

Gatten and Lake Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118158
Local Authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	301213
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Gehane Gordelier HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Anne Simmons
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Bartlett
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2005
School address	Howard Road Shanklin PO37 6HD
Telephone number	01983 862763
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Age group	5–9
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Gatten and Lake is slightly smaller than most other primary schools. The percentage of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) is low.

Since the last inspection the school has been led by two successive acting headteachers and there have been significant changes to staffing. A new substantive headteacher has been appointed from September 2007. There have also been significant changes to the former governing body which until very recently had been replaced by an interim executive board. There is now a shadow governing body in place with new members and a newly elected chair and vice chair.

The school provides extended provision which begins with breakfast club at 8 am and after school clubs from 3 to 6 pm.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school has significantly improved since the last inspection and its overall effectiveness is now satisfactory. This has been achieved thanks to the hard work and determination of two acting headteachers as well as that of staff and pupils. The local authority as well as the interim executive board have also provided the school with effective support. Senior leaders now have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are developing their ability to bring about improvement. Consequently, the quality of leadership and management has improved markedly. Effective systems for monitoring and evaluating have enabled the school to gain a more accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Expectations of what staff and pupils can achieve have risen; teachers are making better use of assessment information to challenge more able pupils more successfully. All pupils are making better progress, particularly in Key Stage 1. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average overall. Progress is not consistent in all year groups, however. This is partly due to historical weaknesses as well as aspects of teaching and learning which could be further improved. The school has made good progress in the last eighteen months and has demonstrated that its capacity to continue to improve is at least satisfactory. Consequently, in accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The recent changes to leadership and teaching in the Foundation Stage have led to improvements in provision which is now satisfactory overall. Children enter the school with knowledge and skills that are not as good as most four year olds, but are now making satisfactory progress. Recent improvements in planning have resulted in more appropriate and challenging work. Consequently these children are more engaged and more enthusiastic.

The personal development and well-being of pupils is a strength of the school. The improvements in the quality of teaching have led to pupils developing good attitudes and a greater enjoyment of learning. Pupils are well behaved and demonstrate good moral values. They make a good contribution to helping the school to be a happy and safe place. Pupils have a good understanding of how to be healthy.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory although it is improving steadily. Teachers are taking better account of the different ways in which pupils learn. As one pupil said, 'Teaching is better because teachers now have a better understanding of how we learn'. As a result, teaching is making increasingly better use of the learning environment to provide pupils with practical and exciting activities. Teachers are making improved use of visual aids including interactive whiteboards to support pupils' learning. They are also beginning to make more effective use of prompts, marking and assessment strategies but these have yet to be used consistently well throughout the school. Marking and assessment are not always understood by pupils. This is reducing the impact of strategies that, when used well, are bringing about good levels of progress in pupils' learning.

Links between different subjects are developing well and the curriculum is greatly enhanced by visits to local places of interest as well as by after school clubs. Despite teachers increased use of information and communication technology (ICT), it is not always being used effectively to support learning in other subjects. The quality of planning for English and mathematics is increasingly good, but this is not the case in other subjects. Planning for many subjects does not include sufficient guidance about what it is pupils will learn and how the needs of pupils

with different abilities will be met. Nevertheless, pupils are still making satisfactory progress, but the school recognises this could be better and has scheduled a review of the curriculum.

Pupils are well cared for, but the level of academic guidance and support is not as strong as the level of personal and pastoral support. This is reducing the rate of progress that pupils make and at times compromises the school's efforts to meet the needs of all pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation so that the school is able to identify and quantify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Improve planning, in subjects other than English and mathematics, so it takes account of the needs of all pupils and ensures good progression of skills.
- Ensure that pupils receive and understand the information they require to improve and make better 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

Achievement is satisfactory and standards, although rising, are broadly average. Historical weaknesses are still apparent in some classes and this is resulting in slower rates of progress despite improvements in teaching. The implementation of a new reading programme is having a good impact on raising standards, with spelling and reading ages increasingly dramatically for all pupils in a very short space of time. As a result, the rate of progress in English is now good and better than it is in mathematics.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and the results of the 2007 assessments show that these pupils are now meeting, if not exceeding, their targets. However, until recently progress in Key Stage 2 was too variable. This has improved and is now at least satisfactory. The school has correctly identified that girls outperform boys in English and mathematics by the end of Years 2 and 4 and are exploring ways of enabling boys to do better. Children in the Reception year are now making satisfactory progress and most are in line to meet the goals set for children of that age. However, some of the progress has been very recent.

There is now better use of data to help pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory levels of progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. As a result, many pupils enjoy school. One said, 'I enjoy school a lot because everything is special'.

