



Northern Parade Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116190
LEA Portsmouth LEA
Inspection number 279768
Inspection dates 14 June 2006 to 15 June 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	Doyle Avenue
School category	Community		Portsmouth
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		PO2 9NE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02392662129
Number on roll	330	Fax number	02392661376
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Nigel Huxtable
Date of previous inspection	8 May 2000	Headteacher	Mr C J Watts

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
7 to 11	14 June 2006 - 15 June 2006	279768

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Northern Parade is a larger than average junior school. The intake is mixed in terms of deprivation and prosperity, with an average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Almost a quarter of the pupils are from service families. The majority of pupils have White British heritage; a small proportion come from minority ethnic backgrounds with a few at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. The school has a unit for hearing impaired children.

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. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards and achievement.

By the end of Year 6 standards are below average in English and mathematics and this is not good enough given pupils' average attainment on entry. Action taken recently is bringing about some improvement in pupils' progress in English, and to a much lesser extent in mathematics. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and beginning to make an impact on standards. Pupils are becoming more aware of how well they are doing and, as a result, are keen to do even better. However, at times teachers direct too much of the learning, leaving insufficient time for independent work. Pupils with hearing impairment are supported well within the rest of the school. The use of assessment data is improving, but it is not sharp enough in identifying what more needs to be done to plan challenging work for all abilities. The underachievement of some pupils is identified and effective support given, but the school is not picking up others who should be doing better.

A satisfactory start has been made in improving the curriculum in order to meet the needs of all learners, and pupils benefit from good enrichment opportunities. Pupils' personal development is well catered for and adults show a strong commitment to their welfare, drawing fully on the support of parents and other agencies. Pupils behave well and enjoy coming to school. Leadership and management promote a high level of care for pupils, but have only recently started to bring about improvements in standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress so that teachers clearly identify any underachievement in English and mathematics and take action to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Ensure that sufficient time is provided in lessons for pupils to produce more work independently.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are not as high as they should be and overall progress through the school is inadequate. This is reflected in the results of national tests in mathematics and science taken by Year 6 in 2005. Since 2001, standards in these subjects have been consistently below average. In English, standards were average in 2005, showing an

improvement on the previous year due to concerted action taken by the school. Standards in the current Year 6, based on the latest teacher assessments, show that in English they have fallen to below average, and in mathematics to well below average. This decline from the previous year can be partly explained by a larger proportion of pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties in the year group, and some disruption to teaching and learning in the previous year. But weaknesses in some aspects of teaching exacerbate the slow progress made by pupils. The support given to pupils with additional learning needs and those with hearing impairment enables them to make slightly better progress than most other pupils. The school sets reasonably challenging targets for Year 6 but is unlikely to meet them in the current year.

Assessment procedures are becoming more rigorous and underachievement is more readily being identified. As a result, different intervention strategies in English have started to improve the overall rate of progress, but there remain too many inconsistencies. Recent developments in helping pupils to be more aware of how well they are doing and how their work could be improved, are starting to impact on learning and achievement. Action to improve teaching and learning in mathematics has not been successful in raising standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Attendance is average; pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to work. Their behaviour is good and they are courteous and polite to each other and visitors. Pupils understand well how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and keep themselves safe, and particularly enjoy the healthy school meals prepared on site. They make a good contribution to the school and wider community by taking on responsible roles and helping those who are less fortunate through charity fund raising. The school council is well established and pupils' opinions are considered and acted upon, for instance in the way the playground is now zoned. Pupils provide entertainment for people in a local residential home. Spiritual development is good and assemblies provide an important focus for this. Pupils have good opportunities to reflect on the lives of others and come to sensitively understand different faiths and cultures. Their improving basic skills and good personal development prepare them satisfactorily for their future life and learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils enjoy lessons because they have good relationships with staff. Close attention is given to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Those in the hearing impaired unit are well integrated into the school and benefit from specialist teaching. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly in group work and through

specialised teaching programmes, but are not always as effective in whole class sessions. Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support teaching and learning.

