

Andover Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116269
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312238
Inspection dates	10–11 September 2007
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Shields
Headteacher	Mrs Karolyn Grave
Date of previous school inspection	20 October 2003
School address	East Street Andover SP10 1EP
Telephone number	012 6435 2322
Fax number	012 6435 3283

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

Andover CE is an average size primary school. The school has a mixed catchment area. There is a variety of housing and a good social mix. Around 40% of children come from St Mary's Ward - the 'poorest' ward in the Andover area. The number of pupils from ethnic minority groups, or with English as an additional language is well below the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average, but the number with statements of special educational needs is above average. There have been a number of staff changes recently and the headteacher was appointed to the school in January 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Andover is an improving school that provides its pupils with a satisfactory quality of education with some good features. Very good leadership and management by the present headteacher, since she joined the school two terms ago, is enabling all involved to move the school forward rapidly. As one parent observed, 'The new headteacher has great ideas and has been quick to implement them.'

After several years of improving results in national tests, 2006 saw a considerable fall in standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards stabilised in 2007 but, although pupils met their targets in mathematics in 2007, they did not do so in English. One of the main reasons for the decline was the inconsistent use of assessment and tracking data to make sure that lessons were meeting the needs of all pupils. New systems and procedures have seen a significant improvement in the use of data, but there is still more to do to make this consistent. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are higher and, although it is too soon to see how effectively this will raise standards, the targets set for 2008 are challenging. In the light of the improving quality of teaching observed, they are appropriate.

Pupils join the school with a range of skills but their attainment is broadly average. Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start and are now making good progress. By the end of Reception, most children reach the goals expected of them. Provision in Key Stage 1 is now good overall. Many of the new systems introduced have already begun to be effective in the day-to-day running of this key stage. The staff, teachers and teaching assistants plan and work together and have a zeal to improve that is infectious. Innovations made in Key Stage 2 have been equally carefully introduced, but here the changes of staff have hindered the progress of their implementation.

All pupils, whatever their background or ability, are valued and enjoy themselves in the school's safe and caring environment. Most parents are very supportive, one reflecting the views of many in noting, 'It is a very caring school and the atmosphere shows this.' Pupils' personal development is good. They show caring attitudes to each other and the environment. They are developing a good understanding of healthy living and keeping safe.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is being reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils more successfully than previously. However, there are still some inconsistencies in the progress the pupils make as they move through the school. This is because of variation in the quality of teaching. In some classes, it is lively and moves learning along at a good pace. In others, the teaching, although satisfactory, does not provide consistent challenge. Quite often lessons show pupils what they are being asked to do, rather than making it clear what they are expected to learn. This makes it difficult for staff, and in particular, the pupils, to check on how successful they have been, and what they need to do next to improve.

The very good leadership of the headteacher ensures that complacency is not tolerated. Staff now share her vision of continued improvement and have an accurate view of its effectiveness and know the next steps they need to take to improve the quality of provision. Their capacity to improve is good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Many parents expressed their genuine satisfaction in the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage. Children have only just started at the school but, as one parent said, 'My son could not have made a better start to his school days. I could not be happier.'

In particular, parents are pleased with the home visits conducted by the staff that mean their children's introduction to the school is carefully planned and delivered. At the time of the inspection, it was remarkable to see how well the children had settled in and were working and playing happily on only their second day at school. The staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn. The teaching observed was consistently good and firmly based on providing activities to nurture and enhance children's early language and social skills. The additional small room for cooking not only gives all the children an exciting experience, but also allows the Key Stage 1 coordinator to be fully involved in the provision of what she and her colleagues have so carefully planned.

The indoor areas are stimulating and provide a good focus on activities to cover the whole of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Although the outside area is equally stimulating and well organised it is not easily accessible. This makes planning, and providing, the necessary opportunities outside difficult.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by making teaching more consistent, particularly in the level of challenge and in clearly explaining what pupils are to learn.
- Ensure that the assessment and tracking systems are embedded and used effectively in all subjects to match work consistently to the needs of the pupils.

