

Peel Common Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116175
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	290447
Inspection dates	6–7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Johnson
Headteacher	Mrs Carole Bishop
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002
School address	The Drive Rowner Gosport PO13 0QD
Telephone number	01329 281206
Fax number	01329 230811

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small school is situated in a generally disadvantaged area of Gosport. The school admits pupils from a wide variety of social backgrounds. Almost all are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above that found nationally.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Peel Common is a satisfactory and improving school. Standards are broadly average. They are higher than those of previous years and are rising because teaching has been strengthened and tracking information is now being used well to identify and address any underachievement. However, there is scope for further improvement as standards should be higher, particularly in mathematics. The parents are overwhelmingly supportive and are summed up by one parent who wrote, 'I can't praise the school and its staff too highly. They have really made a huge difference to my son who is now a much happier and settled child'.

Achievement is satisfactory overall. The school is rightly concerned that too few higher attaining pupils have reached the expected higher levels in national tests in recent years, particularly in mathematics. However, almost all pupils are now making, and sometimes exceeding, the progress expected of them so that achievement is satisfactory overall. Last year pupils exceeded their targets in English but not in mathematics. Assessments show that standards in English are being maintained and the numbers likely to achieve higher levels in mathematics are on track to improve significantly this year. This is supported by inspection evidence and confirms that recent changes to address underachievement are making a difference.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The amount of good teaching is increasing but there is still room for further improvements. Teachers are planning work that meets the needs of all groups of pupils and this is accelerating the progress of most pupils. A weakness is that the marking of pupils' work in mathematics is not as effective as in other subjects. Some good examples of marking were seen that gave pupils a clear idea of what they needed to do in order to improve their work. However, this is not consistent in all classes. This was borne out in conversations with pupils who explained they found the marking of their English and science work to be the most helpful especially when they were also given the opportunity to assess for themselves how well they were doing.

This is a school in which each child matters. All pupils are warmly welcomed and equally valued. The quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils is satisfactory overall, and their pastoral care is good. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning, but systems for target setting and assessment are not as consistent in mathematics compared with other subjects.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, and is enriched through a wide range of out-of-class activities. It provides well for pupils' personal, social and health education and makes a positive contribution to pupils' good personal development and well-being.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher and leadership team provide clear direction and a shared vision for improvement. However, there remain inconsistencies in the teaching and management of subjects, leading to an uneven rate of progress made by pupils across the school. The chair of governors and governing body provides satisfactory support to the school in helping it to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics to raise standards and ensure that teachers' marking and feedback provides pupils with a clear idea of how to improve their work.
- Improve the way teachers use assessment in mathematics and provide more opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and progress.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are broadly average overall and pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. This shows considerable improvement since 2004 when standards were significantly below average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are now making good progress in English. Previously, pupils of higher ability have not achieved as well as they could in mathematics. However, the rate of progress is improving, reflecting improvements to the teaching and to systems for tracking and identifying underachievement. Very recent data shows that higher ability pupils are making satisfactory progress in mathematics in all classes. Standards in information and communication technology [ICT] have improved well since the last inspection and are average by the end of Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported and make good progress against their personal targets. The school recognises that it needs to continue working hard to raise achievement further in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Relationships across the school are very good and as a result pupils are friendly, helpful and caring towards each other. They are well behaved, enjoy learning and have good attitudes to their work. They feel very safe and are confident that any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are dealt with well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They make their own class rules, have many opportunities to explore and understand human feelings and relationships, for example, during assemblies. They contribute well to the wider community through their support for charities such as 'Children in Chernobyl', and their involvement in the civic award programme. The school council is very active and is pleased with its efforts to improve the fences and organise the Huff and Puff club. They have a clear understanding of a healthy lifestyle including the importance of a balanced diet, hydration and plenty of exercise. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities to acquire literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and so are satisfactorily equipped for later life and learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There is a good climate for learning in all classes. This stems from pupils' keenness to learn and their response to teachers' skills in making lessons enjoyable. Teachers are sharing learning objectives in lessons and using assessment information to plan work that is suitably challenging for different groups. The school has focused on improving the teaching of writing across the school and the positive impact of this work is now evident in the better standards achieved and the good progress made by pupils. Although there were many examples of challenging learning activities for higher ability pupils in Year 5 and 6, the rate of improvement in mathematics lessons is not as rapid. A weakness in otherwise competent teaching is that the marking of pupils' work in mathematics is not as effective as in other subjects. As a result, some

