

# Alverstoke Church of England Aided Junior School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116392
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312290
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 December 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joanna Toulson

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	268
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs J Morgan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M Mullen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	The Avenue Alverstoke Gosport PO12 2JS
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 580450
<b>Fax number</b>	02392 510346

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors and one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Most pupils join from the local infant school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools award and is working towards the enhanced status. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly in line with the numbers found in schools nationally.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Alverstoke Junior School is a good school with outstanding features.

By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, they reach standards that are significantly above those reached by pupils nationally. This, together with good personal development, prepares them well for their secondary education. Pupils make good progress from their starting points because of the good teaching they receive. Progress from year to year is, however, inconsistent with the older pupils making the most progress.

The very good care and support that staff show towards the pupils is echoed in the way in which the pupils treat each other. Behaviour is good. Pupils are kind to each other and play well together in the playground. There is a very real sense of community in the school, which pupils and parents appreciate. A parent said, 'They really make learning fun and there is a great community spirit.'

Pupils enjoy school and speak enthusiastically about the varied and rich experiences that it offers. Visits to the locality, including a residential visit in Year 6, contribute a great deal to the personal development of pupils. Experts in the community, including musicians and artists, are used well to enrich the curriculum. The school provides an excellent range of extra curricular activities which pupils and parents value. As a parent said, 'There are excellent opportunities at the school. The music opportunities are very good, as are those for sport and other clubs.' Pupils have an outstanding commitment to being healthy. The take-up of the excellent range of sports and games activities after school is very high.

The school provides a safe, secure environment within a broadly Christian ethos. Pupils are proud of their school and look after it. The school has a strong ethos of involvement with and support by parents who are very much involved with school life. The school works well with the local community and, as a voluntary aided school, has especially strong links with the local church. The day before the inspection, Christmas lunch at the school was enjoyed by nearly 600 people, including pupils, their families and members of the local community.

Whilst some teaching is satisfactory, the quality of teaching and learning in the school is good overall. In the most effective lessons, pupils make good progress because of good teaching which matches the needs of individual pupils. Teachers make learning exciting and pupils respond well. Where teaching is less effective, teachers do not take sufficient account of the needs of pupils with different abilities.

The school rightly judges its effectiveness to be good and has identified key strengths and weaknesses. The plans that the school have in place identify appropriate areas for improvement but are not sharply linked to pupil achievement. The lack of clear measures by which progress can be judged hinders the school's ability to evaluate how well it is doing towards achieving its aims.

The school is well placed to become even better. The headteacher provides good leadership. She has successfully built a strong, committed team of staff who are determined to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the quality of teaching to the best in the school.
- Ensure all school planning has clear measures to show its impact on pupils' progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils join the school with standards in English, mathematics and science which are broadly in line with those found nationally although pupils' speaking and listening skills are well above average. In 2007, pupils at the end of Year 6 reached standards which were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Following a focus on improving standards for the more able in English, a significant number of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 although boys did less well than girls at the higher levels for writing. The school is now taking appropriate steps to support the more able boys in their writing.

Pupils make good progress from their starting points in Year 3. Year on year progress is, however, inconsistent with most progress being made by the older pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress because of the good support they receive.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The school promotes good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy all that it offers. They are considerate to each other, work co-operatively and behave well. The school is now developing systems and procedures with other agencies to support even better behaviour management to match the complex needs of a very small minority of pupils. Pupils appreciate the 'buddy benches' in the playground where they can sit if they need someone to play with. The school encourages pupils to take part in the community through concerts and visits to the local church. Pupils feel safe in the school and know who to go to when they feel troubled or upset. Bullying is rare and, when it happens, it is dealt with promptly and effectively. The school site is secure and safe. Pupils are aware of why they should eat healthy food and exercise regularly. To this end the school has outstanding provision for sports and physical exercise which include swimming, tennis and dance. There are high take up rates for all these activities. As one pupil said, 'You keep really fit and healthy'. The school has the Healthy Schools Award and is committed to achieving enhanced status in 2008. Pupils have appropriate information regarding sex education and substance misuse. The elected members of the school council make an effective contribution to the running of the school. Pupils are given responsibilities in classes and around the school by, for example, setting up for assembly and answering the telephone at break times.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning ranges from satisfactory to outstanding and is good overall.

