

Moorings Way Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116220
Local Authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	312222
Inspection date	8 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Wendy Forbes

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	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Kevin Farrar (acting)
Headteacher	Ms Victoria Page
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2004
School address	Moorings Way Milton Southsea PO4 8YJ
Telephone number	023 9282 9147
Fax number	023 9229 1023

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: the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage, achievement and standards, pupils' personal development and well-being, teaching and learning, aspects of the curriculum, care, guidance and support, and the effectiveness of leaders and managers. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, samples of pupils' work, assessment data, discussions with pupils, staff and governors, feedback from parents, documents, and information about attendance. 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 assessment as given in its self-evaluation were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Moorings is a smaller than average infant school whose pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and include pupils with moderate learning difficulties as well as speech and language difficulties. There are relatively few children who have English as an additional language. The school benefits from local community links such as the Sports Alliance. Breakfast and after school clubs operate extended services on the school site. The school has achieved Silver Artsmark, Activemark, the Healthy Schools award and Investors in People. The recently appointed headteacher has been in post for less than a year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory and it is providing an improving standard of education. There is much to be proud of in this school. It benefits from a hard working, committed staff whose efforts are greatly appreciated by the majority of parents. Consequently, pupils get a good start to their education in Reception. As one parent said '...Moorings Way is a caring school...and I am very happy that my child attends the school...'.

Pupils begin in the Foundation Stage with levels expected for their age. Most make satisfactory progress in line with their starting points so that by the end of Year 2 standards in reading and writing overall are just above the national average, and mathematical attainment is broadly in line. Although the majority of pupils achieved their Level 2 academic targets this year the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in writing and mathematics remains below the national average and the school's target.

The newly appointed headteacher provides effective leadership. She works closely with other senior colleagues and together they have correctly identified areas for school development. This has resulted in successfully stopping the decline in standards over the past four years, so that good progress is now being made by the youngest pupils in the school and by all pupils in reading.

Amongst the school's many strengths is the level of pastoral care, guidance and support which enhances the personal development and well-being of pupils. The provision of an on-site breakfast club, walking bus and extra-curricular clubs all help to ensure that children are provided with good quality care, and enthruses their learning. Pupils speak enthusiastically of the care and support they are given by all staff feeling confident that they can speak to an adult if they are concerned about anything.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils learn to value and respect others. They demonstrate a good understanding of right and wrong and this has led to good behaviour. Most aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles and know how to keep themselves safe. The school's positive ethos is reflected in the many personal development initiatives for example achievement assemblies and awards for hard work and good behaviour. Pupils make a good contribution to their community, for example through the school council and links with Age-Concern. Pupils say they love learning and coming to school enjoying an interesting range of cultural development opportunities such as multi-cultural arts week. As one pupil said, 'I love school, it is just perfect. I don't want to change anything.' Despite pupils' appreciation of school, attendance levels are currently only satisfactory due to recent long-term absences caused by holidays taken in term time.

The school acknowledges the need to continue to develop home-school communication and has worked hard to successfully promote positive initiatives such as family lunches and learning afternoons, which has helped to forge a closer partnership with parents. The school works successfully with the local community and outside agencies to ensure pupils receive good levels of support. Sports links with the Sports Alliance and local football club help to provide wider opportunities for children to enjoy sporting activities.

Overall, teaching is satisfactory and reflects the progress that the majority of pupils make in Years 1 and 2. There is some good teaching as seen in Reception where learning is fun, varied and exciting. Where teaching is good pupils make good progress. The best teaching is

characterised by clear learning objectives, good pace, high expectations and challenge. Where teaching is less well pitched to pupils' needs, the pace is slower and less well focused.

Consequently not all pupils are sufficiently challenged to achieve their personal best, particularly higher attaining pupils. This is particularly the case in the teaching of mathematics and writing. Teachers are beginning to make good use of information and communication technology (ICT). Recently purchased laptops have provided opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills and support good links across other curriculum areas. The newly reviewed curriculum is well planned and organised and beginning to enliven the classroom. Outdoor visits, visitors and after school clubs all help to enrich the curriculum and excite pupils' love of learning. Children speak enthusiastically, for example, about their curriculum events such as the multi-cultural arts week and visits to local places of historic interest. Good artwork from these visits reflects their love of learning and interest.

Staff work well as a team. Support staff contribute well to lessons and to the good overall quality of care and support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

Good use of data is starting to effectively track and monitor pupils' progress. The school has rightly focused its efforts on developing the use of assessment to support learning. Although older children are now beginning to understand what they need to do to improve their work the system is not yet fully embedded and the impact of such initiatives are yet to be seen in long term improvements in attainment. Teachers provide helpful feedback orally but marking does not always help pupils to know and understand how to improve their work the next time.

Governors know the school well and understand its strengths and areas for development but have yet to develop a full strategic partnership role with the school in order to raise standards further and to hold the school to account. The governing body acknowledges the need to ensure it fulfils its statutory requirement to monitor the school's policy on race or equality and to inform the parents/carers about the impact of the school's work in this area. There has been some improvement since the last inspection particularly in assessment procedures, developments in the curriculum and pupil tracking. Staff training and development in these key areas are starting to raise the sights and aspirations of staff and pupils which is helping to drive up standards as seen in the improvements in reading. These improvements and the school's current priorities demonstrate the school's good ability to improve still further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Although attainment on entry to the school, for the current cohort, is in line with that expected for their age, some previous year groups have been below this level on entry. Children make good progress in the Reception class and are achieving well. As a result, by the time they move to Year 1 the majority of pupils achieve the recommended goals for the areas of learning and a high proportion achieve well above expectations for children of this age. This is because of the good teaching children receive. Effective daily planning incorporates a good range of directed and child-initiated activities. Teaching assistants support learning effectively. There is a clear emphasis on speaking and listening, together with laying the foundations of good phonic knowledge and writing. Ongoing assessments give a clear picture of how individual children are progressing. The outdoor learning area remains an area for further development. Children have benefited from an environment where learning is fun and expectations are high.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- The governing body needs to ensure that all their statutory requirements are met in full.

A small proportion of 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 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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	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	1
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

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	2
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

18 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorings Way Infant School, Southsea, PO4 8YJ

Thank you for making me feel so welcome in your school. I enjoyed meeting you, talking to you, and looking at your work. I was so impressed to see how hard you work to make your school a happy place. You clearly love your school and are proud of the many awards you have recently received such as Healthy Schools, Silver Artsmark and Activemark, and you are enjoying the school's new laptops.

You told me that you enjoy school and that you work hard to do your best. You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and help others to have a happy time at school. Your good behaviour and caring relationships reflect your keenness to learn and the good care provided by adults. Many of you are very sensible, kind and thoughtful, particularly when taking on responsibilities such as school councillors.

I was pleased to see that the youngest children are making good progress. However I feel that there are some things that your school could do better. This is because not all the teaching and activities particularly in writing and mathematics help you achieve your personal best.

Your new headteacher and all the staff are working hard to improve your school. To help your school become better I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to help you improve your skills in writing and mathematics, and provide more difficult work for those of you who are more able.

I hope that you continue to work hard and keep enjoying school.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Forbes

Lead Inspector