

Wyke Regis Infant School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113713
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	311347
Inspection dates	26–27 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Martin Kerly

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	278
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vacant Position
Headteacher	Margaret Davies
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2003
School address	Shrubbery Lane Wyke Regis Weymouth DT4 9LU
Telephone number	01305 782470
Fax number	01305 766721

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This averaged sized infant school and nursery serves a mixed residential coastal community including an area experiencing some socio-economic hardship. Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, whilst currently about average, is increasing. These pupils are distributed unequally with a concentration in Year 2. Children attending the Nursery class are in school for three sessions a week and those in the Reception classes attend mornings only during the autumn term. The overall attainment of children on entry to the school is a little below that expected nationally for their age, particularly in their speech and language skills.

A decline in pupil numbers led to a reduction from ten to nine classes and a major change in the structure of the classes at the start of this term. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now taught in five parallel mixed-year group classes instead of six single-year classes as in previous years.

The school has nationally recognised awards for being an Investor in People, a Healthy School and for computer education.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This excellent school has many exceptional qualities that contribute to the outstanding provision. The pupils' achievement throughout is outstanding. By the end of Year 2 standards in all the core subjects are consistently and significantly above the national average. The main reasons for this include the highly effective leadership by the headteacher and all other key post holders, the superb start children have when entering the school and the good and frequently excellent teaching that makes very imaginative use of the exceptional accommodation.

The headteacher very successfully promotes a climate in which pupils flourish and staff teams are encouraged to share responsibility for running the school. One parent summed this up by commenting, 'You can see the school is run as a whole team effort. I would not want my child to go to any other school.' There are particularly effective systems for checking all aspects of performance and using the information gathered when making plans for future developments. Consequently, the school has an exceptionally detailed and accurate view of its performance and has improved substantially since the last inspection. It is very well placed to maintain its high quality whilst improving further.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding and their behaviour is exemplary. They love school and are exceptionally thoughtful about each other. The school has excellent systems to ensure that all members of the extended staff team are fully involved and this leads to outstanding care, guidance and support. Children get off to a superb start when they join the Nursery class and this is built on exceptionally well in Reception to ensure overall provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. This view is endorsed wholeheartedly by parents, one of whom wrote, 'His year in Nursery was superb. This school is fantastic and I know my son will thrive here.'

Teaching and learning are at least good throughout the school at a time when the structure of five classes is changing; in the Foundation Stage they are outstanding. Some parents expressed concern to the inspectors about the move to five mixed-year classes for pupils in Years 1 and 2. However, the teachers are responding well to this new organisation of classes. They are already adapting their lessons and classrooms to cater for the wider age range and recognise the need to adapt parts of their lessons even more to help ensure they fully meet the needs of all pupils. Within the overall good curriculum across the school, experiences in the Foundation Stage are excellent and pupils throughout the school benefit from high quality clubs and other additional activities. Subject leaders are providing excellent support for their colleagues by drafting new curricular plans for the mixed-year group classes.

The outstanding leadership and management of the school, under the clear strategic direction of the headteacher, very successfully promote a culture of continuous improvement for the pupils' academic and personal development, and a commitment to enhanced professional expertise for the staff. All staff teams are led exceptionally well and many teachers and support staff have gained substantial additional professional qualifications helping to enhance their overall contribution.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The children have a superb start to their education. They make exceptional progress because of outstanding teaching and by the end of the Foundation Stage most have met and many are exceeding the nationally agreed learning goals for their age.

One parent summed up the provision in the Nursery by writing to inspectors, 'I believe the staff make an exceptional team, creating an ambience in the setting which ensures the children feel nurtured, safe and stimulated.' These qualities are the result of highly effective leadership across the Foundation Stage and the professional commitment of all members of the team. Careful planning in all six areas of the curriculum ensures very effective use of the stunning accommodation indoors and out, to support children's learning. Joint planning by the three reception teachers very effectively ensures similar experiences in their classes whilst adapting activities to the needs of particular groups.

What the school should do to improve further

- Refine the planning of individual lessons in Years 1 and 2 in order to fully respond throughout each lesson to the pupils' wide range of needs.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Above average standards by the end of Year 2 have been maintained since the last inspection. Standards rose further in 2007 and are above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science, being high in mathematics. The achievement of boys and girls of all abilities is outstanding. The excellent systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are used effectively to set challenging targets and to review the support needed by specific individuals or groups. Those with learning difficulties are identified early. They respond very well to the additional and carefully targeted support received and consequently make rapid progress. It is too soon to have substantial evidence about progress being made this term after just three weeks in the mixed-year classes. However, evidence from lessons and pupils' books indicates at least good progress is already being established as teachers get to know their pupils and adjust to the changed structure of their classes. Current Year 2 pupils are securely on track to meet their challenging targets for the end of the school year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' excellent personal development, including their positive attitudes to learning, and key study skills, means they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of education and adult life. They enjoy their lessons immensely, play very happily together and talk positively about the school to inspectors. Behaviour is exemplary in lessons and during play and lunchtimes. Pupils like the system for inviting guests to the 'top table' as a reward for positive attitudes. They have a very clear understanding of healthy lifestyles, knowing the importance of good food. Pupils are motivated by the daily physical activity sessions, and many participate in the after-school clubs. They all feel safe, as there are always adults they can go to in case of worries. Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding with exceptional moral and social development. Extensive links with a school in South Africa help pupils to explore the differences of childhood in other cultures. The school is doing all it can to encourage better

