



Ringwood Church of England Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116309
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 290496
Inspection date 8 March 2007
Reporting inspector Hilary Bonser

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	School Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Ringwood
Age range of pupils	3-7		BH24 1LG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01425 473829
Number on roll (school)	263	Fax number	01425 475295
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Rev Canon J Turpin MA
		Headteacher	Mrs J M Thomson
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. About a third of them travel from beyond the immediate neighbourhood. While attainment on entry to school is generally above average, in most year groups about a quarter of the children start school with below average skills. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities varies between year groups but is above average overall. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and none are at an early stage of learning English. The school has a sixteen-place Early Learning Group for pre-school children with speech and language difficulties. The school has received and sustains a number of national awards, including the Charter Mark, Investors in People and the Active Mark Gold.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an excellent school where pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve exceptionally well in their personal development as well as in their learning. Parents and pupils justifiably regard the school very highly. As one parent commented, 'What a wonderful start to school life, one could not ask for better!' Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, the school has continued to build on its successes since the last inspection. The curriculum, which was a relative weakness then, has been transformed into a major strength of the school. This, combined with the consistently very high quality of teaching, has contributed to further improvements in achievement and in standards, which are above average overall but exceptionally high in mathematics and reading. However, there is no sense of complacency. As one governor said, 'We never feel that we have 'arrived'!' This very clear commitment, shared by all staff and governors, together with the improvements already made show that the school is very well placed to develop even further. The school identifies its strengths, its areas for development and what is needed to remedy them accurately. It is very aware that standards in writing, although above average, are not yet as high as in mathematics and reading and is currently focusing attention on this.

The headteacher has been very successful in promoting very strong team work among all staff. This is a key factor in the excellent quality of education in the Early Learning Group, the Foundation Stage and across all year groups, and results in pupils making exceptionally good progress throughout the school. Very rigorous assessment and tracking of pupils' progress contribute to this success. A particular strength is the way information is used to set challenging targets for each pupil and to provide wide-ranging additional support or challenge where needed. Teachers are especially good at keeping pupils focused on their targets to help them improve their work.

The exemplary curriculum is innovative, creative, and enthuses pupils and staff alike. A parent rightly commented on the 'imaginative and inspiring way it is delivered'. This adds considerably to pupils' learning and enthusiasm for school. The school provides an outstanding level of care, guidance and support for pupils, which reflects the value it places on each child and the importance of fostering their confidence as learners. This contributes very well to a calm and happy environment where pupils feel secure and eager to learn. As a result, they behave exceptionally well and really enjoy coming to school. The excellent partnership with parents, and other schools and agencies underpins this and supports pupils' very positive attitudes.

What the school should do to improve further

- Fully implement plans to raise standards in writing towards those in reading and mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children do very well in the Reception classes. Many reach or exceed the expected learning goals by the end of the year and all make good and frequently very good progress from their individual starting points in all areas of their learning. Extremely well-planned provision, an inviting, secure environment and high quality teaching contribute to this.

In Years 1 and 2, boys and girls of all abilities continue to make rapid progress as a result of an exciting curriculum, excellent teaching and very close attention to individual needs. Fewer children than in previous years reached the higher Level 3 in writing in the national tests in 2006. The very rigorous action in all year groups to address this is already further improving pupils' rate of progress in their writing, although too soon to see its full effect on standards at the end of Year 2. The school identifies pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities at an early stage and excellent provision helps them and children in the Early Learning Group to achieve exceptionally well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also excellent, reflecting the values this church school actively and successfully promotes in all areas of learning. Pupils contribute to school life very well, taking on responsibilities around the school, such as 'Play Patrol', with enthusiasm and pride. 'We like to solve each other's problems and make them happy', said one pupil. This reflects the very positive and supportive relationships across the school. Pupils say that they feel very safe and cared for and love coming to school. 'There's nothing to be worried about', remarked one pupil. Pupils are very well aware of what to do to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. They have frequent opportunities in lessons to work together or independently and to make choices and decisions. This, together with the high level of their literacy and numeracy skills, prepares them very effectively for their future lives. Attendance remains average overall. This is because of the number of family holidays taken in term time, in spite of the determined efforts of the school to reduce these.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are excellent. Teachers make very clear to pupils what, how and why they are expected to learn in each lesson, and plan varied, closely matched tasks that absorb and motivate them. As a result, pupils concentrate and learn exceptionally well and enjoy their work. The regular use of deserved praise and encouragement promotes responsible behaviour, confidence and very positive attitudes to learning

