



Rowner Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116167
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 296535
Inspection dates 12–13 September 2006
Reporting inspector Peter Thrussell

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Tichborne Way
School category	Community		Rowner
Age range of pupils	7–11		Gosport PO13 0BN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01329280299
Number on roll (school)	188	Fax number	01329285428
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr William Townsend
		Headteacher	Mrs Mary Wood
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Rowner is a smaller than average junior school. The number on roll has been falling in recent years. The intake is mixed in terms of deprivation and prosperity with a below average proportion eligible for free school meals. The majority of pupils have British White heritage; a small proportion come from minority ethnic backgrounds with very few at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Rowner is a satisfactory school with many strengths. Pupils are very well cared for by the staff. One parent commented that her daughter's success was 'due to the fantastic care she and our family received at Rowner'. The majority of pupils behave well and are polite and keen to learn. As a result the school has a calm and purposeful atmosphere. The few pupils with challenging behaviour or social difficulties are supported well. Pupils feel safe and know that when any unpleasantness is reported it is quickly and fairly dealt with. Pupils enjoy coming to school, as the above level of attendance shows. This enjoyment is fostered through a good, well-balanced curriculum, which is enriched through visits, visitors and clubs, adding further interest and experiences that help to bring learning to life. Pupils value the contribution they can make through the school council and the responsible jobs they are given to do. Links with other schools and other agencies are good, providing support for both staff and pupils. Good opportunities for sport, and encouragement to eat healthily, contribute well to pupils' development of healthy lifestyles. Links with parents are developing well due to the hard work and commitment of the headteacher. 'Drop in' times and subject workshops help to strengthen the part parents have to play in the education and well-being of their children.

Pupils enter the school with average attainment. Progress through the school is variable. However, by the end of Year 6 pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress. Standards overall are average, equipping pupils satisfactorily for their future life and learning. There are particular strengths in reading and science but writing is a weakness throughout the school.

Teaching and learning vary across the school but overall are satisfactory. Detailed planning shows that lessons have a clear purpose, and this is shared well with pupils. Warm relationships contribute to good lessons where pupils achieve well. However, occasionally there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to explore, discuss and extend their learning and this reduces the progress they make. Assessment information is not always used well enough to check pupils' progress and to plan what they need to do next. This limits the effectiveness of both teaching and learning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The head teacher has a clear idea of what needs to be improved. However, the school's improvement planning does not keep a sufficient check on the actions being taken, their impact on pupils' learning, or on how their success is to be measured. Without more rigorous monitoring procedures to ensure and maintain a high quality of provision, including teaching and learning, the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- * Raise standards in writing throughout the school
- * Make better use of assessment information to check pupils' progress and plan the next steps in their learning

- * Ensure that monitoring systems are more rigorous and lead to improvements in teaching and learning
- * Strengthen leadership and management through a more rigorous approach to improvement planning, monitoring and evaluation

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are average and achievement satisfactory. A lack of careful monitoring has resulted in the rates of progress varying both within and between year groups. National testing in Year 6 shows overall standards to be average. This has been the trend in recent years. Although a more able year group in 2005 performed better, this general picture is likely to be replicated in the 2006 results.

Standards in reading are above average. A strong focus on reading, with the introduction of a new reading scheme, improved library facilities, guided reading and the stimulus of visiting authors have been effective. However, standards in writing are below average for all groups. The school has identified ways to improve these but does not yet have sufficiently rigorous plans for doing so. Standards in science have improved and are above average, helped by detailed planning and a strong focus on investigative work. Mathematics has shown some improvement in recent years, but the school's analysis of the latest results indicates that standards are now back to average, with a lower percentage achieving both the higher and expected levels than in the previous year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Their spiritual moral, social and cultural development is also good. A few of the pupils have challenging behaviour and difficulties with social relationships. They are managed well through the staff's high expectations and considerable support as they all implement the school's behaviour policy consistently. Pupils are eager to contribute to their school and the wider community and gain a great deal by helping with tasks around the school, serving on the school council and raising money for charities. Pupils' ideas and initiative are encouraged. For example, the school council were able to use money raised by parents to choose and buy new benches for the playground. Pupils are well aware of safety issues and adopt safe practices to look after themselves and others. They are successfully adopting a healthy lifestyle. Good provision for sport through a sports partnership and the involvement of coaches and parents encourages physical fitness and has led to frequent success in local tournaments and matches. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and many eat the balanced and healthy lunches cooked at the school each day. Their good personal development and satisfactory standards in literacy, numeracy and computer skills, mean pupils are soundly prepared for later life and learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There is some variation in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Pupils make good progress in lessons where plans are detailed and they are carefully introduced to what they are going to learn about. This progress is further aided where good use is made of well informed teaching assistants. In many lessons tasks are well matched to individual learning needs, and there are warm relationships between staff and pupils that promote positive attitudes to learning. Marking of work is up to date and generally shows pupils what they have done well and how they can improve. Learning is less effective where insufficient use is made of assessment to ensure that teaching is planned to meet pupils' specific needs.

