



Oakfield Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115993
LEA Hampshire LEA
Inspection number 279719
Inspection dates 26 June 2006 to 27 June 2006
Reporting inspector Christopher Grove AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Sylvia Crescent
School category	Community		Totton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Southampton SO40 3LN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02380862530
Number on roll	199	Fax number	02380861948
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Nigel Bushrod
Date of previous inspection	8 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Smith

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	26 June 2006 - 27 June 2006	279719

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated in a town west of Southampton and is slightly smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very low, and none is at an early stage of learning English. The present headteacher was appointed in January 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's view is that its overall effectiveness is good, but inspectors judge it to be satisfactory. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as a result of the school's caring ethos. Attainment on entry is average, but is variable from year to year. The Reception class gives pupils a good start. Across the school, standards are average. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily because of satisfactory teaching and assessment, although weaknesses in marking and target-setting mean that pupils are not always clear about how they can improve their work, especially their writing. Whilst the curriculum is otherwise satisfactory, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding to investigate and solve problems and for more able pupils, in particular, to write in other subjects. Enrichment and extra-curricular activities are good.

The school has a good partnership with parents who indicate strong support and have few concerns. There are also good links with the education welfare service and with Testwood Sports College, which is having a positive impact on the provision in physical education. The headteacher and other senior managers are providing satisfactory leadership and management. Although a check is kept on teaching and learning and test results are analysed, weaknesses, particularly in writing, are not always identified and tackled. However, the school has dealt with weaknesses identified in its last inspection report and this success shows that it has the capacity to improve further. The governing body has a satisfactory understanding of how the school is performing, but does not challenge as much as it could. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

andmiddot; Provide more opportunities for pupils, particularly the more able, to write in other subjects.andmiddot; Plan more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to investigate and to solve problems. andmiddot; Keep a closer check on teaching and learning and use the information to identify and address weaknesses and evaluate the school's performance.andmiddot; Ensure that pupils have a better understanding of how well they are doing and how they can improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. On entry to the school, pupils' attainment is variable from year to year, but is average overall. Children get a good start in the Reception class because of a range of imaginative teaching methods. In recent years, results in the national tests in Year 2 have been slowly rising, reflecting good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 1 and Year 2. In 2005, however, results declined to below average in all three subjects. This represents satisfactory progress because the year group had below average attainment on entry.

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils currently in Year 2 are making good progress, notably in mathematics, so that their standards are now average.

Results in the Year 6 tests in English, mathematics and science have also been rising and have been above average in recent years, but fell in 2005 so that they were average in English and science and below average in mathematics. In English, above average attainment in reading was partly offset by below average attainment in writing. The evidence from the inspection, however, shows that the achievement of present Year 6 pupils is now satisfactory in English and mathematics and standards are average. School councillors referred enthusiastically to their enjoyment of lessons, including science. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities progress as well as other pupils. The school set itself challenging targets in 2005 and exceeded its principal English target, but fell some way short of that target in mathematics. Fewer pupils than expected reached the higher levels in English because of lower attainment in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Well-prepared assemblies promote spiritual growth well, but lessons make a more restricted contribution. Pupils learn about local and national culture through music and visits, although their awareness of more diverse cultures is limited. Most pupils behave well and are eager to learn. Relationships with teachers and teaching assistants are good. Attendance rates are broadly in line with those of other schools and exclusions are rare.

Most pupils are happy at school. They particularly enjoy school trips and special weeks. Pupils make good contributions to their school community and to the wider world, for example by making Christmas boxes for children in Eastern Europe. They feel safe at school. The school council played a significant part in planning 'anti bullying week' and introduced the tuck shop, which sells healthy food at breaktimes. The emphasis on physical fitness and the quality of school lunches help pupils to lead healthy lifestyles. Preparation for the personal skills needed in adult life, through taking responsibilities and contributing ideas, is satisfactory, but is limited by slower progress in writing and mathematics.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers work at a good pace and use available time effectively, which holds pupils' interest well. Pupils' attentiveness is well managed. Teachers use their good relationships with pupils to communicate high expectations, so that they are challenged in their work. Learning is well sequenced so that pupils make good progress. These teachers assess that

progress well, helping pupils' to reflect on their learning. They make good provision for pupils with additional learning needs.

