

Leesland Church of England Controlled Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116334
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312265
Inspection dates	10–11 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	322
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Tracy Nicholls
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Blackham
Date of previous school inspection	20 October 2003
School address	Gordon Road Gosport PO12 3QF
Telephone number	02392 580962
Fax number	02392 356444

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Leesland CE Junior School is a larger than average school. There are high levels of deprivation in the areas served by the school. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Nearly a third of the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities, including five with a statement of special educational needs. Both these proportions are above average. In general, pupils enter the school with below average skills.

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 provides a satisfactory and improving quality of education, and has several strengths. The determination of the headteacher, staff and governors to improve pupils' progress is successfully addressing the significant levels of underachievement in recent years. This has been accomplished by developing a stimulating curriculum, and raising expectations and the level of challenge in lessons. Assessment procedures are now rigorous and used carefully to help ensure that pupils do not mark time by covering old ground. Pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve. The quality of teaching and learning is now good. As a result, pupils are making good progress in lessons and through each school year. Standards are below average but pupils in Years 5 and 6 are doing much better than previous cohorts and are on course to reach the expected standards in reading, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory. The drive to help all pupils reach average standards has, to some extent, diverted attention from those pupils who have the potential to achieve higher levels, and the proportion on course to do so is below average. Much has been done to improve attainment in writing and this is bearing fruit, but standards in writing remain below average.

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well and enjoy good relationships with staff and one another. As one pupil said, 'Children and teachers are friendly to each other at Leesland'. Pupils feel safe, enjoy learning and have good awareness of healthy living. They are proud of their school. They offer mature comments for improvement through the school council and willingly take on extra responsibilities. Many were keen to show inspectors their work, including sensitively written 'diaries of an evacuee', learning logs and vivid art work. Pupils' enthusiasm for music is evident in their delightful response in lessons and in the large number learning an instrument. Opportunities such as these contribute to the outstanding range of enrichment activities. The school's central aim to promote independence, challenge, respect, creativity, enterprise and spirituality is evident across the curriculum. Teachers frequently make explicit reference to these values and this helps pupils to understand what outcomes are expected during lessons and over time.

Pastoral care and support are particularly strong. This is seen in pupils' confidence and good relationships with the adults with whom they come into contact. The sentiments expressed by one parent, who wrote, 'My child's confidence in working independently has increased in leaps and bounds', are shared by the overwhelming majority. Pupils' accelerating achievement owes much to the very good quality of academic guidance. Their learning is extremely well supported. Marking provides very good feedback and, in every classroom, visual prompts support pupils' work, particularly in writing and mathematics.

Leadership and management are good. A persistent push for improvement has raised achievement to a satisfactory level. The headteacher has a very clear vision of how the school should grow as a community in which all pupils achieve their potential both academically and personally. This vision is shared by senior managers and other staff. Governors are well informed and supportive. Self-evaluation is accurate and development planning is sharply focused on raising standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, particularly in writing, and in mathematics and science.
- Ensure more able pupils are set challenging targets in order to fully reach their potential.

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

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. A relentless drive to increase the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels has been successful. Accelerated progress is now evident in most lessons as a result of significant improvement in the teaching and the curriculum. Pupils are now making good progress in lessons and through each year, reflecting the considerable efforts of staff, and pupils' increasing motivation. The school's tracking data indicates that pupils in Years 5 and 6 are on course to reach broadly average standards in reading, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. This is also evident in pupils' current work. In recent years, pupils did not build well enough on their starting points. The relatively high proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school during Years 5 and 6, and the above average number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, had a negative impact on overall achievement. Standards in writing are improving but they remain below average. The proportion of more able pupils reaching the higher levels in English, mathematics and science is also below average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good overall. Pupils have mature attitudes to moral issues. For example, they raise funds for a Brazilian orphanage. Pupils have many opportunities to appreciate music, dance and drama. They are aware of different faiths and customs around the world but their understanding of cultural diversity in Britain is limited. Bullying is a very rare event. When it does occur, pupils use the excellent systems for reporting and the issue is managed promptly and well. Pupils enthusiastically take up the many opportunities provided for them to be physically active and most eat healthy meals at school. Pupils make many positive contributions, for example by suggesting ideas for improving the playground and cloakrooms and writing charters for classroom behaviour. They contribute well to the wider community through charity fund raising, and performing locally in the orchestra or choir. Working on projects with secondary schools and local businesses, they develop good economic understanding. Together with their improving skills in literacy and numeracy, this provides a satisfactory preparation for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Senior leaders have successfully tackled weaknesses in teaching that were resulting in underachievement and there is now much more consistency in the quality of learning through the school. Lessons are purposeful and pupils are given a clear view of what they need to achieve. Teachers consistently use 'learning ladders' to illustrate the progression of skills, so pupils have a good understanding of what they need to learn next and routinely assess their own progress against specific criteria. Marking includes helpful, evaluative comments that indicate how well pupils have succeeded in a task. The recently introduced 'learning logs', replacing routine and uninspiring homework assignments, are popular with pupils and proving

