

Horndean Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115982
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312132
Inspection date	3 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Jo Curd

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	262
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Williams
Headteacher	Mrs Becky Greenhalgh
Date of previous school inspection	20 October 2003
School address	Merchistoun Road Horndean Waterlooville PO8 9LS
Telephone number	02392 593453
Fax number	02392 787399

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: achievement and standards, teaching and learning, personal development and well-being, care, guidance and support and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from school data, records and documents, discussions with pupils, staff and governors, observation of lessons and parents' questionnaires. Although other aspects of the school were not investigated thoroughly the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own judgements, as given in its very rigorous self-evaluation form, were inaccurate. Where appropriate these judgements have been included in this report.

Description of the school

The school is slightly larger than average. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals, are from minority ethnic backgrounds or have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils with such difficulties in the current Year 2 is much higher than in other year groups. Due to promotion, two senior leaders left the school last year. Two staff joined the Senior Leadership Team in September.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding infant school where all children achieve extremely well and make excellent progress in personal development and well-being. Staff and pupils are very happy. Most parents are extremely grateful for, and supportive of all that the school does. One parent said, 'What a fantastic school this is! My daughter has had a wonderful time and is enjoying her last year. The staff work extremely hard and I feel honoured that my daughter has been able to attend'. Another said, 'The ethos of the school along with the staff and especially headteacher are second to none'.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher has a very accurate understanding of the school, an exceedingly clear vision for its role in children's lives and a very strong commitment to the development of every pupil. The senior leadership team, made up of five very experienced and astute staff, is extremely strong and effective. This team has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and a continuous desire to improve provision further. The governors rigorously monitor and evaluate the contribution they make to the school. They provide strong support and are ready to challenge wherever necessary. Accurate, thorough and ongoing self-evaluation is central to the school's success. Each member of the school community is valued and supported well. The headteacher recognises the skills and interests of staff and successfully develops and utilises them to improve the school's provision. Teamwork of the whole school community including teachers, assistants, administrative staff and midday support staff is strong contributing to the outstanding provision.

The school's system for assessment and tracking progress is thorough and highly effective. Staff use it extremely well to ensure that all pupils make excellent progress. Children start in the reception class with a wide range of knowledge, skills and understanding. Overall, these are slightly below those expected for this age especially in communication, language and literacy. Due to a very imaginative and well organised curriculum, effective teaching and very good care, guidance and support, all children make rapid progress in the Foundation Stage. They gain confidence, independence and motivation for learning. By the end of the Foundation Year standards are just above national expectations for all areas except some linked with writing. Due to extremely effective teaching and excellent support, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, continue to achieve very well in Years 1 and 2. For the past five years, standards at the end of Year 2 have consistently been significantly higher than the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. Over this time, standards in reading and mathematics have improved each year. Pupils currently in Year 2 had a lower starting point, than most year groups, when they entered the reception class. A third have learning difficulties and disabilities. Assessments show that they are all achieving extremely well.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Staff use assessments of pupils exceedingly well to organise appropriate teaching groups and to plan the curriculum. Pupils are settled and very keen to learn. Teachers plan lessons and organise classrooms very effectively. Activities are interesting, practical and relevant. Many pupils particularly enjoy their writing groups where they have time to write about things that specifically interest them. Links with parents through discussion, agreeing targets for future learning, workshops and support are extremely good. They successfully help parents to extend children's learning out of school. However, records of the activities are not always kept to show the effect of these collaborations or as a basis for extending cooperation further.

The school is extremely well organised and sharply focussed to promote pupils' personal development and well-being. All members of staff are strongly committed to the ethos that every child matters. Pupils respond exceedingly well and consequently have outstanding personal development and well-being. They are extremely well behaved, friendly and polite. Very high levels of enjoyment are evident in the eagerness with which most of them enter school in the mornings and in their smiles and laughter. Attendance is above the national average. Most absence is due to illness. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils contribute well to the school's strong sense of community and care. For example taking the role as playground monitors very seriously and responsibly, ensuring that anybody who goes to sit on the friendship bench is cared for and supported very well. Pupils respond extremely well to the high expectations staff have for their behaviour. They also respond very positively to opportunities to develop their independence, for example, playing safely and sensibly in the courtyard and leading peers inside at the end of playtimes. Their eager participation in 'Move It' exercises with all the staff outside at the beginning of each day further strengthens the school community, social cohesion and the health of all. Due to their high levels of motivation, achievement and care for others, pupils are outstandingly well prepared for later life and learning.

The school fully deserves its popularity and very good reputation in the community. Due to its extremely effective leadership and management, accurate and thorough self-evaluation, and continuous desire to develop, the school has improved since its last inspection and its capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

This is an extremely effective Foundation Stage where children make rapid progress in their learning and outstanding progress in their personal development. Due to very good care, very effective teaching and an extremely well planned curriculum children are exceedingly well prepared for later life and learning. Because time and resources are organised so very well most children quickly develop high levels of confidence and independence. Staff meet and support individual needs extremely effectively through well organised groups and a very good balance between adult led and child chosen activities. These are very imaginative and well planned. A group of children were engrossed in an investigation of materials during the inspection. They wrapped a small play figure in a range of fabrics, poured 'rain' upon him and then discovered whether he became wet or stayed dry. They enjoyed this very practical and appropriate activity, which successfully helped them develop their language skills and a greater understanding of the world.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure key discussions and collaborations with parents are recorded consistently to extend their partnership in pupils' learning further.

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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	1
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	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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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

13 December 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Horndean Infant School, Waterloooville, PO8 9LS

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school recently. The things you said about your school really helped me with my work.

I agree with you that your 'school is great'. You are all making extremely good progress in your learning and the way you relate to and care for each other - well done. Teaching, care and support are all extremely good. Your staff all work very well together and are led exceedingly well by Mrs Greenhalgh and others.

The school is always working to make things even better for you. One thing your teachers and I agreed that it would be good to do is to include the discussions your parents have with staff about your learning in your records. This would show how strong the links between your parents and staff are and the way your parents' ideas and views are valued and used at school.

Perhaps you could help by continuing to tell your parents about things you do at school and your staff about things you do when you are not at school. This would help them all to understand you better and make activities even more helpful for your learning.

With best wishes to you and your families.

Jo Curd

Lead inspector