

Mill Rythe Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115914
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312105
Inspection date	20 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Anthony Green

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	337
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs L Hine
Headteacher	Mrs J Queripel
Date of previous school inspection	2 June 2003
School address	Havant Road Hayling Island PO11 0PA
Telephone number	02392 463663
Fax number	02392 467745

Age group	7-11
Inspection date	20 September 2007
Inspection number	312105

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

This was a reduced tariff inspection. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, especially in English, mathematics and ICT, provision for able, gifted and talented pupils, teaching and learning, personal development and well-being, care, guidance and support and leadership. Evidence was gathered from discussion with parents, pupils, staff, governors, observation of a range of lessons and parents' questionnaires. The inspector also examined the school's data, records and other documents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a popular, larger-than-average, school mainly taking pupils from the island. The socio-economic circumstances are mixed. Most pupils are from White British heritage, with few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average. A very small proportion are in care. The number eligible for free school meals is below average.

The school has gained accreditation for Investors in People and is working towards the Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'The school is well run, the staff are supportive and positive. 'Our children are safe, happy and well educated. They know these are the best days of their lives. What more could we ask for?' This is how one parent summed up her child's education, and it is a view that is echoed by the majority of parents and carers.

Mill Rythe is a rapidly improving school. It is very well led by the headteacher, who with her deputy, sets a clear direction for the school. A real strength of her leadership, and of the governors, is the appointment of a very enthusiastic and motivated senior management team. Although relatively new, they are having a dramatic impact on the school, which can be seen in the annual rise in standards and achievement since 2005 from average to above average in English, mathematics and science. The 2007 national test results also show that an identified gender gap has been closed and boys and girls now achieve equally well. However, standards in writing are not as good as other aspects of English, especially in Years 3 and 4. The governing body is well informed and bring a range of experiences to the school. They are very supportive and are not afraid to question decisions in order to benefit pupils' education.

A very strong feature is the outstanding personal development and well-being of pupils. They enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. They arrive promptly and are eager to start lessons. Pupils feel safe and secure and take pride in everything they do. They talk to visitors with confidence about their work. Pupils care for one another and anyone feeling lonely at break-times can sit on the 'friendship bench' and will soon be approached by others to join in a game. The school council has a genuine involvement in decision making. As one said, 'We make a definite difference. We can see the improvements and when we ask others, it works'. They are especially proud of their healthy eating initiatives and that their ideas for improving the school grounds are now at the planning stage and will soon be put into practice. Procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils are well established and robust.

A range of visits and visitors, and the teaching of Spanish in all classes, enrich the creative and well-planned curriculum. Close links with the language department of the local secondary college has ensured that all teachers are well prepared to teach Spanish. In a Spanish lesson observed, the pupils thoroughly enjoyed expressing different moods using Spanish vocabulary. Many said that they were really looking forward to the time when they could use Spanish on holiday. Throughout the school pupils are grouped for mathematics, which is having a positive impact on standards and achievement. In Year 6, pupils are also set for English and science. Although standards in writing are above average by Year 6, the school recognises that there is a need to accelerate opportunities for writing in Years 3 and 4. The school is also aware of the necessity to plan even more challenging activities for those pupils identified as gifted and talented.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy life-styles and they are very aware that they attend a 'healthy school'. They enjoy taking part in healthy exercises, known in the school as 'burpees', and physical education lessons. One pupil emphatically said, 'We are not allowed to bring sweets, chocolates or crisps. It has to be food that's good and healthy for you. That's how it should be'. All pupils have a weekly swimming lesson in the school's indoor pool.

Teaching is good and results in good progress. Unsatisfactory teaching at the time of the previous inspection has been addressed. No teaching observed was less than good, with some lessons containing elements of outstanding. Well-informed learning support assistants give

good support, especially for those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and so this group of pupils achieve as well as others. Teachers plan interesting lessons and use resources effectively. Information and communication technology is used well and by Year 6 pupils are very confident when using computers and interactive whiteboards. The school is justifiably proud of its informative website, which contains information presented by adults and pupils. It contains a range of information for parents and pupils, including pod casts on methods of teaching different aspects of mathematics. Pupils confirmed that they found this a very useful tool for themselves and their parents and carers. Comprehensive assessment information ensures that work is generally challenging and enjoyable for all groups of pupils. Older pupils, especially, are clear about their targets and know what to do to improve their work. The school is trialling new methods of target setting to make them more meaningful for pupils and more manageable for teachers.

The school is accurate in its self-evaluation of its performance and has a very good understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. The issues of the previous inspection have been addressed well. There is a shared desire to move the school forward, which has resulted in very good improvement since the last inspection and an outstanding capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate the progress of pupils in writing in Years 3 and 4.
- Increase planned opportunities for gifted and talented pupils.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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 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	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

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?	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.

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	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

27 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mill Rythe Junior School, Hayling Island, PO11 0PA

Gracias (thank you) for your very friendly welcome when I visited your school on the 19 September. I enjoyed talking to so many of you and hearing about your work. You told me that you go to a good school and I agree. What I especially like is:

- you work hard in lessons and are successful in your Year 6 national tests (SATs)
- you are developing into friendly, polite and confident young people
- your thoughts and ideas are valued by staff and you contribute very well to the way the school is run. I was impressed by the work of the school council
- teaching is good, which is why you do so well in your work
- the work planned for you is interesting and enjoyable. I really enjoyed watching some of you learning to speak Spanish
- you are well cared for and you feel safe
- the school is very well led by your headteacher, senior staff and governors.

Even in a good school there are things that can be improved. I have asked your school to:

- give you more opportunities to develop your writing skills, especially in Years 3 and 4
- plan even more challenging work for those of you with special talents in any aspect of the curriculum.

I wish you every success in the future.

Anthony GreenLead inspector