



Lydlynch Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115954
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 290376
Inspection date 18 September 2006
Reporting inspector Michael Pye

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Lydlynch Road
School category	Community		Totton
Age range of pupils	4-7		Southampton SO40 3DW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02380863188
Number on roll (school)	142	Fax number	02380869921
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John Illston (Acting)
		Headteacher	Mrs Karen Atkinson
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average with pupils coming from mixed social backgrounds. The nature of the school's intake changes considerably from year to year. There are few pupils entitled to free school meals. Currently there are above average numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD), but below average numbers with statements of special educational need. Predominantly White British there are few pupils from minority ethnic groups or whose first language is believed not to be English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lydlynch is a good school. One parent accurately summed up the qualities when she said, 'The staff's dedication, compassion, and continued support is shown by every child I know at the school, in their enthusiasm to go to school and in their eagerness to learn'. To see the smiling faces as pupils come into school leaves nobody in doubt that pupils feel safe, enjoy their education and consequently are prepared to work hard.

Pupils achieve well because they feel secure in the knowledge that the adults have their best interests at heart. Effective management has promoted the good levels of care and pupils' personal development as being essential to the pupils adopting positive attitudes to work. From Reception onwards pupils benefit from numerous opportunities to learn about how to live together, and to discuss any concerns they may have. In this environment of mutual respect, relationships are strong, the pupils behave well, and are polite and friendly. At the same time the highly experienced leadership of the school has successfully maintained good levels of pupils' academic progress. Pupils are keen to learn and are able to achieve well because teaching and learning are monitored and supported well by senior managers. This has been achieved in circumstances where children's standards on entry to the school vary considerably year on year, but are generally below average, particularly in writing. In 2006, pupils in Year 2 made good progress and attained above average standards in reading and mathematics. Writing was average, although the numbers of pupils gaining the higher grades was below average.

The quality and management of the Foundation Stage is good. Here, as well as elsewhere in the school, pupils' progress is well tracked. This reflects the leadership's commitment to the early identification of pupils who require additional support. As a consequence, good intervention procedures are introduced at an early stage and pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress.

Teamwork has been effectively developed, although the role of the co-ordinators has not been fully maximised to give them full responsibility for analysing data and proposing initiatives for improvement in their subjects. Staff are committed to the clear vision promoted by the headteacher and consequently reflect on their own practice, and consider changes to bring about further improvement. Capacity to further improve the school is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing, particularly for higher attainers.
- Extend the role of co-ordinators to make them more responsible for analysing the performance of their subject areas.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement throughout the school is consistently good, despite the nature of the intake varying from year to year; the greatly increased numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities in Year 2 is one example of such change. Inspection evidence shows that all pupils make good progress as a result of good assessment, well targeted support and good levels of communication between teachers and teaching assistants.

When children enter the Foundation Stage their skills are less well developed than for most four-year-olds. They make good progress, particularly in number, but pupils entering Year 1 have below average standards in communication and writing. By Year 2 the majority have made good progress overall. In reading it is often very good with pupils in the 2006 tests gaining above average standards. Standards are just above average in mathematics in these tests, and average but improving in writing. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher grades in writing was below average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. The pupils make particularly good use of reflection time during assemblies. They were eager to consider the differences in expectations and lifestyles between themselves and children elsewhere in the world. Behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils are polite, interested and they work well together. Their enjoyment of school is clear. 'I never want this school to close', said one pupil. Attendance has improved since the last inspection, is now average but the school recognises that there is more work to do to further improve the rate.

