

# Liss Infant School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 116021        |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Hampshire     |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 290397        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 23 March 2007 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | John Seal HMI |

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

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|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Infant                            |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community                         |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–7                               |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed                             |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |                                   |
| School                                    | 173                               |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr Andy Dabson                    |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mrs Teresa Offer                  |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 16 October 2001                   |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Hillbrow Road<br>Liss<br>GU33 7LQ |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01730 892666                      |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01730 894141                      |

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|--------------------------|---------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Liss Infants is a two form entry school. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals and from ethnic backgrounds is well below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and statements of special educational need 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: 2

Liss Infant School is a good school with many outstanding features. The children get off to a flying start in the Reception classes. They quickly become confident learners and achieve well in all areas of learning. This is because of the very high quality teaching in an exciting and stimulating learning environment. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average. Relatively recent, but highly effective robust and rigorous assessment systems, effectively monitored and moderated, are resulting in pupils making outstanding rates of progress. This improved progress is leading to good standards of achievement that are rising still further.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Particular strengths include their enjoyment of learning, behaviour and attendance. The care, guidance and support of all pupils are also outstanding. A strength of the school is its ability to cater for the needs of its pupils, who are supported and challenged very well. This is especially so for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities who are encouraged to take an active part in reviewing their own learning plans. Lessons are well planned and support teaching, which is always at least good.

The headteacher's leadership of the school is outstanding. She has clearly communicated the school's priorities and a vision for the future to the whole school's community. Staff throughout the school are being developed in their roles and given greater responsibility. The governors know what the school's strengths and weaknesses are. However, there are insufficient measurable outcomes in the improvement plan for them to know how much difference the school will have made to pupils' learning over time.

The school works well with the community and many outside agencies. It manages its resources and finances extremely well and has been very successful in maintaining and extending the many strong features reported at the last inspection. As a result, there is good capacity for the school to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Make the targets in the improvement plans more specific, linking them to expected gains in pupils' learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good and rising. When the children start school their skills and abilities vary considerably from year to year. Some year groups have higher starting points than others. The school has a long record of pupils achieving assessment and test results in their reading, writing and mathematics that are significantly above average by the end of Year 2. However, in 2006 the results fell to be similar to the national average. The school's comprehensive evaluation of the performance of this group shows that the pupils made rapid progress from a much lower starting point than usual. The work in the pupils' books shows that standards are above average again and that they are also making swift progress.

This relatively recent improvement in pupils' rate of learning is a result of a range of effective and rigorous tracking systems that have been implemented throughout the school. These focus on employing very effective intervention and support strategies. The school sets challenging targets for pupils across the school, which they meet and, in some cases, exceed. At the end of the Foundation Stage, many children are already above what is expected nationally. The

targets and the pupils' progress towards them are based on secure teacher assessments, robust monitoring and moderation. This process ensures that pupils are now making rapid progress, especially those with learning difficulties or disabilities. As a result, standards are rising and pupils' achievements are getting better still.

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

### **Grade: 1**

This is a real strength of the school. Pupils' personal development is very well supported and their behaviour in classes and around the school is outstanding. They know why they should behave well and suggest ways of improving their behaviour further. They make good contributions to the community through the recently established school council. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with some outstanding features. A good example of this is there has not been a need for the school to record any racist or bullying incidents and there have been no exclusions.

Pupils are excited by the learning activities provided and really enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is outstanding. Pupils feel very safe in the school. They adopt healthy lifestyles, for example through the high take up of the free fruit on offer. They have also been involved in decisions about how to make the playground more physically challenging.

Pupils are developing group working skills and attitudes which will contribute to their future good economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Overall the quality of the teaching and learning is good. In Reception it is outstanding. Teachers and learning support assistants form a strong, cohesive and effective team.

The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is never less than good and there are many areas of outstanding practice that include the planning of practical, hands-on activities. However, some lessons have an over-long introduction that reduces the time available for pupils to work independently. Lesson plans are based on different systems of regular and accurate assessments of where children are in each year group. This ensures rapid progress by all groups of pupils including those who have learning difficulties or disabilities.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good; it is broad and relevant. The pupils now have more opportunities to write in a range of contexts and this has helped to improve the quality of their writing.

The curriculum is underpinned by good schemes of work based on a wide and varied range of practical activities including 'blocked' weeks to explore subjects such as art and music in more depth. There is good use of information and communication technology to stimulate and motivate pupils. The Foundation Stage curriculum for children in the Reception class is stimulating and exciting. There is a good balance of teacher led activities and those the children can choose themselves. There is a strong emphasis on developing the children's knowledge of letter sounds.

Pupils enjoyment of learning can be seen in the extensive and well-subscribed range of extra-curricular activities, which include French and environmental science.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school considers this to be a strength, and rightly so. Pupils receive outstanding care, guidance and support. The school has ensured that there are very effective assessment and rigorous tracking systems in place to help the pupils make rapid progress. Although these are not yet consistent throughout the school they, nevertheless, result in effective planning of challenging activities that match all groups of pupils' learning needs. The significant group of more able and high achieving pupils have challenging targets that demonstrate the school's high expectations.

Personal support for pupils is outstanding. They know to whom to turn if they are worried and any individual difficulty or incident is treated seriously. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are secure.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides clear direction. Her very effective leadership has developed a strong and determined sense of purpose. All staff and governors share this, as did the extremely high number of the parental questionnaires that were returned. One parent wrote, 'this is a school that strongly believes that every child really does matter'.

The governing body is effective; it is involved and appropriately challenging where necessary. It has supported the school in its highly effective deployment of staffing and resources to ensure maximum improvement. This has led to clear actions being taken to ensure strong impact on pupils' progress, the quality of teaching and learning and the school's improvement plan. These are all regularly and rigorously monitored. Although the actions are clear, their impact over time needs to be evaluated more effectively to gauge how much difference the school is making to the pupils' progress against the suitably challenging targets it has set itself.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### 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> | 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  | 1   |
| 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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How well do learners achieve?</b>   | 2 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 2 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 1 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 1 |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                           | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 1 |
| The attendance of learners  | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 1 |
| 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 | 2 |

### The quality of provision

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

<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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 2   |
| 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   | 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  | 1   |
| 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**

Thank you very much for your friendly welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking to you and seeing you in lessons. You told me that your school is a good school and I agree.

You are making outstanding progress and many of you reach above average standards in your work. Soon you will be achieving as much as you can. This is because your teachers and helpers give you exciting and interesting lessons and you work very hard.

You have a very good headteacher who knows what your school needs to do to help it improve. Your teachers work hard to make very many of your lessons fun and they plan them together with the learning support assistants so that you all can make very good progress.

The adults in the school look after you very well and you get on together very well. You know a lot about being healthy and how the right food and exercise can make you even healthier. Your teachers are very good at checking how well you are getting on so they can continue to help you do even better.

To help the school become even better, your headteacher, teachers and the governors are already working on ways to make sure you all continue to make progress. I have asked them to make sure that their targets for improving the school are linked more closely to your learning.

I hope you continue to be happy at school and to learn as much as you can.

Best wishes

John Seal

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools