

# Langstone Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116207
<b>Local Authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	312214
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynn Bappa

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs M Otton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs L Stallion
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Ascot Road Copnor Portsmouth PO3 6EY
<b>Telephone number</b>	023 9283 2642
<b>Fax number</b>	023 9283 8365

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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is situated in a residential area that includes a mixture of owner-occupied, privately rented and public housing. The catchment area has changed since the last inspection to include a higher percentage of public housing and children with a range of social needs. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a small percentage from minority ethnic families. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is much lower than average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average, although there are very few pupils with statements of special educational need. The school has the Healthy Schools, Investors in People, and Active Mark awards.

## 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 and improving school with many good features. It provides well for pupils' personal development and for their care, guidance and support. By the time they leave the school, pupils have become well-rounded individuals because of their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils say they are happy coming to school and there is little bullying. They say they feel safe and know what to do if there is a problem.

Standards declined significantly in 2006. The school acted quickly to tackle this. The strategies put into place included a reading volunteer scheme and a focus on problem solving in mathematics. They soon bore fruit. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2007 showed a marked improvement, particularly in reading, where attainment rose from significantly below average to below average, with a good proportion of pupils working above the expected level. Standards in mathematics saw a similar rapid improvement in the percentage of pupils gaining the expected levels, although very few achieved the higher levels. At the same time, longer-term initiatives were put into place to continue to drive standards upwards, particularly in writing. These included the introduction of a whole-school literacy programme, an effective tracking system and improved leadership structures. Inspection evidence and the school's own data show that the upward trend is continuing with a steadily increasing percentage of pupils working at nationally expected levels. These strategies are accelerating progress rapidly but have not been in place long enough to help all pupils, particularly those judged capable of working at higher levels in writing and mathematics, to reach their full potential. Overall achievement is therefore satisfactory and continuing to improve.

Senior leaders provide a decisive direction for the school. Since the last inspection, the school has faced the challenges of major staff changes, a shift in the nature of the school's population and a significant dip in standards. The headteacher has clarified the roles and responsibilities of senior and subject leaders, resulting in effective monitoring procedures that chart the school's performance well. Staff are committed to the school's improvement programme and confidence is high. The introduction of a tracking system that requires teachers to review each child's progress every term means that potential underachievers are quickly identified and next steps carefully planned in pupils' learning. Teaching has improved and, although it is currently satisfactory, it has a growing number of good features. These are not yet consistent throughout the school, however. The school is rightly keen to improve the overall quality to good and better in order to raise standards further. Although teachers plan lessons that are mostly well matched to the pupils' learning needs, more remains to be done to ensure that higher attaining pupils achieve as well as they can, particularly in writing and mathematics. Learning is supported by a satisfactory and rapidly improving curriculum with good enrichment opportunities. Behaviour has improved significantly and most pupils show good attitudes in lessons and around the school. Attendance levels fluctuate but have improved significantly and are now satisfactory. While it is still too soon to see the full impact of all the initiatives put into place to raise standards, there are good signs of improvement and the school is in a good position to build on these.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Provision in the Foundation Stage has improved significantly. It is now satisfactory with a growing number of good features. Induction is well planned and delivered. As a result, children

settle quickly into school and make steady progress in their learning. The literacy programme, introduced initially into the Reception classes before being rolled out across the school, has already improved children's reading and writing skills. As one parent, typical of several, commented, 'The new way of learning letters and words is really good, my son has picked this up very quickly and he really enjoys it.' The school provides a satisfactory activity-based curriculum with a good emphasis on personal development and a focus on improving communication skills. This gives children a sound start to their learning. The outdoor area, however, is small, uninspiring and set away from the classrooms. This does not allow free access or the opportunity for children to explore for themselves. There are, however, plans to improve this provision. Effective arrangements ensure a smooth transition from Reception to Year 1. Parents say that their children are well cared for and staff are friendly and approachable.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise the achievement and standards of higher attaining pupils, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning so that it reflects the school's best practice.
- Enhance the quality of outdoor provision in the Foundation Stage.