Pupils are aware of healthy living choices and how to stay safe; one pupil talked about the dangers of the internet. They make a good contribution to the community, for example, when they developed a 'safe' travel booklet for parents as part of the school travel plan. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for future life and economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Careful and methodical monitoring by senior managers helps maintain good teaching and learning. Areas for improvement are identified and reviewed regularly. The teaching in the recently introduced phonics lessons reflects the good standards of teaching. Pupils know what they are expected to learn because learning objectives are made clear to them. They are prepared to answer questions because of the good quality relationships that are quickly established. This is evident even in the new Reception class. Pupils spoke of enjoying their lessons because teachers made them 'fun'. Pupils

respond well to some well focused questioning although inconsistencies exist in how often pupils are asked to explain their answers. Not all teachers reinforce the learning points of the lesson in well constructed end of lesson summaries.

Most lessons are conducted at pace with good use made of short, sharp whole-group sessions interspersed with opportunities for independent learning. Good on-going assessment, and careful marking by the teachers enables potential weaknesses to be quickly picked up and appropriate support given.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum has been reviewed recently and has been well developed. For instance, the school recognised the need to introduce phonics and more creative writing opportunities and these are now established. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Pupils' participation in clubs is monitored to ensure all benefit equally. Visits to local shops, and the contrasting areas of the New Forest and Totton do much to aid pupils understanding of the wider world. The skills of information and communication technology are well delivered in discrete lessons, although their use in other subjects to support these skills is less well identified. The emotional, personal, social and health needs of pupils are met by a well developed programme that includes opportunities where pupils can voice their opinions. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and provides well thought out opportunities for pupils to make decisions. Whilst the outdoor area has been well developed since the last inspection the school rightly recognises the need to further develop this area.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and are underpinned by the school's knowledge of the pupils and their families. 'I feel the communication between staff and parent is particularly good', said one parent. The school has carefully thought out how best to introduce new pupils into the school. The success of this was apparent in the calm and trusting environment in the pupils' first whole-day in the reception class. A good range of external agencies are used to give individual pupils and their families the required support.

Robust child protection procedures are in place, while risk assessments and health and safety procedures are well implemented. All staff undergo first aid training. The emotional needs of the pupils are well catered for by the recent introduction of emotional literacy work.

The school tracks the academic progress of pupils very well. For those requiring additional support, use is made in lessons of good 'pupil-friendly' targets. Pupils are increasingly being given opportunities to assess their own efforts but not all have a clear understanding about how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Established procedures have been effective in maintaining good pupil achievement levels despite the changing nature of the cohorts. In particular the school makes good use of monitoring and evaluation procedures to help identify areas for improvement. An open style of management has resulted in staff and governors being involved in evaluating aspects of school life, whilst pupils and parents are consistently canvassed as to their opinions about possible improvements. The school council was involved in the choice of playground equipment and parents' views on uniform have been acted upon. The role of the co-ordinators has been developed, but their analysis and evaluation of performance data in order to improve pupils' achievement in their subjects remains underdeveloped.

The school's self-critical approach is well illustrated by their commitment to improving writing despite a significant rise in standards in 2005. A whole-school approach was adopted and effective changes made to both curriculum and teaching.

The good governing body supports and challenge the school well. The evolving links between governors and individual teachers is resulting in a better understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

The school's leadership has brought about good improvement since the last inspection - in maintaining achievement levels, attendance and writing standards for example. This, together with the improved tracking of pupils' progress, shows they have a good capacity to improve the school further.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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
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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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 may remember my recent visit to your school. Thank you for being so welcoming and I listened carefully to what you had to say about the school. I agree with you and your parents that you go to a good school.

I particularly liked:

- The way that you work hard, and that you get better at reading and mathematics quicker than most other children of your age. This is also a result of the good teaching that you receive. You told me that the teachers make lessons fun
- The way that you were smiling and said you enjoyed school, and felt safe
- The way that you are well behaved, polite and friendly. You told me that any problems are quickly sorted out by the adults who care for you so well
- The way that the school keeps a careful watch on how well you are doing and the way it gives you extra help when you need it.

I have asked the school to work on making your writing even better. I also asked that the responsibility for improving the progress and standards of your work in different subjects could be shared by more teachers.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Pye

Lead inspector