

Purbrook Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115937
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312113
Inspection date	2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Janet Sinclair

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	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Bryan
Headteacher	Mrs L Clements
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2004
School address	Aldermoor Road East Purbrook Waterlooville PO7 5NQ
Telephone number	02392 610761
Fax number	02392 611880

Age group	4-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: overall achievement, boys' achievement, curricular provision, academic guidance and the effectiveness of new leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form (SEF), national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, curriculum and planning documents, observation of the school at work, interviews with staff, governors, pupils and an analysis of parents' questionnaires. 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 the SEF were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Children join this large infant school with a wide range of skills and abilities that are broadly average overall. Pupils' entitlement to free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly above average as is the proportion of pupils with complex needs who have a statement of special educational need. The school has had, and is still experiencing, a turbulent time in terms of staff changes due to maternity leave, retirement and promotion. The headteacher has been in post for less than 2 years. The school has Investors in People status, Activemark, ICT mark and Artsmark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving well in spite of on-going staff changes and this is due to the effective leadership of the headteacher. She has ensured that the school is a happy, friendly place where children feel safe and well cared for. Consequently, they fully enjoy their learning. Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the care their children receive. One parent, summing up the views of most, said, 'The school is a very happy, friendly place and all staff are approachable and want to do their best for the children.'

Good induction and very good relationships ensure children in the Foundation Stage settle well to school life and make good progress in their personal and social skills. They make satisfactory progress overall so that most meet the goals expected of them on entry to Year 1, except in writing. This satisfactory progress continues in Years 1 and 2 so that pupils reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. They make better progress in writing, given their lower starting point, and this is due to a whole school focus on improving writing and pupils' good knowledge of how to use their writing targets to improve their work. In the national assessments in 2007, boys did not do as well as girls. The school acted swiftly to address this through making activities more relevant to boys' interests. As a result, their performance has improved this year. Pupils with complex learning difficulties receive good support because of good links with outside agencies and appropriately trained school support staff. Additionally, the nurture group ensures effective support for pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties. This helps them make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.

Teachers plan and organise lessons well and relationships at all levels are good, ensuring pupils are keen and motivated to learn. A good feature of most lessons is the opportunities pupils have to discuss their work and share their ideas. Whilst some teaching is good, it is satisfactory overall. The quality is inconsistent because teachers' expectations are not always high enough and questioning is not always used well enough to develop pupils' ideas or extend their thinking. Although teachers mark pupils' work regularly, they rarely tell them what they need to do to improve and this limits the impact of the teachers' good efforts.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and behave well and this is reflected in their good attendance. Their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. They are thoughtful and considerate towards each other and are fully involved in making class rules. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through, for example, the school council who are particularly pleased with the part they took in the new playground markings and the fact that they make decisions to improve the school. Pupils have a good knowledge of healthy lifestyles quickly quoting 'fruit, vegetables, milk and lots of exercise' as necessary components. After-school clubs for football and dance as well as daily fruit at break times and regular physical education lessons ensures good provision as well as outcomes. Pupils particularly enjoy planned occasions such as the 'Environment Event', which made a huge impression on them in terms of caring for the world. Their verdict was that, 'It was brilliant.' Much of the curricular provision is good. However, cross-curricular links, to enhance pupils' use of their writing, mathematical and information and communication technology skills, are not clearly planned. Additionally, the emphasis on planning discretely within year groups makes it difficult to guarantee continuity and progression across the key stage.

The school takes good care of its pupils and has robust systems in place to ensure their welfare and safety. Pupils say they feel safe in school and confident of adult support should they have

any worries. New and more rigorous systems to track pupils' progress have enabled the school to target support at pupils not doing well enough. This has helped, for instance, to increase progress in writing. Pupils are involved well in improving their performance through their writing targets, but are much less clear about any targets for mathematics or their use to improve their work. The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, have guided the school well through some very difficult times, maintaining a positive climate for learning and continuing to focus on improvement. Effective monitoring of teaching is leading to improvement but is hampered by constant staff changes. The school has a very detailed strategic plan, which it is using well to secure improvements, for example, in writing and boys' performance. However, the success criteria are often too general, making it difficult to measure clearly the extent of improvement. The many changes to senior leadership within the school, and the short time some were in post, have made it difficult to assess their impact on the work of the school. Governors are supportive of the school and are developing their expertise through their sub committees and visits to school enabling them to better fulfil their role as critical friend.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Recent improvements to the learning environment in the Foundation Stage, made by the new co-ordinator, have enabled children to become independent learners who enjoy all the activities on offer. There is a good focus on learning through topics. This was evident in their current work, which involved a visit to a farm, followed up well with a range of related activities in the classroom. Teachers ensure a good balance between child chosen and teacher-led activities, but some activities do not fully engage children in their learning. Questioning is not always used well to develop pupils' ideas and this limits their progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rate of pupils' progress by ensuring that teachers raise their expectations of what pupils can learn and use questioning more effectively to develop pupils' ideas and extend their thinking.
- Improve marking and ensure pupils know their targets for mathematics so that these can be used to help them to improve their work.
- Ensure that the success criteria in the school improvement plan are more specific and clearly measurable.

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.

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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
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

15 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Purbrook Infant School, Waterloooville, PO7 5NQ

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping me with the inspection. I enjoyed meeting Year 2 pupils and school council members as you were so keen to tell me about how much you enjoy your school trips, sports days and the school fete.

I think that Purbrook Infant School is a satisfactory and improving school. I agree with your parents that it is a friendly, happy school that you enjoy attending.

Here are some other things I particularly liked about your school.

- You enjoy writing and it is getting better because of your hard work.
- You work hard as school councillors and you are helping to make the school better for everyone.
- You enjoy school, especially all the extra activities you have, and are keen to learn.
- Your headteacher and all the staff take good care of you and you in turn are thoughtful, kind and caring to each other.

Every school has something it could do better, so this is what I have asked your school to do to help you learn more easily.

- Improve the progress you make by ensuring you are given harder work and are asked questions that challenge you and make you think more.
- Teachers need to tell you exactly what you need to do to improve when marking your work. They also need to make sure that you know what your targets are for mathematics so that you can use them to help you to make more progress in this subject.
- Ensure that the most important things in the school improvement plan can be measured clearly to show how good the improvement has been.

With best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Janet Sinclair

Lead Inspector