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.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

In 2006, teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 showed significantly declining standards, particularly in reading. By 2007, because of well-chosen actions taken by the headteacher, standards had improved. The improvement was most marked in reading. Standards in mathematics also rose, with a greater percentage of pupils gaining the expected levels. Writing standards, however, showed only a small improvement, although the introduction of the new literacy programme has begun to have a very positive impact on pupils' standards in that area. As one parent commented, 'I have seen a giant leap in my oldest daughter's reading, writing and spelling since the start of the programme. What a great start to give our kids!' Rates of progress are beginning to accelerate and are already good in some subjects and for some groups of pupils. Vulnerable children, as well as those with moderate learning difficulties in literacy and numeracy, make good progress because they are well supported and monitored by classroom assistants and teachers. All groups of pupils make good progress in reading.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy coming to school and get on well with each other and with their teachers and other adults in school. They have a good understanding of healthy living through participation in a wide range of activities. Pupils are proud of their roles as 'school helpers' when supporting others at play time. As one explained, 'We look after the little children when they are sad.' They have good opportunities to reflect on their feelings and on the consequences of their actions. They learn to respect the different ways in which people choose to express faith. Pupils' positive contribution to their local community is good. For example, pupils took part in an arts project to design a panel for the new bridge built nearby. The pupils' satisfactory progress in basic

skills, combined with their well-developed social skills, prepare them soundly for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teachers have worked hard to raise standards and their actions have borne fruit, although it is too soon to see the full impact on pupils' national assessments in Year 2. They usually set out their expectations for effort and behaviour clearly. As a result, classroom relationships are positive and most pupils work willingly. Teachers are good at motivating pupils so that they are eager to learn. For example, pupils in Year 1 were excited at the prospect of composing pirate adventures. In the best lessons, the pace of learning is often brisk, but there are occasions when this dips, pupils' attentions wander and their learning suffers. Some teachers have very effective strategies for encouraging good listening by, for example, praising those who are attentive. At times, however, pupils do not listen carefully enough and the rate of progress slows. Although teachers generally plan well, with different work being set for different ability groups, more remains to be done to ensure that potentially higher attaining pupils reach their full potential, particularly in writing and mathematics.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Work for pupils with learning difficulties is planned carefully and enables them to make good progress. Teachers are getting better at planning challenging work for higher attaining pupils. There are good plans to improve their skills in this area by working with an advanced skills teacher on lessons for the most able pupils in mathematics. The phonics programme is beginning to bear significant fruit, although it is too soon to see its full impact on standards. Imaginatively designed topics, such as 'Pirates', help to make learning relevant. Following a recent review, the school has taken steps to strengthen aspects of creativity in the curriculum by planning a wider range of imaginative cross-curricular topics. There is a good programme for personal, social and health education. A good range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities supports the curriculum.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care is effective and enables pupils to make good progress in their personal development. The school's caring ethos creates an environment in which attention to pupils' welfare has a high priority. This is increasingly important because a growing number of pupils have difficulties in their lives and the school supports them well. The school is a very welcoming place for children. There are good procedures for child protection. Academic guidance is good. Systems for tracking pupils' progress and setting the next steps in their learning have improved significantly and teachers are using them well to identify underachievement and set more challenging targets.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The dedication of the headteacher and her staff are reflected in a safe and happy school. Senior managers have maintained good levels of care. There is a clear commitment towards making every pupil feel valued. The school responded robustly to a dip in performance in academic standards in 2006. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, based on accurate and honest self-evaluation. They are using this information effectively to improve standards. They are setting challenging targets and the school is on track to improve pupils' achievement further. The school takes good account of parental opinion and responds well to suggestions made by them. There are good links with neighbouring schools and with external agencies and the community. Despite considerable difficulties in recruiting sufficient governors, the governing body is supportive and shows a growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses 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?	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	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	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	2
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	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?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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**

29 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Langstone Infant School, Portsmouth, PO3 6EY

Thank you for making us so welcome and sharing with us your thoughts about your school. We particularly enjoyed talking to the school helpers and to the children who showed us their work. We also really enjoyed your assembly with the famous football player! You enjoy your lessons and all the other things that you do in school. We think Langstone Infants is a satisfactory school that is getting better in very many ways. You behave well, play together sensibly and care for each other if someone is feeling upset. The headteacher and all the other staff have worked very hard to improve your school. They believe that all of you can do well, so it is up to you to prove them right and help the school move from being satisfactory to good in all parts of its work.

We have asked your teachers to make a few improvements to make the school better. Last year's results in Year 2 showed that pupils are now doing better than they were. This is really good news and everyone is very pleased. We have asked your teachers to make sure that all of you have to think about your work, even those of you who sometimes find it quite easy. You can help by always working as hard as you can. We think your teachers have worked hard to make lessons better so that you learn more quickly. We have asked them to carry on doing this, so that even more lessons are good ones. The last thing we have asked them to do is to make the outdoor area for children in Reception class more interesting and exciting.

I hope that you continue to enjoy your time at school and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Lynn Bappa

Lead Inspector