But this good teaching is not consistent across the school. Where teaching is less effective, the sequence of the lesson is not sufficiently well planned, and time is not well enough managed to ensure good rates of progress. Teachers do not always make clear to pupils their expectations for good work. The challenge of tasks set, especially for the more able, is not consistently high to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they could. Furthermore, the use of assessment and target-setting is not yet sufficiently consistent across the school to be effective in raising pupils' standards, especially in writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils are not always clear about how well they are doing and what they should do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The use of national and local guidelines ensures that it is broad and balanced. Curriculum plans are not always used effectively to meet pupils' individual learning needs and opportunities for independent learning are too few, which limits pupils' opportunities to take some responsibility for their own progress. There are satisfactory links between subjects, particularly those involving the use of some aspects of English, mathematics and ICT, for example using poetry to record understanding about Egyptian mummies. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects, which slows their progress, particularly those capable of achieving the higher levels. Planning for mathematics provides insufficient opportunity for pupils to investigate and solve problems, which, again, slows their progress. Pupils enjoy the good range of extra-curricular opportunities, including residential trips in Years 4 and 6, visits to places of interest, special weeks such as 'Book Week' and 'Art Week', and a good range of lunchtime and after school clubs, including French, sport and chess. These extra-curricular activities contribute well to pupils' learning about life and personal development. Pupils from different year groups enjoyed co-operating in 'Learning Together Week', developing confidence, teamwork and strategies to deal with personal and social issues.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Parents are particularly happy with the good physical and emotional care, and the ways in which the school welcomes their children. The arrangements to safeguard pupils' welfare, and their health and safety, are effective and are regularly reviewed. Close co-operation with the education welfare service, successfully ensures that vulnerable pupils are identified and supported. High priority is given to emotional literacy, so that most pupils are successfully learning how to cope with their feelings. Pupils care well for each other. As one pupil said, 'When you're lonely, a buddy comes to play with you'. Guidance and support for pupils' academic learning are less effective. Marking and the use of targets to guide progress are inconsistent between classes. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they might

because they are not given sufficient encouragement to improve their work, or clear guidance on the next steps in their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well in small groups, and are making particularly good progress in their personal and social development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Since her appointment, the headteacher has formed an effective team with the deputy and assistant headteachers and set an appropriate direction. She has recently had to assume additional responsibilities during two periods of leave by one team member, and had to manage other key staffing changes. Together, these factors have reduced the impact of some initiatives. The school has analysed the decline in test results in mathematics in Year 6 and reading in Year 2, and set in place appropriate measures to address these issues. But there has not been sufficient acknowledgement of lower writing results, or action to improve writing standards. Subject leaders check teachers' planning and pupils' work, and have started to observe teaching, but their impact to date is limited. Planning for improvement is satisfactory, but there is not yet sufficient rigour in the school's evaluation of its performance. For instance, classroom observations have not analysed sufficiently the overall impact of teaching on pupils' learning and the effectiveness of assessment. However, the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection in information and communication technology and in the quality of teaching in Year 1 have been satisfactorily addressed, and this demonstrates that the school has the capacity to improve further.

The governing body satisfactorily discharges its legal responsibilities. The chair of governors is experienced and understands the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors offer sound support, but need to challenge the school more to secure further improvement.

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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

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

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

Children

Following our visit to your school, Mrs Curd and I would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you at work in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes. We think that Oakfield Primary is a satisfactory school.

These are the most important things we saw and the things we most liked: • You behave well, and you enjoy your lessons and playtimes. • You have good relationships with your teachers and your teaching assistants. • The adults care for you so that you feel safe at school. • You are enthusiastic about your schoolwork and after-school activities. • Your headteacher is setting a clear direction for your school. • You get a good start in Reception, and most pupils are achieving satisfactorily by the end of Year 6. • The teaching at your school is satisfactory. • You understand the importance of being healthy. • You get opportunities to make positive contributions to the school.

We have asked your teachers to: • Improve your writing by giving you more opportunities to write in different subjects. • Give you more opportunities to investigate and solve problems in mathematics. • Check up more on your learning so as to see where you are not doing so well and to make improvements. • Help you to understand better how well you are doing and how you can improve your work. We wish you all well in the future. Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Chris Grove

Lead Inspector