

Ludlow Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116099
Local Authority	Southampton
Inspection number	312174
Inspection date	7 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Christopher Grove

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	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Brenda Watts
Headteacher	Mrs Jeannie Gibbons
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2004
School address	Ludlow Road Woolston Southampton SO19 2EU
Telephone number	0238 0575752
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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 pupils' achievement and progress, the quality of pupils' personal development and well-being, the school's use of assessment data and target-setting, and the effectiveness of leadership and management. Some lessons were observed. In addition, evidence was gathered from discussions and school documentation to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and the school's curriculum. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included in this report.

Description of the school

The school is of average size and is situated in an urban setting. Pupils come mainly from two local wards. The intake is socially mixed. The great majority of pupils are White British, and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, principally speech, language and communication difficulties, is around the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Ludlow Infant is a good school. It also has some outstanding features. 'My child is a true Ludlow Learner who keeps trying and never gives up,' is how one delighted parent characterised the impact of the school. The overwhelming majority of parents are fulsome in their praise for the school and its ethos. Another said that, 'she would recommend the school to anyone with great confidence'. The headteacher enjoys the full-hearted support of parents, pupils and governors. Her style of leadership is well regarded by parents and engenders the strong sense of team spirit among the staff, and the school's positive and caring ethos.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. In class, pupils are attentive to teachers. Around the school and in the playground, they are happy, confident and animated, and relate well to one another. Pupils' positive qualities are due in no small measure to their excellent relationships with the staff. Their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their moral and social development is outstanding, as is shown in their behaviour and mature responses in classrooms. Pupils' attendance has improved and is now average reflecting their enjoyment of school and learning.

Pupils' understanding of adopting a healthy lifestyle is outstanding. They enjoy healthy exercise, in part because of the good sports partnership initiative. Participation in the free fruit and vegetables and milk schemes, as well as the good quality of school lunches, leads to healthy eating by pupils. The school also promotes pupils' emotional health, which is an important element in the self-assurance that they develop. The Healthy Schools award at the enhanced level, and the Activemark award, attest to the high quality of the school's provision. Parents are confident that their children are safe at school. Rare incidents, such as name-calling, are very well handled to the satisfaction of parents. The school has also secured the Safe School award. Pupils support various charities. School council members make active contributions to school. For example, they have contributed good ideas to make the library an exciting place to visit, and successfully sought financial support from a major company to reline the school pond after it had been vandalised. Pupils' social and collaborative skills make a good contribution to their future economic well-being. Their understanding about sustainable development is well supported by work towards the Eco Schools (Silver) award. However, their current standards in basic subjects mean that their future economic well-being is satisfactory.

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points across Years 1 and 2, which leads to broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. National test results show that the proportion of pupils who attain the higher levels is broadly average, but there is scope to improve this by providing more challenging work in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils of higher ability. Groups such as pupils with special educational needs, including those with speech, language and communication difficulties, make good progress, as also do those who are acquiring English as an additional language.

Pupils' good progress and achievement result from consistently good teaching. One parent rightly referred to 'the dedication and enthusiasm of the teaching and support staff', and this is certainly the case. Teachers' excellent relationships with pupils facilitate learning. Lessons are well paced, and teachers are good at engaging pupils' interest. Good use is made of teaching assistants. For instance, the three classes in each of Years 1 and 2 are divided into four or five different groups for part of literacy and numeracy lessons. This gives pupils good opportunities

for intensive practice in smaller groups with work that is closely matched to their learning needs. Teachers assess pupils' understanding well through their questions. Pupils are also sometimes asked to assess themselves, for instance, by demonstrating how well they understand the tasks set.

The school has a well-organised curriculum. This includes a good programme of work in personal, social and health education, which encourages good personal development. Displays around the school show the good quality and the range of artwork undertaken. The school's strengths in physical education and music include some specialist teaching. The Activemark and Artsmark (Gold) awards are testimony to the good quality of work in these areas. Opportunities are also taken to encourage pupils' independence in their learning, for example, through lessons called 'plan, do and review'. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances pupils' learning well.

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support. Pastoral care is of a high quality. Measures to safeguard pupils' welfare are robust, and procedures to provide child protection and to assess risks are rigorous. Attendance has improved in the last two years. This is as a result of the very well developed procedures employed to encourage those few parents who find it difficult to ensure that their children attend regularly and promptly. Liaison with pre-schools, including the one on site, and with the junior school, is very good. The academic guidance available to pupils through the school's target-setting arrangements is exemplary. Using booklets which indicate what knowledge and skills pupils are expected to show at the various levels, teachers regularly assess pupils' learning in literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology. These booklets are also well used in lessons, for instance, to help pupils to look ahead to the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The headteacher and other leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and of the curriculum. Consequently, the leadership team has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school sets itself challenging targets, and pupils are on course to reach these this year. Governors are highly committed, and know well the school's many strengths and few weaknesses. The partnership with others, including parents, is good. Good improvements have been made to teaching, curriculum and attendance following the last inspection, and together with the school's effective self-evaluation, this indicates a good capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The teachers in the Foundation Stage have developed excellent liaison between home and school. This includes a well-devised information booklet given to all families before entry. When children first enter the school, their knowledge and skills are often below, and sometimes well below, those expected for their age, especially in early reading, writing and numeracy skills. Children make good progress. By the time they move into Year 1, their learning has improved as a result of good teaching, although standards are a little below those expected of five-year-olds. There is excellent rapport between adults and children. A good balance is provided between work led by teachers and opportunities for children to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers and teaching assistants form a close-knit team to develop children's learning. Good use is made of the outside area for a range of interesting activities. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standards of more able pupils in reading, writing, and mathematics.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	3

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

17 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ludlow Infant School, Southampton, SO19 2EU

I would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. I enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at playtime and lunchtime. Ludlow Infant is a good school, and has some outstanding features. It is a happy place for children to be, as many of your parents say. There are lots of really good things about your school. These are the most important ones.

- Your school has a really lovely atmosphere about it.
- The headteacher and the other school leaders do a good job. They know what is good about your school and they want to make it even better.
- You enjoy school and your behaviour in lessons and around school is excellent you have excellent relationships with the teachers and the other adults. They take outstanding care of you.
- Your personal development is good. Your moral and social development is excellent.
- You are making good progress in your learning, so that you reach the standards expected in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teaching in your school is good.
- The teachers have planned a good curriculum, which you find interesting and enjoyable.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.
- Your school has good relationships with your parents.

The headteacher and the other leaders have worked hard to make the school such a good place. I have asked the school to make things even better by:

- raising the standards of more able pupils in reading, writing, and mathematics.

You can help too by continuing to work hard and taking advantage of the improvements that your teachers will be making. I really enjoyed my time in your school. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Chris Grove

Lead Inspector