In a few lessons there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to explore and extend their learning through discussion both with adults and others in their class. Also at the end of some lessons the teachers do not always provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to talk about how well they have done and what they have found difficult. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is inconsistent. In some classes these pupils are supported well and are able to undertake tasks independently, which are well matched to their learning needs. There is also insufficient monitoring of teaching assistants and the impact of their work. Consequently not all support is fully effective.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is much improved since the last inspection and now includes all the required areas. Links are planned between subjects that encourage pupils to use and develop the different skills they have learned. Interactive white boards are used well to strengthen and illuminate teaching and learning. However, the computer suite is underused so although pupils' information and communication (ICT) skills are satisfactory, they are not practised or fully developed. A good range of clubs and enrichment activities add to pupils' enjoyment of school and contribute well to their personal and social development. Actors and audience both appreciate the music and drama in annual performances such as 'Bugsy Malone'. Trips, including a residential one in Year 5, and visitors such as fire-fighters, widen pupils' horizons and provide good first hand learning experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support overall are satisfactory. Pupils are very well cared for. The head teacher's expertise in this area and the care and attention of all staff are frequently used in the support and care of pupils. Some pupils are given the extra time they need to talk through personal and social issues and to resolve disputes and difficulties. As a result some have successfully settled and made good progress in

personal development here following unsuccessful starts at other schools. A high level of supervision at play times enables safe play in the school's large open grounds and encourages pupils to act and behave responsibly.

Pupils say they are guided well in their learning. They understand that targets for English, mathematics and science help them 'learn more' and 'make them want to work'. However, teachers themselves do not all use these targets well enough when checking how successful pupils are in meeting them and planning the next steps in their learning,

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides an effective lead, particularly on the pastoral care and well-being of pupils. Due to the effective re-organisation of the leadership structure she is now ably assisted by two senior teachers who are quickly developing their management roles. Although the school's systems for monitoring its work are satisfactory, they are not yet robustly or systematically applied. For instance, although lessons have been monitored regularly, there has been insufficient focus on the impact of teaching on learning and the progress made by pupils. The school improvement plan is satisfactory and identifies suitable areas for improvement. However, it lacks clear, quantifiable criteria to judge how success will be evaluated, particularly in terms of pupils' achievement and standards.

Pupils' progress is regularly assessed and recorded, but it has only been recently that this information has been fully used to systematically monitor individual progress, identify where pupils are not doing as well as expected, look for reasons why and provide support so that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection, particularly on the issues of attendance, behaviour and curriculum. The role of the governors has also improved and is now satisfactory. Governors are keen to develop their skills and are increasingly supportive of the work of the school.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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?	2
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.

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	3
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

I am writing to let you know what we found when we visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We spoke to many of you during our visit and you were always interesting to talk to and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things you take part in. We decided that Rowner is a satisfactory school, which has a number of strengths.

We liked these things the most:

- * You enjoy school and are interested in the things you do.
- * The school is very caring and looks after you well.
- * Most of you know how to improve your work.
- * You understand the importance of eating the right things and taking plenty of exercise
- * The school provides many interesting and exciting things for you to do.
- * The school listens to you when you suggest how things could be better.
- * You value being given responsibilities.

We have asked the school to work on these things now:

- * Look more closely at how well you are progressing and carefully plan what you each need to learn next, especially in writing, so that you all do even better.
- * Check up regularly to give teachers some help to make sure that you are all getting the best chance to do your best.
- * Keep a more careful check on all that it does and plans to do to ensure that you all have an enjoyable, challenging and successful time in school.

Thank you again

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell Lead Inspector