



Netley Abbey Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116061
LEA Hampshire LEA
Inspection number 279737
Inspection dates 2 May 2006 to 3 May 2006
Reporting inspector Peter Thrussell AI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Westwood Road
School category	Community		Netley Abbey
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Southampton SO31 5EL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02380453731
Number on roll	298	Fax number	02380454240
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr John Forder
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Shirley Nicholas-Bond

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Netley Abbey is a larger than average junior school, which currently has a falling roll. The intake is mixed in terms of deprivation and prosperity, with a lower than average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils have British White heritage and none is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The school believes its effectiveness to be satisfactory, but inspection findings show that it is ineffective and provides unsatisfactory value for money.

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards and achievement, teaching and learning and leadership and management.

Standards throughout the school are below average and this is not good enough given pupils' average attainment on entry. The quality of teaching is inadequate because pupils do not make sufficient progress. Assessment is not used well enough in English and mathematics to identify and plan for the next steps in pupils' learning. In addition, the pace of teaching is often too slow and pupils are not active enough in lessons, so that insufficient learning takes place and their enjoyment of school is diminished. The curriculum is now starting to be planned to meet the needs of all pupils; they benefit from special events and a focus on healthy lifestyles. Closer links with the infant school are beginning to benefit pupils' learning. Their personal development is satisfactorily catered for and all adults show a strong level of commitment to pupils' welfare. Behaviour has improved and is now good. Under the determined leadership of the headteacher, senior managers are developing their roles. Leadership and management have paid attention to low standards and underachievement. Action to tackle this, along with raising the quality of teaching and learning, is beginning to make an impact. Given the success of actions taken to address the issues from the last inspection, such as, improving the pupils' attitudes to learning, improve resources and create a better learning environment, the school is sufficiently well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in English and mathematics so that pupils attain higher standards.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that a high proportion of lessons are of good quality and pupils are fully challenged.
- Improve assessment so that teachers are aware of, and can meet individual learning needs.
- Develop and strengthen the role of senior management, particularly in relation to monitoring achievement and standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are too low because pupils make inadequate progress through the school. Although standards in science are average, they are not as high as they should be in English, particularly writing, and mathematics. This is reflected in the results in the

national tests taken by Year 6 when compared to their performance in Year 2. This underachievement is partly explained by weaknesses in teaching, staff turnover and some disruptive behaviour in the past.

The trend in performance is downwards in English and consistently below average in mathematics. This picture is now similar for boys and girls, and for most groups of pupils. It is slightly better for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities due to the support they are given. In 2005, the school met its targets in mathematics and exceeded them in English. Taking Year 2 performance into account the school recognises that these were not sufficiently challenging.

Pupils in Year 6 are given practice test papers. The results of these are now analysed and used by the teachers to plan tasks that are matched to the needs of the different ability sets. This focused approach is allowing pupils to make up some lost ground in their past learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Personal development is satisfactory. Staff have worked hard to improve pupil's attitudes and behaviour. A more consistent approach with concerted praise has led to good behaviour from most pupils. Although behaviour in the playground is more boisterous, it is well supervised. Pupils listen well, are keen to learn and quick to respond to teachers' requests. They generally enjoy school but find some lessons dull and would like more practical activities. They are well aware of the importance of safety but have insufficient opportunities to develop safe practices themselves, for example by handling tools and equipment. They are successfully developing healthy lifestyles through well balanced and nutritious school lunches, which most pupils appreciate, and good opportunities for sport and exercise. Attendance is in line with the national average. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are polite, caring and considerate to visitors and each other. They make a good contribution to their school and wider community. The class and school councils provide good opportunities for pupils to express their views and make suggestions for school improvements, such as re-painting the school hall. There are too few opportunities for pupils to contribute in lessons, however, and to take initiative for their own learning. Given their level of basic skills, and positive attitudes the school is preparing them adequately for their future life and learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Although teaching and learning are improving they are currently inadequate. Many pupils are not making sufficient progress in their learning. In many lessons teaching is too directed and teachers' expectations are too low; the pace of learning is too slow, pupils are insufficiently engaged and have too few opportunities for active learning.

