



The Mountbatten School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116408
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 290525
Inspection date 1 November 2006
Reporting inspector Peter Sanderson HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Whitenap Lane
School category	Community		Romsey
Age range of pupils	11–16		SO51 5SY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01794502502
Number on roll (school)	1414	Fax number	01794502501
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Dr Mary Bainbridge
		Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Morffew
Date of previous school inspection	3 December 2001		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
11–16	1 November 2006	290525

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

The Mountbatten School is a large, oversubscribed comprehensive school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below that found in most schools. Very few speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below that found in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The school has specialist status in languages and sports.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Mountbatten is a good school with many outstanding features. It is well regarded by its pupils and their parents, with just cause. Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, there is a shared commitment at all levels within the school community to provide the best for all pupils. She is well supported by the senior leadership team. The overall quality of middle leadership is good. Attainment information is generally used well to set targets, track pupil progress, identify underachievement and provide support. However, there is some inconsistency in the effectiveness of the use of these systems between departments leading to variation in pupil achievement between subjects.

The school has very good systems for monitoring and evaluating its performance and, as a consequence, knows itself very well. It has implemented an effective range of strategies to improve teaching and learning and standards have risen since the last inspection. Teaching is good overall and there is some outstanding practice within the school. Pupils know their targets and how well they are doing, but they are not always clear in all subjects what they must do to improve. Pupils make good progress during their time at the school achieving well above national average standards by the end of Year 11.

The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding. They behave extremely well and show excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils enjoy their work and attendance is well above the national average. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are excellent. The care, guidance and support of pupils is outstanding. They feel safe and this is contributing to their desire to do well. The school curriculum is good and meets the needs of all pupils. There is a good range of academic courses available to pupils in Years 10 and 11. The school offers an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities and the uptake by pupils is excellent.

The school has achieved specialist status in languages and sport. This has contributed to improvement by allowing the school to enrich its curriculum, develop its liaison with link primary schools and improve its resources.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that attainment information is used effectively and consistently across the school in order to further improve pupils' achievement.
- Ensure that pupils know what to do to improve their learning in all subject areas.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are well above the national average and achievement is good. Attainment on entry to the school is above the national average. Due to very good teaching all groups of pupils make very good progress during their first three years at the school.

They achieve well above national average standards by the end of Year 9. Standards have been improving at a rate slightly faster than that seen nationally in recent years.

The progress made by pupils during Years 10 and 11 is slightly below that seen during the first three years at the school. However, progress is good and pupils achieve well above national average standards by the end of Year 11.

There is some variation between the progress made by pupils in different subjects. The school recognises this and has taken effective action to address this issue. The school's good pupil tracking system shows this variation is being reduced. The Year 11 examinations in 2005 indicated that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities made only satisfactory progress. This issue has now been addressed through earlier intervention strategies and the progress of these pupils is now good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development of pupils is outstanding. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary and their mature attitudes make a significant contribution to the school's calm and safe atmosphere. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their excellent development in this area enhances the very positive ethos and sense of high self esteem in the school.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is well above the national average. They have a very secure understanding of healthy lifestyles and diet. They are very enthusiastic about the benefits of exercise and many pupils participate in the range of sporting activities offered by the school. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. They support numerous local community events and regularly raise money for adopted charities. The school council is active and pupils enjoy the responsibility of making their own decisions. Through opportunities provided by the school, pupils develop excellent skills in preparation for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils respond very well to effective teaching and this ensures they make good progress. Lessons are well planned and expectations are high. Teachers make very good use of interactive whiteboards and consequently pupils' interest is captured quickly and no time is wasted. Very good use is made of questioning to check pupils' understanding and encourage further learning. Teachers and pupils have excellent relationships which make for a good working environment in the classroom with pupils enjoying their learning.

In many lessons teachers clearly explain to pupils what they need to learn or be able to do in order to improve their performance. Reference is often usefully made to national curriculum levels or examination grades. However, this good practice is not

yet consistent across the school. Pupils are aware of their targets and how well they are doing but they are not clear in all subjects what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that meets the needs of its pupils. There is good curriculum liaison with link primary schools and this helps smooth the transition of pupils from Year 6 into Year 7. Provision for languages and sport is very good reflecting the specialist nature of the school. All pupils study two languages during Years 8 and 9 and a large number of pupils follow one or two languages during Years 10 and 11. The school also acts as a language hub for local primary schools supporting the teaching of languages within these schools.

The three curriculum pathways in Years 10 and 11 meet the needs of pupils of different abilities and interests. There is a good choice of academic courses, but, vocational courses are only offered to a limited range of pupils. Some of these vocational courses are provided through a link with a local college.

A high proportion of pupils participate in the outstanding range of enrichment activities that are offered outside of schools hours.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding care, guidance and support provided for pupils ensures that they feel valued and successfully promotes their excellent personal development. As one parent said and;quot;The staff at the school are very approachable and willing to go that extra mile for an individual pupil.and;quot; Health and safety are well catered for and child protection procedures are rigorous and thorough. Pupils feel safe in school and they and their parents agree that any issues of concern are dealt with promptly, supportively and efficiently. Very good links are made with outside agencies to provide a comprehensive range of support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Very good support is also given to vulnerable pupils and more recently to those whose behaviour has been impeding their academic progress. The school has recently developed and improved its system for setting pupils academic targets and tracking their progress towards these targets. This system allows underachieving pupils to be identified and good support is provided for them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Overall leadership and management are good with some areas that are outstanding. The headteacher is an outstanding leader, and she is well supported by her senior leadership team. Together they ensure that the school is clearly focussed on raising standards through improving the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher

wants the best for all pupils and the school vision and;quot;We care, we respect, we achieveand;quot; is one that is shared by all staff.

The overall quality of middle leadership in the school is good. There is some very good practice but this is not consistent across all subject areas. There is inconsistency in the effectiveness with which departments use attainment information to improve pupils' learning and this leads to some variation in achievement between subjects.

The school has good procedures for monitoring and evaluating its work. Through this process leaders and managers are clear about the strengths of the school as well as areas of weaknesses. Areas for development are clearly addressed in the school improvement plan. The implementation and impact of this plan are well monitored by the leadership team and governors. This process has ensured that standards have continued to rise since the previous inspection. The capacity for further improvement is good.

The governors steer the work of the school very effectively. They work successfully with the senior leadership team providing good support and challenge. Resources are well managed with a clear focus on providing good value for money.

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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?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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	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	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?	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?	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?	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

During the recent inspection, we met and talked with many of you, sat in some of your lessons and looked at work you had done. We would like to thank you for the help you gave us. Now that we have finished the inspection, I am writing to tell you of our findings.

We thought your school was good with many outstanding features. Many of you told us that you enjoy your lessons and are proud of your school. The following points are what we found to be the school's key strengths;

- Your headteacher is an outstanding leader who wants the very best for all of you. She is well supported by other senior teachers in the school.
- You are taught well and are making good progress in your lessons.
- Your relationships with each other and with teachers are excellent. Your attitudes to learning and behaviour are outstanding.
- You told us you feel safe in school and valued because your teachers take outstanding care of you.
- The school offers you an excellent range of after school clubs and activities. It was good to see that many of you make the most of these opportunities.

You can see that we think your school has many strengths but to become even better we have asked it to do the following:

- You achieve very well in a number of subjects because your progress is tracked well, and you are provided with good support when you need it. You also know your targets and what you must do to improve in these subjects. We have asked the school to ensure that this is the case in all of your subjects.

Thank you again and I wish you all good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Sanderson

Her Majesty's Inspector