



# Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 116368  
**Local Authority** Hampshire  
**Inspection number** 279804  
**Inspection dates** 21–22 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Michael Pye

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Church Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Romsey
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		SO51 8EP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01794512047
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	211	<b>Fax number</b>	01794830191
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Steve Alger
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Everard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 June 2000		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average sized primary school draws pupils from a mixed range of housing. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. There are few ethnic minority pupils, although the proportion of pupils with English as a second language is average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is also average and there is currently one pupil with a statement of special educational need. The recently appointed headteacher has had to deal with some extensive building developments, together with significant staff upheaval.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. Parents recognise that care is good and pupils' personal development is progressing well. Pupils feel safe and can talk about how to live healthily. Nowhere is this caring approach more evident than in the Foundation Stage. The good relationships help to ensure that the new children settle well, and make satisfactory progress.

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve satisfactorily and reach standards that are average. However, inspectors agree with the headteacher that pupils could be further stretched. The school has accurately recognised this and identified where improvement is needed. Careful monitoring of teaching has begun to have an impact. In the last two years standards of writing and mathematics have fallen and are broadly average. Standards for higher attainers in mathematics have improved although writing remains a weakness. Overall, pupils are developing satisfactory skills that help them with their future learning.

Such improvements are possible because the school has established a positive learning environment. Pupils enjoy school, behave well and make use of the good opportunities to reflect on issues affecting their lives. They enjoy the various clubs on offer and benefit from the strong partnerships that the school has established. The active school council enables pupils to make a good contribution to the running of the school. Thriving links with a local secondary school result in mathematics and art classes for higher attainers, and all pupils benefit from sports' coaching.

The monitoring of teaching is well linked to professional development and the school is working on raising teachers' expectations of pupils' work. Good assessment and tracking systems help to identify pupils' progress. The effectiveness with which teachers use such information to plan the next steps in pupils' learning is variable. Teamwork has been effectively developed, although the role of coordinators is not yet maximised to give full responsibility for raising performance in their areas.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in writing
- Raise teachers' awareness of how to make better use of assessment information to plan the next steps in pupils' learning
- Fully develop the role of coordinators so as to give them more responsibility for rigorous monitoring and evaluation.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards are average and achievement satisfactory. Children enter the school with skills and understanding which are broadly average. They get a satisfactory start to their education in the Foundation Stage and when they enter Year 1 most have achieved the learning goals expected at this age. There are strengths in personal and social

development, but a weakness in written communication skills. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Years 1 and 2 and standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average. Standards in writing and mathematics have fallen slightly, due in part to many changes of staff. Satisfactory progress continues in Years 3 to 6. National testing in Year 6 shows standards to be broadly average, with a weakness in writing.

A whole school focus on mathematics, through monitoring and staff development, has met with some success in raising the achievement of more able pupils. Plans are in place to raise standards in writing but these have yet to show any significant impact.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well being are good. Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. The school provides some very good opportunities for deeper reflection by pupils. In assemblies, for example, they reflect on the wider environment, and play African and Indian music as they make an imaginary journey around the world. Pupils are increasingly benefiting from a well thought out programme of emotional support. Regular sports lessons and coaching help develop pupils' fitness levels, and the pupils are active during breaks. Pupils tell of enjoying lessons, and benefit from a good range of opportunities to participate in the local community, particularly with the local Abbey. Through the effective school council pupils are able to take decisions about school life, including giving their views on the appointment of the new headteacher. The use of a computer skills centre helps pupils make satisfactory progress in preparing for later life. Attendance is satisfactory. Some family holiday arrangements adversely affect this rate. The school recognises that good attendance could be more rewarded.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is often a good working buzz in classrooms. Good relationships exist that promote an eagerness to learn. In the Foundation Stage, day-to-day assessments are used well to plan interesting activities that move children on in their learning. Pupils further their understanding through the good opportunities for pupils to discuss work amongst themselves. Recent changes are now enabling teaching assistants to work more effectively with groups of pupils and ensure their progress.

