

Lymington Church of England Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116365
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312277
Inspection date	5 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr H Miles
Headteacher	Mrs J Welford
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2004
School address	Avenue Road Lymington SO41 9GP
Telephone number	01590 673355
Fax number	01590 688264

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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 how well pupils progress, particularly girls and higher attainers in writing, the quality of teachers' planning, and how well subject co-ordinators and key stage managers monitor and evaluate the impact of their work. The inspector gathered evidence from an analysis of information and data about pupils' achievement provided by the school, observations of parts of lessons, parents' questionnaires and discussions with the headteacher and other managers, a representative of the governing body and pupils. The inspector did not investigate other aspects of the school's work in detail, but found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These judgements have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school is situated in the centre of this coastal town. However, being a church school, it draws from a large area, with pupils coming from a wide mix of social and economic backgrounds. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. Pupils come from a predominantly White British background, although there is a small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational need is well above average, although the number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is as nationally expected. A new senior management team has been appointed since the last inspection. The school is recognised nationally through the Healthy School and ActiveMark Awards and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'My daughter absolutely loves coming to school. She is happy and full of enthusiasm for everything she does'. This parent echoes the views of many others, including the pupils. Overall, the school provides a good standard of education where pupils achieve well. In the personal development of pupils, and in their care, guidance and support, both pastorally and academically, the school is outstanding.

The well above average standards have their origin in the very good leadership of the headteacher, who is ably assisted by her deputy. Very clear strategies for the school's development, including the setting of very challenging targets, result from rigorous monitoring by senior managers, and their extremely accurate evaluation. All staff are involved in monitoring. Some subject managers, but not all, carry out sufficiently detailed analyses on which to base their development planning. The school is not inward-looking, but makes use of an excellent range of external partners that benefit pupils. This includes improved contact with the local church, as well as a range of business sponsors. Parents are well involved in this partnership, with the school regularly holding drop-in coffee mornings, and evening workshops, for example, on how to help their child with writing and mathematics. Parents feel that these are, 'very informative'.

Another parent wrote, 'Both my children have, by far, exceeded my expectations both academically and in the speed in which they have settled'. This accurately highlights the good academic standards and the caring ethos of the school. In the last two years, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been well above average. Given the starting points of these pupils, this reflects good achievement levels. Current work supports this picture of pupils, including slower learners, achieving well and attaining above average standards. There are no significant differences between the performance of different groups of pupils.

These academic standards result from consistently good teaching and the pupils' very positive attitudes. Pupils tell of lessons being good and that the varied activities they have challenge them and contribute very well to their enjoyment and interest. Some aspects of teaching are outstanding. Teachers use a very good range of assessment data that help them plan work well for pupils of different abilities. In one literacy lesson pupils were well involved in evaluating their own and other's work, though this is not always the case. Pupils respond well, are polite, and display good behaviour, for example, when listening to others.

The school very successfully promotes the outstanding personal development of pupils. Pupils show maturity by remaining on task, and respond well to the very positive relationships in lessons. They are eager to get involved, as one pupil said, 'I love school. It helps me learn'. They have an extremely good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe, and talk animatedly about healthy food, drinking water and enjoying sport. 'Stay quiet in PE (physical education)', said one girl, 'otherwise the teacher can't know if somebody has hurt themselves and needs help'. Through such things as the effective school council, hosting and entertaining elderly people in school, and singing in the community, the pupils make an excellent contribution to the community. The excellent opportunity pupils have to close their eyes and take time to reflect in assemblies make an outstanding contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.

The good curriculum meets the literacy and numeracy needs of the pupils very well and addresses their emotional needs extremely well. Pupils are prepared well for later life. However, the school recognises the need to identify where all subjects could reinforce pupils' skills in information

and communication technology (ICT). Pupils say how much they enjoy the very good opportunities they have to receive visitors, visit places like the local museum, and attend a number of good clubs, not least the coaching by the local professional football club.

Pupils settle quickly to their work because they feel safe and very well cared for. Parents wrote that specific needs of pupils, whether physical or social, are catered for very well. Support assistants are skilled and contribute well to the progress of slower learners. A visit and talk by a young man with cerebral palsy is one example of how well the caring ethos is developed. He wrote movingly of the impact of the pupils' letters that he later received. Another outstanding aspect is the academic guidance given to pupils. In particular, the 'Lymington Book' and 'First Day of the Month Book' give pupils the opportunity to show what they have learnt in writing. Teachers use this very well to assess progress, but also to give valuable feedback about how pupils can improve.

The relatively new senior management team has been very effective in improving and maintaining the levels of academic standards, and in the excellent development of pupils' social and personal skills. This shows that there is an outstanding capacity to improve further. Close attention is paid to basics, such as the provision of vibrant displays, especially the mathematics boards. These help stimulate pupils and contribute to a lively learning environment. Governors contribute effectively to monitoring through regular visits, and have a very good knowledge of the school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Entry levels vary year by year, but are broadly as expected for children of this age. There is a pattern of weakness on entry to the school in areas such as writing, reading, linking sounds and letters and in the children's creative development. Good teaching contributes to the children progressing well, and they leave Reception with the majority having met their early learning goals; many exceed them. Some parents expressed views about the arrangements for the staggered entry into Reception. However, the children have settled well. They share resources, take turns, respect and listen to each other. The curriculum is good with pupils able to make frequent decisions about what activities they want to do. They thoroughly enjoy the 'Welly Walking' activities, identifying how the natural world changes from autumn to winter. The children's learning is well reinforced by bright displays of work. Some improvements to the external area have taken place. However, the school recognises the need to further develop this, if the children are fully to use the outdoors for their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Complete an audit of ICT provision, and implement arrangements for where all subjects can support the development of ICT skills and knowledge.
- Ensure the further development of the external area in the Foundation Stage so as to promote children's learning outdoors.

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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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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

14 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lymington Church of England Infant School, Lymington, SO41 9GP

Thank you for welcoming me into your school. You were very eager to tell me your views and show me your work. I listened carefully to you, and I agree that your school is good. I also feel it does some things very well indeed.

I was very impressed by how you enjoy school. You told me how you have lots of things to do, and that you enjoy your visits and visitors. I saw for myself how hard you work, and the good work that you produce. Your work on Coll and Katie Morag looks interesting! You have an excellent understanding about how to stay healthy and keep safe. I also believe you accept responsibility very well. Your school councillors work hard on your behalf, and the comfortable chairs in the library are a good idea.

You progress well with your work because you receive good teaching and have very positive attitudes. You behave well in class, and respect each other. You said you feel safe and that the adults listen to you, and care for you very well. I agree, and I agree with your parents that the school involves them well in things like the mathematics workshop. This helps them support you in your learning.

You get many, good, different things to do. You told me you like sport and music, and the chances you have to work with computers. I have asked that in all subjects you get a chance to develop your computer skills further. You get along with each other very well, including the children in Reception. I have asked that their outdoor area is improved so that they have different activities to work on outside and can learn outdoors all year round.

The school is led very well by your headteacher, and all the adults really want to make sure that things get even better within the school.

I wish you all the best for the future,

Michael Pye

Lead Inspector