



Calmore Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116049
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 279732
Inspection dates 9–10 November 2006
Reporting inspector Hilary Bonser

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

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Type of school | Infant | School address | Calmore Drive |
| School category | Community | | Calmore |
| Age range of pupils | 4–7 | | Southampton SO40 2ZZ |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 02380865994 |
| Number on roll (school) | 165 | Fax number | 02380666505 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Mrs Geraldine Etherington |
| | | Headteacher | Mrs Anne Neale |
| Date of previous school inspection | 16 October 2000 | | |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than many infant schools. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds, some of which are disadvantaged. Most come from the local neighbourhood. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average although several are at an early stage of learning English. Standards on entry to the school are below average, with some children having poorly developed language and number skills. The school is emerging from a period of uncertainty and difficulties arising from a fall in numbers and the local reorganisation of schools and educational facilities. Plans are now in hand for the school to accommodate extended Early Years provision and a Language Impairment Unit.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils of all abilities achieve well. Parents and pupils justifiably hold the school in high regard. As one parent put it, 'It is a fantastic infant school and I am so pleased my child is a pupil here.' The school has responded effectively to the issues from the last inspection. As a result of effective action, standards have risen and pupils of all abilities achieve well. This considerable improvement, especially over the last three years, is all the more remarkable in that it has been brought about during a turbulent and uncertain period as the future of the school was decided. It shows that the school has successfully kept the needs of the pupils at the heart of its work in spite of the difficulties faced. It reflects the strong, positive leadership of the headteacher and very clear commitment of staff, parents and governors. It also shows that the school is well placed to make further progress. The school identifies its strengths, its areas for development and what is needed to remedy them accurately. It is very aware that standards are not yet as high in writing as in mathematics and reading and that pupils are not involved enough in assessing their own progress and setting their targets for improvement. It is currently focusing attention on these areas.

The headteacher has successfully promoted strong team work among staff, resulting in good teaching and learning in all year groups. Competent learning support assistants contribute very well to this, helped by good training, close co-operation with teachers and the value placed on their work. Children receive a good start to their education in the Reception classes and make good progress throughout the school, reaching above average standards by the end of Year 2. Rigorous assessment and tracking of pupils' progress contribute to this success. In English and mathematics, for example, teachers use assessments well to match work to the varying needs of pupils through careful but flexible grouping and to provide individual or small group support or extension as appropriate.

Pupils enjoy an interesting, relevant curriculum that has been adjusted well to meet their particular needs. This, together with a good range of additional activities, adds considerably to pupils' learning and enthusiasm for school. The school provides good care and support for pupils, which is fully appreciated by parents. It reflects the value it places on each child and the emphasis on fostering their confidence as learners. These are hallmarks of the school. As a result, pupils form good relationships, behave well and really enjoy coming to school. The good partnership with parents, other schools and agencies underpins this and supports pupils' positive attitudes.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing.
- Involve pupils more effectively in assessing their progress and knowing how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children do well in the reception classes. Most reach the expected learning goals expected by the end of their Reception year in all areas of learning except in their language and number skills. These are below average although children make good progress over the year in these from their individual starting points. A very inviting, stimulating environment, very good induction arrangements and well taught lessons contribute to this. In Years 1 and 2, boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds continue to make good progress as a result of good teaching and attention to individual needs.

