



Siskin Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116172
LEA Hampshire LEA
Inspection number 279764
Inspection dates 21 September 2005 to 22 September 2005
Reporting inspector Gehane Gordelier HMI

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Type of school | Junior | School address | Nimrod Drive |
| School category | Community | | Rowner |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 | | Gosport, Hampshire PO13 8AA |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 02392583029 |
| Number on roll | 167 | Fax number | 02392501713 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mrs A Rae |
| Date of previous inspection | 11 October 1999 | Headteacher | Mr S Connor |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Siskin Junior School is about the same size as other primary schools. It is situated on a former estate for naval personnel in Rowner near Gosport and shares its grounds with neighbouring schools and the local community. The catchment area includes private housing, housing association and council dwellings. Despite an expanding owner occupied area there are high levels of social deprivation. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The newly appointed headteacher has been in post for two weeks. This is the third term that there has been an acting deputy headteacher. There is a full compliment of staff; two of whom are on temporary contracts. The vast majority of pupils are white and a very small minority speak English as an additional language. A large number of pupils have emotional, behavioural disorders and the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well above the national average. There are six classes, some of which contain pupils belonging to different age groups.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The effectiveness of the school is inadequate and this has also been recognised by the school and the local authority. There is insufficient provision within the curriculum to meet the needs and interests of pupils. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are well below the national average. Pupils are not doing as well as they should and their progress over time is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching includes some positive elements but considerable weaknesses. Teaching and learning are severely compromised by poor attitudes to learning and the anti-social behaviour exhibited by a minority of pupils. This behaviour impacts negatively on the enjoyment of most lessons and the well-being of other pupils. Despite only being in post for a short time, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have had a positive impact on the school and have gained the support of the staff and the vast majority of parents. The roles and responsibilities of other senior and middle managers are underdeveloped. There are insufficient systems in place for the school to monitor and assess its own effectiveness. The governing body has not maintained a strategic overview and there has been insufficient progress since the last inspection. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What the school should do to improve further

* Improve the pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. * Raise standards of achievement in all subjects with a specific focus on basic skills. * Strengthen and develop the roles and impact of senior and middle managers as well as that of governors. * Develop robust systems of self-evaluation, which identify weaknesses and the necessary strategies to bring about improvement. In addition, ensure that success criteria are sharply focused on improving the rate of pupils' progress and raising standards. * Improve the quality of teaching and learning and the use of assessment procedures. * Improve rates of attendance and the quality of care.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Achievement and standards are inadequate and the trend over time does not show an improving picture. When pupils enter the school in Year 3, their standards are low. Unsatisfactory teaching and poor behaviour cause a significant proportion of pupils to continue to underachieve. The standards that pupils achieve by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are well below the national average and are falling. The picture is less bleak for English than for mathematics, but is still inadequate. Pupils' progress is not assessed systematically or rigorously enough throughout the school. This means there is not enough use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning. As a result, pupils' capabilities and previously gained knowledge

and skills are not being taken into account sufficiently and the needs of different groups of pupils are not being met. The teachers are also not taking enough account of the pupils' targets in their planning. The targets set for pupils in Year 6 are challenging.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 4

The school recognises that the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which was good in the last inspection, is now inadequate. The behaviour of the younger pupils is usually better than that of the older pupils, although there are difficulties in some Year 3 classes, during lessons and around the school. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour with a small minority of older pupils are serious as they subject other pupils and adults to verbal and physical abuse. This is having a detrimental impact on pupils' well-being and personal development. It is also causing severe disruption to lessons and hindering pupils' learning. Although many pupils enjoy some of their lessons, particularly mathematics, art, information and communication technology (ICT), sports and games, there is a significant number who display poor attitudes and a reluctance to learn. Parents have expressed their concern about the behaviour of pupils during lessons as well as when they enter and leave school. The newly appointed headteacher is aware of the damage that poor behaviour is causing and has already initiated a review of the behaviour policy. He has correctly identified the need to improve behaviour and is developing a consistent approach throughout the school. Attendance was identified as a key issue in the last inspection and despite efforts to improve the situation this remains a serious cause for concern. Absences are followed up by a phone call to parents or carers and the school sends a letter home when absences are unauthorised. There is a school liaison officer who works with parents, but the positive impact of this work has not been sufficiently widespread. The education welfare officer has followed up pupils whose attendance is poor; however, up until now, the approach of the school has been too soft and has not been sufficiently successful in bringing about improved rates of attendance. This is also having a detrimental effect on pupils' attitudes to learning and progress. The school has a history of working with the local community; however this has had limited impact on pupils' achievements. There are satisfactory links with other schools which have increased the provision for sporting and musical activities. The school actively encourages pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle and is developing satisfactory strategies at promoting pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils are encouraged to adopt safe and healthy practises; however, the lack of consistency and the different approaches amongst staff is reducing the impact of some of the initiatives rendering them inadequate overall. Despite the existence of a school council there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to contribute their views and take on responsibilities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The school agrees that the quality of teaching is not as good as at the time of the last inspection and that it is now inadequate overall. Where teaching is satisfactory there are effective systems of classroom management and control; teachers respond to low level disruption in a manner which is consistent, firm and fair. In these lessons, teachers help pupils to recall and build on their previous learning. They make effective use of different sorts of questions, which encourage pupils to think creatively and apply their knowledge and skills. In a Year 4 English lesson, there was good, explicit teaching of key vocabulary. This enabled pupils to talk with confidence about different forms of poetry using the correct terminology. However, a significant amount of the lessons observed were inadequate. In all of these lessons low level disruption often deteriorated into aggressive and disrespectful levels of non compliance. As a result, pupils are reluctant to co-operate with staff and when work is completed this is done reluctantly. There are insufficient strategies to engage and motivate pupils. Those pupils who would like to participate are often unclear about what is expected of them and what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils demonstrate poor speaking and listening skills and teaching does not include sufficient strategies to reinforce these basic skills. There is insufficient assessment of pupils' level of progress and understanding and as a result there are not appropriate measures or strategies to support the learning needs of most pupils. The pace of lessons is too slow and this is aggravated by poor behaviour. Planning is weak and lacks sufficient detail, for example key questions and vocabulary are rarely included. The work is not planned to take account of the different ability groups and some activities are too hard, too easy or not relevant to the needs of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