Good behaviour means learning takes place in a happy and conducive atmosphere. Pupils are polite, friendly, and courteous, showing consideration for each other. They cooperate well, especially in group work listening to and respecting differing view points. Pupils take pride in their work, are keen to learn and do as well as they can. These good attitudes, social skills and

participation in activities before and after school, along with their good knowledge of healthy eating and keeping fit are enabling them to develop important skills for their future lives.

Pupils' spiritual and cultural developments are satisfactory, while their moral and social developments are good. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and an appreciation of the need to care for the natural world. They take pride in being part of the school community. They know about other faiths, though less about other cultures and ways of life.

Attendance is satisfactory, although it is hampered by families taking holidays in school time and a small group of pupils who do not attend as often as they should. This impacts adversely the achievement of those pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory with good features. This is because there have been good improvements since the last inspection due to effective strategic support and staff changes. There has also been good progress in improving the use of assessment although inconsistencies remain. Some aspects of marking are still being embedded, but there are examples of excellent day to day planning that successfully involve all adults in the room in recording what pupils can do as the lesson proceeds.

The management of behaviour is good and lessons are generally lively and purposeful. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to motivate and engage pupils and use pupil talk well to develop speaking and thinking skills. As one pupil said 'Teachers explain things clearly and don't expect us just to listen'. Independent tasks are sometimes less well supported. Teachers have good systems to ensure they talk to pupils about their learning. However, explanations and prompts which are supposed to support learning are not always clear or specific enough. Consequently, pupils do not always understand or remember what they need to do to improve.

Foundation Stage teaching is now satisfactory. It is better organised with especially good use of high quality support staff. However, at times there is an over reliance on the use of word books that makes learning less interesting.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and does not always allow pupils enough opportunities to be creative and to see the links in their learning. This is recognised by the school who are planning a review of the curriculum. There has been good work in the interim in developing links between some subjects. This, together with good enrichment in the form of clubs and visits utilising the beautiful local environment, has resulted in a livelier, more interesting curriculum. New planning ensures that teachers make better use of opportunities to reinforce new vocabulary. Teaching assistants usually provide good support, because they have detailed plans to guide their input. English and mathematics is well planned. However, planning in other subjects is not well enough designed to ensure that all pupils are challenged sufficiently. Standards in ICT have risen and are in line with expectations because of more focused teaching, but teachers do not always make use of the identified opportunities to use computers in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Adults place a strong emphasis on pupils' pastoral care and look after their personal needs well in a secure environment. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know who to go to if they want help or have a problem. The school works well with other agencies to promote learning and improve attendance. It is striving to promote greater involvement of parents in their child's learning and recognises this as an area for further development.

The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified effectively but they are not always taken into account fully in lessons or in small group work out of the classroom. This means tasks are not always designed to meet the specific needs of all pupils and at times this reduces the level of enjoyment of learning.

The school has a system for tracking pupils' progress and setting challenging targets. However, pupils do not all know enough about what they have to do to improve their work and or to increase their rate of progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The acting headteachers have helped senior leaders to develop the skills they require to do their jobs well. Senior leaders have been empowered to work effectively as leaders within a team in a way that is leading to whole school improvement. They now interrogate and make better use of data and this has enabled them to gain an accurate view of the strengths and weakness within teaching and learning. Senior leaders are working successfully with other staff and this is helping to improve aspects of teaching.

While the quality of management systems and structures has improved, there is still limited rigour and detail in key aspects of the school's work. Some, but not all leaders and managers, are evaluating and also planning for improvement. However, the contents of management documents are often too general and do not focus sharply enough on specific areas for improvement. Furthermore, it is difficult for the school to measure how successful it has been because there are insufficient quantifiable targets. The shadow governing body is developing its role well and helping the school to improve by acting as a supportive yet critical friend.

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Annex A

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?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	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

16 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gatten and Lake Primary School, Shanklin, PO37 6HD

Thank you very much for making us so welcome and helping the inspectors when we visited your school. We were very pleased to talk to you and to find out what you think about your school and how you help to make it such a special place to learn.

We agree that you are learning more, that teaching is better and that lessons are now more interesting. There are some good things about your school and that includes your behaviour and how you keep yourselves safe and make healthy choices.

The staff at the school work hard and look after you well. You will be glad to know that we think the school no longer needs 'Special Measures,' and is now satisfactory. That means that some things about the school are working well and some could be even better.

To help make your school even better than it is, we have asked the school to work hard on three important things:

1. School leaders do more to make sure that all lessons are good ones.
2. Teachers plan so that you all get the level of work that is right for you in all lessons.
3. Teachers tell you clearly what it is you need to do to improve your work.

It was a real pleasure to come to your school and to see how much better the school is. We wish you every happiness and success.

Yours sincerely

Gehane Gordelier
Her Majesty's Inspector