



Ickniel School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116609
LEA Hampshire LEA
Inspection number 279856
Inspection dates 29 November 2005 to 30 November 2005
Reporting inspector Jacque Cook AI

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

Type of school	Special	School address	River Way
School category	Community special		Andover
Age range of pupils	2 to 19		Hampshire SP11 6LT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01264365297
Number on roll	66	Fax number	01264334794
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Linda Horne
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr S A Steer-Smith

Age group 2 to 19	Inspection dates 29 November 2005 - 30 November 2005	Inspection number 279856
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

All pupils at Icknield School have severe, profound or multiple learning difficulties and 40% of pupils from Foundation Stage to Year 9 have autistic spectrum disorder. There are almost twice as many boys as girls. Four pupils are in the care of the local authority. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups. All pupils have some form of communication difficulty. Further education students work from a bungalow that has been skilfully adapted and is about a mile from the school and closer to the centre of Andover. Pupils are from the Andover area of North Hampshire and also from Wiltshire.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspector agrees with the school's view of its overall effectiveness as good. Good leadership and management ensure that most pupils achieve well and make good progress. Pupils in Year 10 make satisfactory progress. The curriculum is satisfactory for most pupils but inadequate for pupils in Year 10 where they have no opportunities for gaining awards. Effective systems lead to pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes. Resources and staffing are used well. Support staff are particularly well trained and are highly effective in supporting pupils' progress. The school provides good value for money. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Records show that children's achievement over time is good. Teaching and learning are good. Some teaching is outstanding but, very occasionally, there are inadequate lessons. Strengths in the strategies used to teach those with autistic spectrum disorder enable these pupils to learn successfully. Assessment procedures are currently being reviewed as well as systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school to make them more rigorous. The headteacher has pioneered very effective innovations in care for pupils and working with parents, this illustrates the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. Although much has been achieved and work is already underway to improve further, there are issues from the last inspection that have not yet been fully dealt with.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The school is modest in its judgement of good. The effectiveness and efficiency of the further education provision is outstanding. Students make very good progress towards a broad range of awards. They study courses that are very relevant and prepare them well for adulthood. As a result, their personal development is very good.

What the school should do to improve further

* Improve assessment and recording systems so that teachers focus on improving specific areas of learning more effectively.* Improve the curriculum and teaching in Year 10. * Make procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school more robust and ensure the governing body have a more effective role in challenging the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Almost all pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as their peers and there is no measurable difference between the progress of boys and girls. Children of nursery and reception age make good progress, many from very low starting points. Students in the further education

provision often make outstanding progress towards gaining a good range of external awards. They learn skills and strategies that equip them very well for the next stage in their learning and when they leave school. Pupils in Year 10, make satisfactory progress overall, but do not achieve as well as they should. All pupils achieve very well in personal, social and health education. The school has rightly identified that there is still work to be done to improve science and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils with autistic spectrum disorder make good progress. Most improve their concentration and communication skills very well. A few with very complex difficulties make satisfactory progress because their learning is hampered by their behaviour. Those pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties make good progress, in particular learning to communicate using a broad range of means. Targets that previously specified the same level of progress for each pupil, were too challenging. The school has recognised this and pupils are now making good progress towards meeting more realistic targets based on the new individual education plans.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Pupils' personal development is good with strengths in their social development. Their attitudes are very positive and they are keen to contribute in their lessons. Pupils commented that they like to 'work hard' and 'get certificates'. Students in the further education provision become increasingly self-assured in the more adult separate facility. They are increasingly confident in a wide range of settings including college, work places and visits to art galleries. Behaviour is mostly good. Almost all those pupils with very difficult behaviour make good progress towards conforming to the school's expectations. A few, however, improve slowly even though very high levels of support are provided. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. They take on responsibilities willingly which helps them to learn to contribute to the community. Pupils also raise considerable funds for charities and contribute to disaster appeals. They feel safe in school and learn strategies to help them to feel safe in the community. The school is in the early stages of applying for the Healthy Schools award. The 'Fruit and Veg for schools' scheme is used well for the younger pupils but opportunities are missed to develop pupils' understanding of healthy eating. However, a healthy life style is promoted very well in the further education provision. Students' economic awareness and preparation for work skills are promoted effectively through the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in lessons.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