Overall the provision for the curriculum is inadequate. Although the curriculum meets statutory requirements it does not take sufficient account of the full range of the learning needs of pupils. There is a satisfactory range of programmes to support learning across the curriculum, but these are not consistently implemented throughout the school. Although there is a scheme of work for pupils' personal, social and health education, this is not fully in place. There are insufficient cross-curricular links or references to real life experiences and this reduces the extent to which curriculum content is meaningful and purposeful for many pupils. There is insufficient use of ICT across the curriculum and this is mainly due to the lack of access to computers in classrooms and the health and safety risks due to poor behaviour. There is insufficient communication between the ICT manager and class teachers and this reduces the impact of ICT lessons. Nevertheless on the occasions when pupils were observed using ICT the majority were well behaved and even the reluctant learners were willing to participate for part of the lesson. The school continues to work in partnership with others. There are workshops and training sessions for parents and members of the

local community. With the exception of sport and music, the links with the community and other partnerships are not having a sufficient impact on improving the overall quality of education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Care is inadequate overall but includes some positive aspects. The staff are very committed to the well-being of pupils and the school ensures that all new staff have been cleared by the Criminal Records Bureau to check their suitability to work with children. There is a named child protection officer and pupils know they can talk to staff if they have concerns. There is a risk assessment policy in place, but there are inconsistencies in its implementation. There are clear lines of action to follow up non-attendance; however, until very recently, these have had very little impact. The special educational needs co-ordinator is effective in ensuring that there are systems in place to care for the most vulnerable pupils. However, these procedures are not always followed by staff. There are also weaknesses in the effectiveness of some staff at managing and preventing undesirable behaviour including bullying.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The school share the view that overall the quality of leadership and management is inadequate and that this is not a reflection on the newly appointed headteacher or the acting deputy headteacher. In the short space of time they have been in post they have demonstrated leadership and management skills which are satisfactory. Parents particularly welcome the extent to which they now feel able to approach the headteacher to discuss any issues or concerns. Members of the school's senior and middle management team welcome the opportunity to influence practice and bring about improvements. However, their roles are under-developed and this is compromising their ability to improve standards. The senior management team have received a good level of support from the local authority. This has helped the newly appointed headteacher and his acting deputy headteacher to identify the areas in need of improvement. The current school improvement plan is too weak to drive and secure improvement. In addition, there has been no evaluation of the extent to which this plan has been implemented or its success in improving the school's effectiveness. The governors on the finance and premises sub-committees have been effective in their roles. All of the governors are very loyal and supportive of the school's efforts and have given up a lot of their time voluntarily. Nevertheless, they have been unaware of the full extent of their roles and responsibilities. Consequently, they have not maintained an overview of the strengths and areas in need of improvement in the curriculum. As a result, there are insufficient procedures which hold the school to account for its underperformance. Although governors recognise that standards are low, they have not challenged the school sufficiently to consider how weaknesses should be improved.

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Inspection judgements

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

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 | No | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | No | 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 | 4 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 4 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 4 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 4 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 4 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 4 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 4 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 4 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 4 | 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? | 4 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 4 | 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 | 4 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 4 | 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 | 4 | 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 | No |
| 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 | No |
| 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 | 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

As you know your school was inspected in September 2005. I am writing to thank you for being friendly and helpful and to share with you the results of the inspection. We enjoyed meeting you and listened carefully to what you had to say. Many of you as well as your parents told us that although you like the school the behaviour of some pupils is spoiling things for others. We agree with you that this is a serious problem. You will have heard that as a result of our visit we have decided that your school needs special measures. This means that although there are some things your school does well, there are other very important things that need to be sorted out and improved.

These are the some of the strengths of your school.* The pupils we spoke to were polite and friendly and made thoughtful and mature comments. They told us that they especially enjoy their mathematics, ICT and art lessons as well as sports and games. * In some of the better lessons pupils showed respect for their teachers and each other, and enjoyed doing practical activities and working together.* Your parents want you to do your best at school and many of them give you help and encouragement.* Your new headteacher and the staff work hard. However, they know the school is not good enough and want to make things better for you.

These are some of the weaknesses and the reasons why your school requires special measures.* The bad behaviour must improve because it is stopping many of you from learning and from enjoying school.* Some pupils are taking too much time off school when they are not supposed to. * Although you enjoy some lessons, other lessons are not interesting enough and the work is either too easy or too difficult.* The school needs to get better at working out what it does well and what it needs to do to improve. * There is not enough help in some lessons for you to know how to do things or improve your work.* Overall, too many pupils are not doing as well as they should for their age, especially in English, mathematics and science. The school must improve the areas of weakness as soon as possible. You and your teachers will be helped by the local authority and Her Majesty's Inspectors will visit the school to check on how things are progressing. It is not going to be easy, but if you work together as a team and each take some responsibility, you will contribute to making your school a much better and more enjoyable place to learn.

Yours sincerely

G Gordelier, Her Majesty's Inspector