successful in helping parents to support learning at home. One parent said, 'They have banished the chore of homework'. In most lessons, learning moves along at a good pace but this is not always the case and sometimes limits progress in the time available. Teachers set work at different levels according to pupils' abilities, but there is room for more demanding work for more able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum includes well-planned and exciting topics that pupils enjoy a great deal. Day-to-day work links strongly to the school values such as respect, creativity and challenge. This has a very positive impact on pupils' personal development. Around 90% of pupils attend an excellent range of lunchtime and after school arts, sporting and general interest clubs. Visitors from a variety of health, community and arts groups significantly augment the curriculum. Pupils make frequent educational trips, and Years 5 and 6 make residential visits. Pupils with learning difficulties are identified well through the rigorous assessment systems. Provision for these pupils is satisfactory and teaching assistants play a significant role in supporting their learning. The school is aware that work for more able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, support and guidance are good. Arrangements to ensure the health and safety of pupils are thorough. The school constantly stresses the importance of pupils respecting and helping one another, and relationships between pupils and staff are very good. Targets for learning are set termly although they are sometimes not challenging enough for the most able. The school works effectively with parents and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. Information on the work planned is sent home along with regular reports on pupils' progress. Attendance is monitored very thoroughly and a range of strategies helps to ensure that parents and pupils appreciate the importance of good attendance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's good capacity to improve is underpinned by a sense of common purpose to realise the school's overarching aim to improve achievement. The headteacher's vision for the school stresses very clearly that children should be encouraged to have a love for learning and a clear understanding of its importance. This is a significant factor in the progress that has been made recently. Raising achievement to a satisfactory level has been hard won. Leaders and managers have had to convince colleagues of the need to reform the curriculum and to introduce new teaching and assessment strategies. They have achieved this very effectively so that all staff are working towards shared goals. The impact of significant improvements in the quality of teaching and the curriculum is evident in pupils' motivation, enthusiasm and improved progress. Although several are new, governors play a useful role raising questions, making suggestions and refining priorities. Teachers' performance is well managed with appropriate support and training provided. Subject leaders are aware of strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility and have clear strategies for improvement. The new coordinator for special educational needs has rightly identified room for improvement in the way the provision is

managed, for example. The school is aware of weaknesses in the way the progress of more able pupils is tracked to help ensure they do as well as they can.

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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 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	3

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?	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?	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?	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	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

23 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leesland Church of England Controlled Junior School, Gosport, PO12 3QF

Thank you for making us welcome during our visit. We were delighted that so many of you greeted us warmly and that you were keen to talk about your work and how you are getting on. The atmosphere in school is very friendly and we saw that you behave well in lessons and around school. We agree with you that the school is improving. We found that it has several really good aspects and some things that need to be improved. Overall, we found it to be satisfactory. It was good to see how much you enjoy lessons. We think the teachers are doing a good job in helping you see what you need to do to improve and how to tackle new work. For example, the mathematics 'tool kits' in each classroom and the displays of ideas on interesting ways to start a sentence are very helpful. We were impressed by the range of extra activities on offer and how many of you took advantage of them. It was clear that the adults look after you very well and ensure you feel safe in school. You play a good part yourselves in helping the school run smoothly and you are obviously keen to help others who live in less fortunate circumstances, for example, the children in the Brazilian orphanage.

Most children are now making good progress in lessons and through the year, so standards are improving. The main area to improve is writing. Although many children read well, most of you find writing more difficult, so it is important to keep trying hard to improve. Try to remember the strategies you have learned for writing for different purposes, such as a persuasive letter or a set of instructions. Some children are working at above average levels in English, mathematics and science but we are sure that, with a little more effort, more of you could do so.

The school is led well and everyone is keen for you do keep on working hard and improving. You can help by continuing to try your best.

Best wishes for the New Year and the future

Yours sincerely,

Rob Crompton

Lead inspector