attendance, which remains satisfactory, mostly due to family holidays taken during term-time. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to help with running the school and contributing to local community events. The school council has a high profile and makes imaginative suggestions for developments around the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There are outstanding aspects of teaching across the school. One of these is the way teachers plan together. Another is the very effective contribution by the highly skilled and well qualified assistants who often work with small groups, ensuring all learners get lots of individual attention. This helps them to make rapid progress. Teachers make excellent use of the high quality accommodation and resources in all classes, providing a range of interesting activities, sometimes simultaneously, without disturbing or distracting others. There are excellent systems for assessing the progress of the learners and this information is generally used very well in ensuring work is carefully matched to the needs of different groups. This term teachers in the new mixed-year classes are responding with commitment and energy to the wider range of needs of their pupils. However, at times, particularly when they are explaining ideas to the whole class and during the conclusions of lessons, they are not always adapting the lesson sufficiently to meet the full range of pupils' abilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The strong emphases in the Foundation Stage on independent learning, with links between different subject areas, are successfully continued through the school in an innovative way helping to motivate and enthuse the pupils. Another innovation is the use of imaginative materials to successfully promote pupils' personal, social and emotional development. The curriculum is carefully developed each year to reflect the particular cohort of learners and is adapted well to support those pupils with learning difficulties. The school leaders are working exceptionally hard this year to develop well structured medium-term plans for the teachers of the mixed-year classes. This remains an ongoing process. There are excellent extra-curricular opportunities with an extensive range of good quality visits, visitors and well attended clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The thorough and comprehensive systems to assess and track pupils' progress are used extremely well to help guide pupils about the next steps in their learning. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is outstanding because the staff are highly trained to identify needs early. They provide expert help and the school works particularly effectively in partnership with parents and other professional agencies. Parents endorse this view: one wrote, 'We are extremely grateful this was noticed at the beginning'; another commented, 'I can't thank the school enough for the work and help they have put into my son.' All the statutory procedures designed to safeguard pupils are implemented rigorously.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Meticulous preparation by the headteacher helps ensure all those involved with the school are clear about the school's ambitious aims for pupils and staff and the carefully thought out ways of achieving those aims. Strategic planning is very effective. It draws on exceptionally comprehensive information about the performance of the school, as well as local and national developments. There are excellent links between strategic planning and the professional development programme for staff, and all activities are carefully reviewed to check their impact on the overall provision for pupils. An example of meticulous preparation was the way the headteacher, senior staff and governors managed the falling rolls and recent move to nine classes. A range of options was carefully considered and external advice sought before a final decision was made. Subsequent information to parents, including opportunities to meet and discuss the new arrangements, and the support for staff in preparing for their new classes, were all excellent. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. The chair leads them effectively and has a good understanding of the school.

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

Monday 1 October 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of Wyke Regis Infant School and Nursery, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9LU

Thank you very much for helping my team of inspectors feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our time in your school, just as you do, particularly talking to groups of you and spending time in your classrooms. I am pleased to say your school is brilliant. There are loads of things that make it so special. Here are some of the highlights:

- You work very hard in lessons and enjoy the many interesting things your teachers plan for you to do. You make excellent progress. Those of you who find your work difficult get lots of extra help from the teachers and teaching assistants.
- We are very impressed by the way you behave in class and around the school. You are very thoughtful towards one another and sensibly help to look after yourselves by eating healthy things and joining in the daily physical exercise and 'huff and puff' sessions.
- The very youngest children in the Nursery have a great time in their amazing room. The rest of you also have excellent classrooms with lots of different spaces and areas to work.
- All the grown-ups who work in the school make sure you are all safe. If you get worried about something or have a problem, the teachers and assistants help you and make sure someone at home knows all about it.
- Nearly all your parents think the school is a great place. A few are a bit bothered about the new classes for those of you in Years 1 and 2, but the school is making sure these classes are good places for you all.
- The headteacher and the other leaders are great at making sure everything about the school is really good. They work in different teams around the school but everyone knows exactly what they have to do.

I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on just one thing to make the school even better:

- Think a bit more about different ways to make sure all parts of lessons in the new mixed Year 1 / Year 2 classes are planned so that they are just right for all the children - not too hard and not too easy.

I know you will all want to help your teachers keep your school really special.

Yours sincerely, Martin Kerly, Lead inspector

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