

# Medstead Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116300
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	290490
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Olson Davis

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	193
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Bryan Webb
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ian Waine
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 May 2001
<b>School address</b>	Roedowns Road Medstead Alton GU34 5LG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01420 562824
<b>Fax number</b>	01420 562451

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This primary school is located in an area of socio-economic advantage. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are no pupils at the early stages of learning English. The school has a unit for eight deaf children whose predominant means of communication is by British Sign Language. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) and pupils with statements of special educational need (SEN) are above the national averages.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school that has made significant improvements over the past year and is well placed to improve further. The school strives to do even better and much has been done to ensure that pupils achieve well. In recent years standards, although still well above average, showed a downward trend. Direct and robust action by the new headteacher has meant that this trend has been completely reversed. Fundamental to pupils' good progress is teachers' effective use of regular and careful assessments to set work that is well matched to their varying needs and abilities. Pupils now reach high standards in English and science with high proportions reaching the higher level 5 in these subjects. The school's strategic planning accurately identifies that although the needs of more able pupils are well catered for in mathematics, not enough challenge is always provided for able pupils capable of reaching level 5. As a result, standards in the subject, whilst still above average, are lower than in English and science.

Pupils' achievement is good and improving under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher. He provides a clear direction for the school ensuring that it has a strong focus on raising standards and that it maintains an unwavering drive towards improvement. He is ably supported by his senior leadership team. There is a strong sense of shared purpose among staff and a clear resolve to do their best for their pupils. Parents appreciate the recent developments. One wrote, 'The new headteacher has improved behaviour and expectations throughout the school immeasurably and has also created a very positive, open communication style with parents. He has energy and passion and it is catching.'

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class because of good teaching and a good Foundation Stage curriculum. They settle quickly and make fast strides in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because of the strong emphasis placed on this area. Pupils enjoy learning because the school takes great care to include them in all aspects of school life. Deaf pupils in the total communication unit are well integrated into the life of the school. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They feel safe and valued because of the strong ethos of care based on Christian values. Relationships are very good. The staff, staff helpers, pupil 'peer mentors' and 'playground pals' effectively promote a 'family' atmosphere in school.

Leadership and management are good. Recent developments in the roles and responsibilities of staff have brought greater rigour to monitoring and the use of assessment information. Several initiatives in the past year, such as strengthening the procedures for tracking pupils' progress and providing more opportunities for pupils to use their skills in real contexts, have resulted in higher standards in English, mathematics and science. Governors know the school well through the high quality information provided by the school and their own increasingly effective monitoring. This allows them to participate fully in managing the school's strategic development.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics to the same high levels as science and English by increasing the challenge for able pupils.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well to reach standards that are well above average at the end of Year 6. Most children start school in the Reception class with attainment that is above that expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. By the start of Year 1, most children have achieved the standards expected for their age and many have exceeded them. The progress they make by the end of Year 2 is also good and continues in Years 3 to 6. Results of assessments at the end of Year 6, in 2007, show that pupils' achievement is good in English, mathematics and science. Pupils attained exceptionally high results in English and in science. Results in mathematics, although good, were not as high as in English and science because a smaller proportion of pupils reached the higher level 5 in the assessments. Although four out of ten Year 6 pupils reached level 5 in mathematics this year, the school has identified that with extra challenge even more pupils could have achieved this level. Minority ethnic pupils make similarly good progress to their classmates. Those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with statements of special educational needs receive a high level of well-targeted support and, as a result, make good progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' enjoyment is evident in all year groups and supports their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Engaging assemblies, 'circle times' and good opportunities for reflection within lessons support the development of spiritual and moral awareness well. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced by links with schools in Burundi and Kenya, French lessons and school trips abroad. The Young Governors and Young Environmentalists take their responsibilities seriously in improving the school community and environment. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe and to live healthy lives. They speak enthusiastically of the wide range of physical activities on offer and opportunities for outdoor learning. They enjoy their school and are proud of it. As a result, attendance is good and the vast majority of pupils behave well. There is a clear behaviour management system which staff use effectively to address the behaviour of a small minority of pupils whose behaviour is not of the same high standard as other pupils. Pupils' good basic skills and good collaborative skills mean they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Children achieve well because of good teaching. Staff in the Reception class provide a good balance between teacher led activities and those chosen by the children which helps make learning enjoyable and develops independence. Teachers throughout the school have high expectations of what pupils can do and give them interesting work which is usually well matched to their capabilities. One pupil said, 'We enjoy the lessons the most because we get to do tons of practical stuff in all subjects.' There is well-focused teaching to extend the more able mathematicians in the 'Challenge Groups'. However, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to add extra challenge to pupils' learning in class. Teachers give clear explanations and check pupils' understanding carefully with well targeted questions. Skilled support staff work closely