and helps pupils to meet teachers' high expectations of them. One pupil commented, 'Teachers always tell us when we do well'. Teachers question pupils in a way that helps them to extend and express their ideas. They plan and work very closely with the highly skilled support staff, enabling them to provide an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers use their meticulous monitoring of individual progress to adjust what they teach to move pupils on in their learning. They involve pupils very well in reviewing their work and deciding what they need to do next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum makes a very significant contribution to pupils' achievement and to all aspects of their personal development. The purposeful, structured integration of subjects provides pupils with a seamless, very relevant approach to learning. Where appropriate, subject specific skills are taught separately to maintain rigour. Six key learning values, fundamental to the school's ethos, and strategies to develop thinking skills are promoted throughout the curriculum at an appropriate level for each year group. The excellent planning that puts the curriculum into practice takes very good account of pupils' individual needs and abilities, including gifted and talented pupils, those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. It means that all pupils are fully included in lessons and are very keen to learn. The high quality of the personal, health and social education elements within the curriculum is recognised in the school's Enhanced Healthy School's Award. This and the many additional activities promote useful life skills that will serve pupils well in becoming responsible members of their communities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. All staff know the pupils and their individual needs very well. The way that all of the lunchtime supervisors work with pupils in other roles in school contributes considerably to this. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are thorough. Pupils feel that any adult in school will listen to them and help if they have a problem. The care and support given, including that to vulnerable pupils and their families, is greatly appreciated by parents. As a result, the school is a happy and safe community where pupils thrive academically and in their personal development.

The school has excellent systems to track pupils' progress and to set targets for learning. These are reviewed regularly and shared with parents as well as pupils. There are very good systems to involve pupils in assessing their progress and setting their own targets. This also helps them to know exactly what to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides excellent leadership, very ably assisted by the two assistant headteachers. She has a very strong sense of direction that is fully focused on continually improving the quality of learning in all areas of pupils' development. She has built an enthusiastic staff team keen to contribute to this, through an emphasis on shared responsibility and supportive teamwork. Her own drive, enthusiasm and example are key factors in motivating staff to successfully meet the very high expectations she has of them. These are reflected in the significant improvements in the curriculum, teaching, learning and achievement since the last inspection.

Subject leaders, especially in the core subjects, make a very good contribution to improving standards through extensive monitoring and by providing training for colleagues. There is a rigorous process of self-evaluation from which well planned priorities have been identified and implemented successfully to raise standards further. The process is underpinned by excellent tracking and evaluation of pupils' progress, which is used very effectively to help them improve. The monitoring activities of the governors are exemplary. They question, support and contribute to the work of the school very well. The school makes very good use of partnerships with other schools, colleges and external agencies to share and develop best practice and to set itself new challenges.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ 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

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

The quality of provision

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

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	1
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

I am writing to let you know what I found out when I inspected your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. I enjoyed seeing you at work and at lunchtime and talking to you. There are lots of things I like about your excellent school.

I liked these things the most.

- Your behaviour is excellent, you work hard and enjoy school thoroughly.
- Your headteacher runs the school very well indeed.
- The adults in school get to know you very well and, as some of you said, they really care about each one of you.
- The school provides many interesting and exciting things for you to do.
- Your teachers are excellent at helping you to get on exceptionally well and to do your best.
- You understand the importance of eating the right things and taking plenty of exercise.

I have asked your teachers to help you to do even better in writing.

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Hilary Bonser

Lead Inspector