They reported a desire for more practical activities, especially in science, and expressed their enjoyment of making things in technology. The head teacher has identified the need for pupils to be more involved and active in their learning, and is encouraging teachers to plan for this. Changes of approach in the classroom are starting to impact on pupils' learning. Marking is inconsistent and does not provide sufficient guidance for pupils to improve their work. Insufficient time is provided for pupils to reflect on their own learning and how well they are doing. Recorded assessments of pupils' achievements are too infrequent to influence teaching and raise standards.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's curriculum is satisfactory. It is generally broad and balanced. Planning shows that all requirements are met. Parents are kept well informed about their child's education through termly curriculum letters and curriculum events. There are strengths in the wide range of first hand learning experiences such as educational visits, themed days and workshops. Provision for information and communication technology is improving and fuller use is now made of this to support learning. The school is developing closer links with the neighbouring infant school to improve continuity and progression of learning between the two. Pupils enjoy an adequate range of extra curricula clubs. Good links with a specialist sports college help develop pupils' physical well-being. Links with the police, health organisations and local council are used well to develop pupils' knowledge of how to stay safe, healthy and become good citizens. A weakness in the curriculum is that work is not well matched to individual learning needs. This is being partially addressed in Year 6 through focussed revision activities, but further work remains to be done on this in the rest of the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pupils are cared for well and arrangements for keeping them safe are secure. Child protection and health and safety procedures are clear and understood by all staff. Risk assessments are carried out appropriately. Most pupils are confident that staff, especially the head teacher, would help them with any social or personal problems that might occur. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are identified and supported adequately. Practical arrangements to help these pupils, such as supportive seating and ramps to reach classrooms, are good. Guidance for pupils' on their work and progress is developing. Most pupils are aware that there are targets to direct and assist their progress but some are unsure how to use these and some find them tedious.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Despite significant signs of improvement leadership and management are inadequate because standards and achievement have yet to be raised to satisfactory levels. The

headteacher has been in post for two years and has been effective in improving the fabric and resources of the school to create a more pleasant learning environment. She has had to establish systems for assessing progress and monitoring the work of the school, without the initial support of a fully effective management structure. Although teaching and learning remain inadequate, monitoring of lessons is showing some improvement in raising the quality of teaching. Performance management is now strongly linked to raising standards and achievement. Assessment procedures need to be developed further to ensure that progress can be more closely monitored throughout the year and any underachievement more quickly identified. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Key skills, including ICT, are now being used adequately across the curriculum and full provision for religious education is now in place. The leadership and management structure is developing and senior managers are more active in their roles particularly in relation to raising standards. Links with parents are now much stronger as shown in their positive responses to the inspection questionnaire. These actions show that the school is now placed to improve further. The headteacher knows the school's strengths and weaknesses, but the school has been overgenerous in its self-evaluation. School improvement planning has already identified the key areas for development, but needs to be more tightly focused in order to be fully effective. The governing body now plays a satisfactory role in challenging the school to improve its performance.

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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?	4	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	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?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	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?	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	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?	4	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?	4	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	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	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

Pupils

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

We liked these things the most: * The adults in your school take care over your safety and well-being. * You understand the importance of good behaviour. * You go on many worthwhile visits. * You understand the importance of healthy eating and exercise. * The school listens to you and acts on your suggestions. * Your headteacher is starting to make the school better.

Although there are some successful aspects to the school overall it is not doing well enough and has some weaknesses. We have asked your school to: * Raise achievement in English and mathematics. * Make sure that all the staff keep a close check on how well you are doing so that they can help those who at times find things difficult and expect more of others. * Plan more exciting lessons where you are all actively involved, do more work and have the opportunity to talk about what you are doing and how well you are doing it. We did enjoy visiting your school and watching you learn.

All best wishes,

Peter Thrussell

Lead Inspector