with teachers to provide good quality help to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including deaf pupils.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The good curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and includes an increasing number of opportunities for them to work independently, imaginatively and creatively. A good emphasis on investigative work in mathematics and science, together with good links between English and other subjects, helps pupils achieve well in these subjects. All other subjects, including French in all years, are covered well. Good plans have been formulated to further enrich the curriculum by maximising the use of the school environment, local resources and exploiting links between them. Provision to meet the particular needs of gifted and talented pupils in school is good. A strong emphasis on sport and a strong programme for pupils' personal, social and health education effectively promote healthy lifestyles. Good partnerships with outside agencies and the local secondary schools enrich the curriculum and provide benefits for pupils' learning and well-being. A good range of popular clubs, lunchtime activities and visit adds to pupils' enjoyment of school and their personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Robust procedures are in place to ensure pupils' health and safety. Pupils say 'If we are upset or need help with our work there is always someone to help us'. Pupils in the unit for the deaf receive high quality care and support. Each has a key worker who ensures their personal and academic needs are met well and that they are integrated into all the school offers.

Teachers make good use of assessment information to identify, track and support pupils' learning needs and to set group and individual targets. Pupils discuss with their teachers how these are best to be achieved. This has led to improved achievement in English, mathematics and science. However, this process is not yet sharp enough to ensure that all those pupils capable of reaching the highest levels at Year 2 and Year 6, particularly in mathematics, actually do so.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' good progress in their academic and personal development owes much to the good leadership and management at all levels. Parents have welcomed the vigour which the new headteacher and his team have brought '...in raising expectations and bringing about many positive improvements which have led to better standards'.

The school knows what it is good at and where it needs to improve. It has used this knowledge well to drive actions which have led to improvements. Staff training has focused on ensuring subject managers 'lead effectively from the middle' and this is bringing sharpness to their work. For example, subject leaders in English, mathematics and science have strengthened provision where needed but know there is more to be done in ensuring even more pupils attain high standards. Subject leaders in the other areas have reviewed the already good practice in their

subjects and are poised to implement their plans to develop a more distinctive curriculum which meets local needs.

Governors are determined to ensure the school continues to improve. Their more streamlined and efficient committee structure, close involvement in drawing up the school development plan and visits to school to see how well the plans are progressing is helping them to work closely with the leadership team to ensure this occurs.

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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>	<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>	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

<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	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### 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	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	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>	2

<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	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

4 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Medstead Church of England Primary School, Alton, GU34 5LG

Thank you for all your help when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and took careful note of what you and your parents had to say about the school. We were impressed by your politeness and friendliness.

Yours is a good school. Here are a few of the many good things about it.

- You are making good progress because your teachers are good at helping you to learn.
- You enjoy your school because teachers are good at planning interesting things for you to do and you play an active part in your own learning.
- All of the adults in school look after you well so you feel safe.
- The school is successful in making sure that you all feel part of the school, particularly those pupils in the total communication unit.
- Your headteacher, the staff and the school governors are clear about what needs to be improved and how to improve it. This means that your school should keep getting better.

All of the adults in your school want it to be even better. The Young Governors also have useful ideas about how the school can be improved. To help them do this we have asked the school to do one main thing.

- Help you to do even better in mathematics by carrying out its plans to make sure that more of you reach the higher level 5 in your Year 6 national assessment.

We hope that you will continue to enjoy your school. We also hope that you will help your teachers as they work hard to make your school even better for you.

Yours sincerely

Olson DavisLead Inspector