Standards are above average at the end of Year 2. The improvement in performance over the last three years shows a particular increase in pupils reaching the higher levels. This reflects the improved provision for more able pupils since the last inspection. Standards are strongest in reading and mathematics for this reason. While standards in writing have also improved, fewer pupils reach Level 3. This is partly because additional opportunities for writing are not matched well enough to pupils' needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils understand the importance of exercise and take full advantage of a well-equipped playground and the skills of a popular sports coach who 'wears us out!' to this end. They choose healthy snacks and some pupils try to encourage their parents to 'buy what's good for you'. Pupils feel safe in school and are happy to discuss any problems with staff. They particularly enjoy lessons where teaching is lively and they have lots to do. These lessons especially promote good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning, encouraging pupils to become confident, independent learners. In lessons where pupils are not fully involved, they do their best to pay attention but soon lose interest. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They value their own and others' worth. This, together with secure literacy and numeracy skills, prepares them well for their future life. Pupils are keen to take on jobs around school and take their responsibilities as council members seriously. They enjoyed choosing paint colours and friezes for the toilets and organising a football 'World Cup Day'. Pupils' concern for the wider community is shown through their charity fund-raising. Many paid to bring their teddies into school for Children in Need. Attendance is average due to a few unavoidable long term absences.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan work well making good use of a wide range of assessments. This helps different groups, including those with learning difficulties, to make good progress in their learning. The work set generally challenges all pupils fully and they respond well and with enthusiasm. This was seen in a literacy lesson for lower attaining pupils where very lively teaching left pupils little time to breathe as they worked hard to complete their varied tasks. Relationships are good and the regular use of praise and encouragement promotes good behaviour, confidence and positive attitudes to learning. Lessons generally have clear objectives. However in some classes in Years 1 and 2, these are not shared well enough with pupils to help them to understand exactly what they should be learning or to check for themselves how well they have done and what they need to do next. Teachers talk to pupils about their work but marking provides few comments to show how it could be improved.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good, relevant curriculum that meets all requirements. It is enriched by a wide range of visits, visitors and a good number of extra activities, such as 'Diversity Week', which contribute well to pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school as well as to their learning. A good example of how the school responds to the particular needs of its pupils was the introduction last year of a tightly structured language programme across the school as a basis for literacy teaching. Initial evaluations show pupils of all abilities progressing well and with increased confidence in both reading and writing skills. However, not enough use is made of opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise or develop their writing skills at appropriate levels. There is good provision for the learning needs of individual pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, helping them to do well. The strong emphasis on all aspects of healthy living, including a programme of personal, social and health education, provides useful life skills that will serve pupils well in becoming responsible citizens.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school knows its pupils well and good, trusting relationships are quickly established as soon as new children come into the school. This results in pupils feeling safe and secure. Child protection and health and safety procedures are fully adhered to and risk assessments are carried out for all events and activities. Pupils with learning difficulties are closely monitored. The individual targets then set are well matched to their needs, enabling them, with good,

well-managed support, to make good progress in achieving them. Good support for pupils with social and emotional needs helps them to develop confidence in themselves and their abilities. Pupils' progress is monitored well. This information is used to set individual learning targets in literacy and numeracy alongside personal targets from Reception onwards. Pupils mostly know their targets and understand how these help them to do better in school. However, there is scope for pupils to be more involved themselves in setting these targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and is supported very well by the deputy headteacher, who also leads and manages the Foundation Stage well. The headteacher has a clear and positive sense of direction that is fully focused on raising standards and achievement in all areas of pupils' learning. She has shared this successfully with staff and motivated them to contribute effectively to it through a difficult period in the school's development. This, together with an emphasis on staff training and supportive teamwork, has resulted in pupils achieving well and standards rising.

Subject leaders make a significant contribution to the development of their subjects through their monitoring of teaching and learning and by providing training for colleagues. They do not yet have full responsibility for the analysis of standards and progress which limits their overview. An accurate process of self-evaluation takes appropriate account of the views of staff, governors, parents and pupils. It is underpinned by comprehensive and rigorous monitoring and evaluation. Governors are well informed through their monitoring activities and through effective financial management are instrumental in ensuring that the school provides good value for money. They question, contribute to and support the work of the school effectively.

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Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|-----------------------|

Overall effectiveness

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to let you know what we found out when we inspected your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We really enjoyed seeing you at work and at playtimes and talking to you. There are lots of things we like about your good school.

We liked these things the most:

- Your behaviour is good, you work hard, enjoy school and get on well together.
- Your headteacher runs the school very well.
- You understand the importance of eating the right things and taking plenty of exercise.
- The school looks after you really well and, as some of you said, there are nice people to help you.
- The school provides many interesting and exciting things for you to do.
- The school listens to you when you suggest improvements.
- We agree with you that your teachers are good at helping you to get on well and do your best.

We have asked your teachers to help some of you get even better at writing. We have also asked them to make sure you know how well you are doing and exactly how to improve your work.

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Hilary Bonser

Lead Inspector