pupils do not have a sufficiently clear understanding about what they need to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and has been appropriately adapted to cater for mixed-age classes. There is good attention to literacy and numeracy planning with good opportunities for pupils to write in a number of different styles, especially in history. However, opportunities for pupils to make links across other subjects are not as explicit or as fully exploited. Recent external monitoring found that pupils' ICT work had improved well since the last inspection and pupils continue to demonstrate confidence and competence in using computers. Pupils' personal development is promoted well through a good emphasis on sporting activity and good attention to health and safety. There are plenty of opportunities for enrichment through visits linked to topics, such as the visit to the Mary Rose when studying the Tudors. There are also a good number of lunch-time and after-school clubs such as gardening, football and the school orchestra. Pupils say that they particularly enjoy the residential visits to Stone Farm and Fairthorne Manor which adds much to their enjoyment of school and their academic and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for the pupils. The staff provide very good care for the pupils and this ensures they enjoy all the school provides and are confident, motivated learners. Parents fully appreciate the good level of care their children receive. As one parent said, 'Each child is treated as an individual and their particular needs are taken into account'. The school caters very well for its most vulnerable pupils ensuring their needs are met through their good links with parents and carers and effective strategies within school, such as the valuable contribution of the home-school link worker. Procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils, including child protection, are securely in place.

Pupils' progress is systematically tracked and senior managers are using this information to ensure pupils make more even progress across the school. Frequent assessments in English and science, including pupils' own assessments of their learning, are good and are helping to raise standards in those subjects. However, although this information is being used well to group pupils by ability for mathematics, the systematic monitoring of their progress or their involvement in assessing how well they are doing are not as effective as in other subjects. This weakness is being addressed through a series of initiatives in Years 3 and 4. However, this has yet to be extended across all classes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is good capacity for future improvement. The headteacher and her deputy work well as a team and are providing clear educational direction. Together they promote an orderly and calm environment for learning. All staff are clearly committed to raising standards and are working well together to achieve this. Key

priorities for improvement have been identified and are being tackled, and this is reflected in the school's clear development plan.

The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate. The school has recently introduced new systems for compiling information about pupils' progress. This is being used well to ensure that all pupils make consistent progress across the school. For example, recent work to improve the writing skills of higher attaining pupils focused closely on the gains made in pupils' learning. This serves as a good model for future developments, particularly in mathematics.

Governance is satisfactory. The recent work of the governors shows they are much more involved in the strategic management of the school than at the time of the last inspection. Although they are starting to hold the school to account for its work they do not yet have sufficiently robust ways of checking on the school's progress.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ 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

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	2
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
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	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

19 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Peel Common Junior School, Gosport, PO13 0QD

Following our visit to your school we would like to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn.

There are lots of things that we like about your school. Some of them are:

- your behaviour is good and you get on very well with each other
- you told us that you enjoy school and, watching you in lessons, we could see that you work hard and try to do your best
- all of the adults in school look after each of you very well so that you feel safe and happy
- you raise money for charities so they can help those who are less fortunate
- you also told us that you like to take on extra responsibilities and to help others.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. You are doing well in lessons but we agree with your teachers that, with some improvements, some of you could learn even more especially in mathematics. We have asked your teachers to make it clear what you need to do to improve your work when they mark your mathematics books. We have also asked them to continue to check your progress more closely in mathematics and to give you more opportunities to be involved in doing this.

Yours truly,

John Earish

Lead inspector