



Meredith Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116186
LEA Portsmouth LEA
Inspection number 279766
Inspection dates 14 November 2005 to 15 November 2005
Reporting inspector Michael Pye AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Portchester Road
School category	Community		Northend
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		Portsmouth PO2 7JB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02392663846
Number on roll	193	Fax number	02392798556
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Miss Marie Ottley
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs M Dainton

Age group 4 to 7	Inspection dates 14 November 2005 - 15 November 2005	Inspection number 279766
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is located in a densely populated area near the centre of Portsmouth. It is an average sized infant school where the numbers of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. Overall pupils enter the school with standards below those expected nationally. The majority of pupils are white but the number of pupils with English as an additional language is average. Although the school is situated in one of the most deprived wards in the city of Portsmouth there is a mix of privately owned and social housing in the area. The percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals is broadly in line with the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that it provides a satisfactory education for the pupils. The headteacher is well supported by an enthusiastic governing body and staff. The school is in a good position to improve, and provides satisfactory value for money. This is a very caring school. Pupils' personal development and safety are emphasised so that pupils feel strongly that adults care for them and that they are safe and secure. As a result they are able to concentrate on their work. Parents agree with this view. One parent wrote our son is treated with respect and as an individual. Pupils get a good start to their education because of the high quality of the management and teaching in reception. They settle quickly, are happy and make good progress. Results of Year 2 national tests in English are just below the national average. In mathematics a significant number of pupils make good progress as a result of well-established methods for tracking pupils' progress, and well planned lessons. Consequently standards in mathematics are above the national average. Most pupils make satisfactory progress. Teaching and learning are overall satisfactory, although inconsistencies in the quality of teaching contributes to a slowing of progress in Years 1 and 2. The strong leadership of the headteacher, supported by the staff and governors has resulted in good improvement since the last inspection. More remains to be done to improve literacy levels at the end of Year 2. However the broad range of curriculum opportunities allows all pupils to succeed in something, for example, girls are encouraged to play football.

What the school should do to improve further

* Improve standards in literacy* Ensure all teachers consistently make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn, and that end of lesson reviews focus on the progress pupils have made.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. On entry to reception significant numbers of pupils have weaknesses in literacy, number calculation and in their social development. They settle quickly and learn well, making good progress as a consequence of good planning and organisation. Teachers take care to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn particularly well in mathematics and by the end of Year 2 reach above average standards. This is a result of good teaching and the effective tracking of pupils' progress. Over the last two years standards of reading and writing have improved and they now just match the national average. This improvement is beginning to reflect the actions taken by the school to improve standards in English. The majority of pupils including those with learning difficulties have made satisfactory progress. In mathematics a significant number of pupils make good progress. Learners are set appropriately challenging targets that enhance their rate of learning. There are no significant differences in the progress of