Lesson planning does not always show clearly enough what pupils are going to learn. Consequently pupils have insufficient knowledge about how they can improve their work. Similarly marking, although being evaluative, does not always give pupils sufficient pointers on how to develop their work. Teachers' expectations of pupils' work are not consistently high enough and do not always reflect the levels at which

pupils need to be working to make the best progress. One pupil commented, 'When we've done the easy work we get harder work to do'.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum and good provision is made for pupils' personal education. Standards in writing indicate that the curriculum is not meeting the needs of some pupils. The school is working on providing more links between subjects, which are enabling pupils to apply their skills in different areas. Visits by the local services, with practical road safety sessions for younger children, help them to understand how to keep safe. Pupils learn about the wider world through a good range of visitors and visits, including a residential visit for Year 6. Many after school clubs add to pupils' enjoyment of school and their social development. Music is a particular strength - 'Excellent music tuition', said one parent. Pupils' cultural development is well developed when they learn to play musical instruments, and successfully participate in festivals involving the school orchestra and choir. A particular emphasis is being placed on how the school grounds are used, and the school council has been involved in developing the 'bog' garden. One pupil commented that the 'school is environmentally friendly'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care guidance and support are satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for and the school places a very strong emphasis on their well-being and safety. Pupils who find behaviour difficult or who have other personal problems are very well looked after, often being assigned to a particular teaching assistant with whom they can have 'special time'. Similarly, those with learning difficulties are well supported and encouraged - for example, they proudly wear the stickers showing that they have achieved their targets. One parent wrote, 'the school is a proper community, it is very caring and very good at celebrating achievement of all kinds'.

Pupils are given targets in literacy and numeracy. Whilst some pupils use them effectively to improve their work, they are not yet sufficiently known and understood by others. Teachers make regular assessments that enable end-of-year targets to be set. However, this information is not being used well enough to keep a more on-going check on pupils' progress and to plan the next steps in their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are overall satisfactory, but with good elements, such as the leadership of the highly experienced headteacher and her deputy. The senior management team have identified where improvements are needed and this has been shared with staff. Effective teamwork has now been established. A good emphasis is

placed on professional development, and staff are increasingly becoming more reflective on how to improve their practice in the classroom. This has not yet resulted in the full use of on-going assessment information in teachers planning.

The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. Senior managers have a well planned cycle of monitoring and evaluation with a clear focus on raising standards and achievement levels. This has resulted in improvements in mathematics, particularly for higher attainers, and in the learning environment. The changes in writing have yet fully to impact on improving standards. Pupils' progress is reviewed regularly and this leads to the use of some well directed appropriate additional support. The role of coordinators needs to be developed with regard to their analysing the reasons behind pupils' achievement levels, and taking responsibility for improvement.

Staff, parents and pupils are consulted as part of the school's self-evaluation. Although some parents feel that their views are not taken into consideration, the school has acted upon their suggestions about improving communication through 'meet the teacher' sessions and curriculum workshops. The governing body gives satisfactory support to the school, and are increasingly able to hold the school to account. It has been particularly effective in working with parents in fund raising. Good links have been made with the very supportive parent's association who have contributed, for example to the purchase of interactive whiteboards.

Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in improving the Foundation Stage and in relation to leadership and management. Meanwhile staff upheaval has been well handled by the headteacher, as have the pressures of the major building works. This record of improvement reflects a satisfactory capacity to improve.





## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

You will remember our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed talking and listening to your comments about your school. We believe your school gives you a satisfactory education.

Things we liked:

- your good behaviour - you are helpful, polite and friendly
- the way you enjoy school
- the way that the adults care for you well and that you feel safe
- you understand about living healthily, you enjoy exercising and make good use of the games equipment and apparatus in the playground
- some of you are working hard and improving your mathematics
- you enjoy the chances given to you by the school to make decisions about things like the 'bog' garden.

We have asked the school to do three things. The first is to help some of you to produce better quality writing. The second is to make sure that you are always given work which is hard enough, and the third is to develop the ways in which teachers keep a check on how well you are making progress.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pye

Lead inspector