) very effectively to enhance their understanding, benefiting from the fact that computers are readily available. All teachers and support staff communicate caring attitudes and these, alongside clear explanations and engaging activities, ensure that children learn well over time. Individual learning needs are generally identified well, and overall pupils of all abilities make good progress in relation to their capabilities. However, the school recognises the need for teachers to inform the pupils more about the progress that they are making.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent. The school makes full use of its highly attractive location and premises, and ensures that all learning programmes respond to local environment and community links at the same time as they meet external requirements. Teachers plan carefully in order to make links between subjects so that pupils learn to use their new skills in a range of contexts. This planning also takes great care to match learning activities to the needs of the pupils. There is an exciting variety of activities available for pupils to do outside school time. Pupils speak highly of these, especially the sporting opportunities. Parents praise the diversity of the clubs that include gardening, chess and drama.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school judges care, guidance and support as outstanding, but inspection shows that it is good, with very good features. Provision for both care and support is excellent. This is because all the adults in the school know the pupils very well and care for them very effectively. The headteacher has established a very positive and respectful atmosphere and pupils take great care of each other as well as of the school environment. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated and included in all the school's work. The school, strongly supported by governors, communicates very well with parents. Arrangements for safeguarding children's welfare are very good. Guidance is good because teachers measure pupils' progress and the school keeps full records of the levels they have reached and those they should aim for. However, teachers do not tell the pupils clearly enough about how well they are doing and exactly what they should do in order to meet challenging targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides good leadership, and is supported well by other managers. The school's main aim, 'Learning for Life', is truly reflected in its emphasis on independent learning and responsibility. To this end, the school develops good literacy and numeracy skills, encourages the use of ICT, provides many enrichment activities and stresses community involvement. This also promotes pupils' enjoyment in learning and economic well-being successfully. The school's graduate training programme and use of newly qualified teachers has provided fresh impetus to teaching and helped to maintain stability among the staff. Monitoring systems are good. Lessons are regularly observed and areas for improvement identified accurately. The progress made by pupils is carefully checked. However, the school does not make enough use of the tracking data to identify trends in progress, provide teachers with levels of attainment to further aid their planning, and to keep pupils themselves better informed of the progress they are making. The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate and takes good account of the views of parents and pupils. It identifies key areas for development, for example

raising standards in writing. Although the school recognises the success of changes it has implemented, it provides few criteria for measuring this success easily. The work of the governing body is good. Governors give the school effective support and make sure that statutory requirements are met. They are well informed about standards but do not sufficiently recognise the importance that should be given to pupil progress as a measure of the school's success. Finance is carefully controlled. Resources are very good and the accommodation outstanding. The layout supports teaching and learning and personal development very effectively.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and telling us about your work.

We liked these things the most: * You work very hard and enjoy your lessons. * You are learning new things more quickly than in some other schools. * Your teachers and classroom assistants are very careful to help you if you do not understand. * You behave well and are a pleasure to talk to. * The school expects you to work sensibly without always having someone looking over you. * You make healthy choices and the school encourages you to exercise. * Your school plans lots of exciting and challenging things for you to do. * Your headteacher and deputy headteacher lead the school well.

We have asked your school to work on these things now: Use the information that they have on how well you are doing to: * Give you goals to work towards and to share them with you. * Let you know more about what you each need to learn to reach your goals and help teachers as they plan to support you all in achieving them. * Check that you are all doing as well as you can. We did enjoy visiting your school and watching you learn. We hope you continue to do well and enjoy the things the staff do for you.