Where learning is better, pupils have a clear understanding of the purpose of lessons and, through discussion and marking, what they need to do to improve their work. The tasks set interest them and they have a good understanding of what is expected of them so that they make good progress. This was evident in a Year 5 lesson where careful questioning clarified misunderstanding about measuring angles. The range of tasks set fully engaged all pupils and developed protractor skills well.

While there is no unsatisfactory teaching, there are factors that slow pupils' progress. Sometimes insufficient time is given in lessons for pupils to develop independent learning skills and produce enough work because the teacher led introductions are too long. While assessment has become more rigorous, it is not always used well enough to plan work for pupils of different ability, particularly higher attainers, so inhibiting their progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Work is appropriate for most pupils but is not always demanding enough to ensure pupils make good progress, especially in English and mathematics. The curriculum has been adapted well to address pupils' social and emotional needs by teaching them how to deal with personal problems successfully.

The school provides an extensive programme of enrichment activities; these are a strength of the curriculum. Teachers increasingly take opportunities to focus pupils' learning in stimulating ways. Investigating a recent round-the-world sailing expedition led to extensive work in mathematics, English, geography and ICT. Educational visits and visitors to the school add good variety, relevance and interest to day-to-day learning. Visits by local police, other emergency services and health workers make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of how to look after themselves safely and to live healthily. Wide-ranging extra-curricular sport, drama and music contribute well to pupils' personal development and self-confidence. One pupil stated, 'When you are on stage you feel good!'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory overall. Care is good. Pupils feel secure at school because there is a strong, supportive caring ethos. Health and safety, child protection routines and risk assessments are fully in place and closely followed. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified quickly and appropriate support given. The school counsellor plays an important role in helping pupils who need extra support. Well trained teaching assistants help pupils to catch up by running specific learning programmes. Effective specialist teaching is provided for the pupils in the hearing-impaired unit. Pupils are encouraged

to show respect for and to be kind to each other. Strategies such as the 'friendship stop' ensure that pupils feel happy and well cared for. Pupils' academic guidance is satisfactory. Their progress has always been recorded and targets given for improvement. However, it is only recently that the school has put in place more effective ways of tracking progress and identifying more fully where further support is needed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Although accurate in much of its self-evaluation, the school has overestimated its judgements on standards and achievement and overall effectiveness. Importantly, the school has focused well on providing a good level of care and promoting good personal development. However, until recently it has not given sufficient attention to achievement and standards, which in consequence are too low. There are signs of improvement, particularly in English, due to action which the school has taken to support some underachieving pupils and involve pupils more in their learning. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has improved the school's recording of assessments so that teachers can now identify any underachievement more quickly and take action. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection; specialist music teaching has raised standards in the subject and more able pupils are doing better in science, although not so well in English and mathematics. Given these recent developments, the school is satisfactorily placed to make improve further.

One reason for the recent improvements in English has been careful monitoring of provision by the subject leader. This has led to some improvements in teaching and learning and the progress pupils make. Despite action taken to raise standards in mathematics, leadership has yet to show any significant effect on raising standards.

The governors are supportive of the work of the school and have a reasonable understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Finances are managed satisfactorily; the school is aware that it needs to take account of falling rolls in its budgeting. Good links are being fostered with parents to encourage them to be more involved in their children's learning. Year 3 parents greatly appreciated being invited to lunch at the school prior to taking part in workshops.

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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?	2	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?	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	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

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 of your safety and well-being. * You understand the importance of good behaviour. * You have many enjoyable and interesting things to do outside of lessons. * You understand the importance of healthy eating and exercise. * The school listens to you and acts on your suggestions. 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: * Check carefully how well you are all doing in English and mathematics and give you further support if you are slipping behind. * Allow you time to produce more work on your own in lessons. We did enjoy visiting your school and watching you learn.

All best wishes,

Peter Thrussell

Lead Inspector