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 section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

From their starting points, pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage because of exemplary planning and thoughtful teaching. Recognising that standards by Year 2 were declining, the school has worked determinedly to improve pupils' basic skills and confidence. This is leading to significant improvements in pupils' progress. Pupils' progress is also accelerating now in Years 3 to 6. However, standards last year were below those expected and the school has moved rapidly to remedy any deficiencies in provision. Targets for attainment in the 2008 national tests are high, but tracking systems show they are realistic. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress and the encouragement they receive from the support assistants is excellent.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils talk openly about the school's supportive environment and enjoy all that it offers. From their earliest days in Reception, relationships are positive and, across the school,

pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons is very good. Pupils of different ages and from different backgrounds play and work together very well. Pupils make a good contribution to their school and the wider community, for example, by raising considerable funds for charities through the effective school council. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lives. They co-operate and work effectively together, preparing them satisfactorily for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In some year groups, teaching is good and ensures pupils progress well. Elsewhere, lessons are often satisfactory resulting in slower progress. The uneven progress the pupils make results in satisfactory rather than good achievement. Pupils work hard and have strong relationships with all staff. Teachers use resources well, including interactive white boards to explain tasks and to clarify pupils' thinking. In a few lessons, the pace of learning is slow, and pupils with poor concentration and listening skills become distracted which detracts from their learning. In the best lessons, teachers have clear targets for learning and review these effectively at the end, but this is inconsistent. Too often, teachers explain clearly what pupils will do rather than what they will learn. Well-prepared teaching assistants enable pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to work with confidence so they make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers' planning is now focused on improving pupils' enjoyment and providing good enhancement opportunities. The well-planned curriculum in the Foundation Stage extends into Year 1, providing necessary continuity and meeting the needs of all pupils. The school recognises that opportunities are sometimes missed for linking subjects and making more effective use of time. Although there are evaluation procedures for checking units of work, their relevance to pupils' academic and personal needs are sometimes missed. After-school clubs extend the curriculum well and events and visitors to school, such as Book Week, authors and a dog warden bring the curriculum to life. Visits to concerts, museums, art galleries and theatres make the curriculum stimulating and extend pupils' life experiences; for example, pupils in Year 6 enjoy their annual residential visit.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The pastoral care provided by the school is good. Staff, governors and the school council are well aware of health and safety issues. There are appropriate procedures for child protection and assessing and dealing with risks. This ensures that pupils, including those who are more vulnerable, feel secure. Thanks to the school's good systems, pupils' attendance rates are above average. Parents appreciate the careful support their children receive. One commented about her son with special educational needs, 'I feel the school is very supportive and approachable.' Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities progress well because of the support they are given. The procedures for tracking individual pupils' progress and setting targets to improve achievement and standards are sound but results and analyses, presented in different forms,

have made them difficult to use effectively. Although there is now some good practice, the use of this information to plan lessons and identify what pupils need to do next to improve is not yet consistent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and all staff place great store in promoting pupils' personal development and this is reflected in pupils' overall happiness, good behaviour, relationships and well-being. Everyone is playing a valuable part in moving the school forward, and teaching assistants and the administrative team are considerable assets to the school and are very much appreciated by all concerned.

The headteacher listens to and consults with staff, governors, parents and children so that they all feel involved in their school. As a result, she has reorganised the leadership of all aspects of the school to provide a structure to drive forward her clear vision to provide a high standard of education. The changes made are beginning to come to fruition, as can be seen in the greater cohesion in the planning and provision in Key Stage 1. As all aspects of the school's work are now being monitored carefully, leaders have very clear understanding of what is working well, what can improve and how it can be achieved. However, as all the staff acknowledge, there is still a lot to accomplish if they are to be the school they know they can be. Governors have a sound understanding of their strategic role in the school's development and are developing their systems for checking on its effectiveness and holding the leaders to account. They acknowledge that they now need time to see it all accomplished.

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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	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	2

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	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	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

21 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Andover Church of England Primary School, Andover, SP10 1EP

This letter is to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection and to thank you for taking the time to talk to us about your school and your work. We think the school provides you with a satisfactory education, but we agree with what you told us - it is getting better and better. The headteacher and teachers have created a caring school community where you enjoy learning and feel safe. You behave well in lessons and like to concentrate on your work. You often make thoughtful and interesting contributions to them. You enjoy and benefit from the wide range of opportunities the school provides in clubs and visits to interesting places.

By the end of Year 6, standards are average but they could be higher. Some of you told us you find the targets the teachers set you are a bit confusing. We have asked the headteacher and teachers to do all they can to challenge you and make sure you all make good progress in every lesson so that more of you will reach the highest levels.

The School Council represents your views well. They have been able to help you all with number of things that were important to you, such as the contributions to schools and children in Africa.

The headteacher is keen to keep improving the school. We have asked the teachers to analyse all the information the school collects about the standards you have reached to make sure you are making good progress all the time.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help. We wish you well in the future.

With kind regards

David Marshall Lead inspector