boys and girls and those pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Pupils whose first language is not English benefit well from good levels of support, including support in their first language.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors confirm the school's view that pupils' personal development and well being are good. Pupils enjoy school and behave well. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils' confidence, independence and social skills are well developed because the school places great emphasis on them as key life skills. . A parent wrote ..as an infant school Meredith is doing a good job. It is encouraging pupils to become confident in their surroundings and themselves. Children adjust very well to the daily change from home to school because parents are encouraged to share the first 10 minutes of school with their children. Consequently pupils start each morning 'ready to learn'.Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Cultural diversity is well developed in topics like 'Celebrations' including Diwali, Eid and Christmas. This is supported by visits to local places of worship. As a result the children are encouraged to appreciate different viewpoints.From reception onwards, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the need to stay safe, and to live healthily. Opportunities in lessons help pupils to learn to take responsibility for themselves and others. They work well together during lessons and in organised play and lunch times. This makes a positive contribution to the pupils' maturity and independence and prepares them well for their next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Inspectors confirm the school's view that teaching and learning are satisfactory. In reception they are good. The children enjoy lessons and achieve well as a result of the good balance between learning through play and more direct teaching. Teachers and support assistants work together well to identify the level at which pupils are working and set challenging and enjoyable work. Learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are motivated by the colourful and stimulating classroom environments, and want to do well because good relationships exist. Pupils' interest is reinforced by the good use of information and communication technology (ICT) and other resources. In group work, where teachers and teaching assistants prompt and encourage learning through skilful demonstrations and questioning, pupils' progress is good. However, progress slows when pupils working on their own do not have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Teachers are beginning to review the outcomes of lessons with pupils. These are not yet consistently focussed on the progress pupils have made towards their learning goals. When this is done well pupils know how to improve their work, and teachers can more accurately adapt their future planning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy the broad and interesting work they do. The curriculum is planned around themes which meet the differing needs of pupils of all ages and abilities. These themes encourage pupils to apply their growing skills in reading, writing and mathematics to 'real' situations. For example, pupils were asked to write sentences about the gunpowder plot. Those pupils who find learning more difficult were encouraged to put into order digital photographs of their classmates who had previously 'acted out' the story of gunpowder plot. The use of ICT has improved since the previous inspection and is helping pupils develop their basic skills. Specialist teaching in subjects add well to pupils' learning. The curriculum is enhanced by an appropriate range of visits and visitors. Pupils reflecting on their time at school noted how much they had learned from visits and visitors. Pupils benefit from a good, well organised curriculum in reception. It gives them a broad range of activities and allows them good opportunities to take decisions about what activities to pursue.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is good, reflecting the strong commitment of all staff to the safety and well-being of the pupils. Pupils have confidence in their teachers and trust that any problems will be dealt with promptly and effectively. The school also monitors the academic progress of pupils well. A parent wrote the teachers have always kept us well informed of any problems or achievements. Realistic targets are set that help pupils improve their work. All pupils have equal access to the opportunities on offer and pupils' achievement is recognised and celebrated by the school. One parent wrote ...now my daughter is confident. Her strong abilities have been encouraged. Child protection measures are well established. The school quickly identifies pupils at risk and ensures that these pupils are well supported. In the interests of pupils, a good range of external agencies are used, including visitors who help to inform pupils about how to keep safe. Health and safety practices, along with risk assessments are reviewed regularly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that leadership and management are satisfactory. A number of new appointments in recent times has delayed the impact of changes on achievement and standards. For example, in some subject areas monitoring by the subject leader is at an early stage of development, whilst in reception two new managers are already sharing responsibility for monitoring and development planning. However, all managers share the aim of continual improvement as illustrated by the action the school has taken to improve standards in English. Phonics have been introduced in reception, and better systems are in place to track pupils' progress and target those pupils requiring additional support. The headteacher's leadership is good. Evaluation of school performance is well established and appropriate areas for improvement are

identified. Information about pupils' performance is used effectively to set realistic targets. The school seeks the views of pupils and parents. It has responded well to suggestions for improvement such as those regarding the changes to the school day. The planned school council will give a more formal voice to the pupils. A good mix of new and experienced staff exists. This together with the headteacher's leadership and the encouraging improvement since the last inspection, means that there is a good capacity for further improvement. Parents and governors give enthusiastic support. Governors are increasingly involved in decision making and take an active part in the school's development planning.

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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?	3	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	2	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	2	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	2	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?	2	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?	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	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	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

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and listened carefully to what you told us.

We liked these things the most: * That you told us how much you enjoy life in school* The way you work with your parents and carers in the morning* That you know that your teachers care for you * That you get a good start to your education in reception* The respect you show for others and how you work well together* That many of you do well in mathematics* Your headteacher and her staff provide you with many good things to do

We have asked your school to work on these things now: * To help you to read and write better* To make sure that in all lessons you know what you are being asked to learn* Ensure your teachers give you time to think about what you have found easy and what you have found difficult in your lessons.