While the quality of teaching and learning are good overall, it is not consistent throughout the school. There are examples of outstanding teaching and learning where staff ensure that the work is very well matched to the needs of the pupils and learning is interesting and exciting. This leads to pupils being involved and clearly enjoying their work. There are a few occasions notably with older pupils in year 10, where teaching and learning are inadequate. In these lessons, it is not clear what pupils are expected to learn, the pace is too slow and pupils do not make as much progress as other year groups. Additionally, work is not sufficiently matched to pupils' needs. A strength of the school is the quality and expertise of the support staff who work exceptionally well as a team with the pupils. Many are highly skilled and have specific tasks. An excellent example of this is the member of staff responsible for preparing materials and teaching a specific strategy for improving pupils' communication skills. Very high levels of expertise in helping pupils with autistic spectrum disorder ensure these pupils have appropriate structures and routines to learn effectively. All staff know the pupils very well and are aware of individual achievements. However, procedures for assessing and recording progress are weak in all classes except in the further education provision where procedures are very good and effective. The teaching and instructing in the further education provision is very good and leads to pupils learning very effectively.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 1

The school has recognised that the satisfactory curriculum requires further development and this work is already underway, especially in Year 10, where there is not an adequate focus on subjects such as citizenship and there are no opportunities for pupils to gain awards. While the curriculum for children of nursery and reception age appropriately covers the areas of learning, the most recent plans show repetition and do not help staff to ensure that children learn consistently. The curriculum is enriched well through a good range of activities in the evenings and on Saturdays that are funded by the school. There are good opportunities for all pupils to go swimming or have hydrotherapy and for many to go horse riding. The curriculum in the further education provision is very good. It has a very clear focus on preparing students for their next stage. Award bearing courses are very suitable and at a range of levels so all students can make progress. College courses, residential visits and work experience improve students' independence and confidence enormously. A flourishing Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme has led to students gaining the coveted gold as well as silver and bronze awards.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is a good level of care, guidance and support for pupils. Staff are very committed to ensuring the pupils are safeguarded. Procedures for child protection are robust with refresher training planned shortly. Vulnerable pupils are identified and monitored carefully. Links with other agencies are a strength. The physiotherapists train staff to carry out daily programmes as well as working directly with pupils. The School, Home Inter-agency Project (SHIP) has also been very successful in helping pupils learn more effectively in school through working directly with families in their homes. The work with parents through the Children with Disabilities (CWD) Working Together project has been running for a year and is proving very effective. Almost all parents are involved and have worked with the co-ordinator to complete a document that can be shared with all professionals. Parents are pleased about the support their children receive in school. Home school books are used well to ensure valuable information is exchanged. Careers education and guidance are good in the further education provision and the Connexions service contributes effectively towards transition reviews. There are good opportunities for pupils to talk with staff in discussion sessions, but the school recognises that there are not enough formal procedures for their views to be collected.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Leadership and management of the school are good. The school has been through a difficult period with a high level of staff absence. This has been managed effectively through the substantial training of the support staff. They have been able to successfully take lessons and maintain the learning of the pupils. Governors are very supportive of the school but they do not provide adequate challenge to the headteacher and senior management team. They recognise that they are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the work of the school and are now looking at ways of improving the number of visits to classrooms. The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate. Monitoring and evaluating procedures are satisfactory and arrangements are being made to make the process more rigorous. Focussed lesson observations are helping to improve the consistency of teaching and learning. But planning of lessons is not rigorously monitored and this results in some inadequate lessons. Although data is analysed, it is not used well enough to track the achievement of pupils. Improvements since the last inspection have been satisfactory, but assessment of learning and ICT across the curriculum require further development. The new deputy headteacher is already tackling shortfalls in the curriculum and seeking to improve assessment. Roles and responsibilities of the senior management team are being improved to ensure that monitoring is more effective. The headteacher is innovative and has successfully developed initiatives, such as the SHIP project which have run for several years and the new CWD project. These are indicative of the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

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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?	2	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

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?	2	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

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	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for making me feel welcome when I visited your school recently. Everyone was very friendly and I enjoyed seeing you working. I would like to give a big thank you to all those of you who told me about your school. I found this very helpful.

This is what I liked about your school: * You try hard and enjoy being at school. * Your teachers and support staff help you learn well. * Staff are very good at helping you to follow routines which help you to learn. * You are looked after well. * Students in the further education centre do really well, gain a lot of awards and learn about things that will help them when they leave school. * Your school is well run.

This is what I have asked your school to do now: * Improve the way staff check your work. * Make sure that pupils in Year 10 have more suitable things to learn. * Improve the way the work of the school is checked and what the governors do.