Classrooms are bright and inviting with stimulating displays that reflect the high standard of work across a wide range of subjects. Good information that supports pupils' learning is evident in every classroom.

In the best lessons, teachers set challenging activities which make pupils think, are practical, investigative and exciting. Teachers make sure that these activities are matched to the needs of individual pupils and this results in pupils making good progress. Interactive whiteboards are used well to illustrate exciting images. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson the teacher

made effective use of photographs of the Earth and moon. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own work. In one lesson, pupils marked their own poems about a Christmas tree and were able to highlight areas where they had been successful as well as where they could improve.

Where teaching is less effective, pupil progress is hindered because work is not well matched to pupils' needs. This is because some planning does not take account of assessment information and does not clearly identify what pupils of different abilities will learn. This results in the less able pupils not understanding the teacher's explanation and the more able pupils only moving on to more challenging work after completing the same work as the rest of the class.

Teaching assistants work effectively to support individual pupils and groups.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is currently reviewing what pupils learn to ensure that pupils experience a rich, relevant and exciting curriculum. For example, the recently revised science curriculum provides good opportunities for practical and investigative work. A distinctive feature of the curriculum is the focus on philosophy which is taught well, supports pupils' understanding of their rights and responsibilities and develops their capacity for logical thinking. Music is a strong feature of the school with pupils having opportunities to learn a musical instrument, play in the school orchestra or sing in choirs. There is good provision for French and physical education which are taught by specialist teachers. Pupils are developing good ICT skills and using these well to support their learning across the curriculum. The programme of visits and visitors makes learning fun. The school uses its grounds and the locality well. For example, pupils benefit from a residential school journey in Year 6 to the Isle of Wight. Other events, such as the Tudor Music Day, the Environment Day and visits by the Bournemouth symphony orchestra add a richness to pupils' school experiences. The opportunities provided through extra curricular activities are outstanding. They include a large range of sports, Spanish, drama, sewing, a book club and a wildlife club as well as a computer club for girls.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a strong ethos of care in the school. This is shown in the warm relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and school staff. A specially trained learning support assistant and family link worker provide good support for vulnerable pupils. The school has effective safeguarding procedures and child protection arrangements. Governors ensure that the school meets statutory health and safety requirements including risk assessments for school trips. Work is well marked by teachers, with useful guidance to pupils about how to improve their work. Most pupils know what they need to learn next. Arrangements for transfer from the feeder infant school are good. Transition to the linked secondary school is also good with Year 6 and Year 7 pupils taking part in a joint musical production.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and is supported by effective senior leaders. The headteacher has successfully established a team of staff who work well together and have a shared understanding of pupils' achievement, personal

development and well-being. Leaders monitor how well pupils are doing and they use this information well to provide effective additional support to pupils who are not making the progress they should. Self-evaluation is accurate and there is a clear cycle of monitoring, including lesson observations. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide good levels of support. Although the school has action plans for improvement in the short and longer terms, these are not sufficiently linked to pupil achievement and do not identify clear measures against which the school can either evaluate success or monitor progress. Leaders manage finances wisely, successfully ensuring that expenditure contributes to the good achievement and personal development of all. The headteacher has developed an effective leadership team which is focused on improving the rate of progress for all pupils and as a result there is a good capacity to improve.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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?	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

<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	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

19 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Alverstoke Church of England Aided Junior School, Gosport, PO12 2JS

I would like to begin by thanking you for making the other inspectors and me so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. We think yours is a good school and that Mrs Mullen and all the staff are working hard to make sure you enjoy school and do well. There are lots of things the school already does well and we have made suggestions for some things that could be done even better.

We think your behaviour is good both in class and in the playground. You are kind to each other and play well. We were really impressed with the number of you who take part in sport after school. We know you understand how exercise helps you stay healthy. You are very lucky to have so many clubs of all different kinds at lunch time as well as after school. You are all rightly proud of your school and you look after the buildings and grounds very well. You told us that you enjoy school, feel safe and like to help each other. Those parents who wrote to us are very positive about the school and say they are pleased with the care and education you receive.

We have asked Mrs Mullen and your teachers to make sure that all lessons are interesting and challenge you to think. Some of you have found the work to be too easy or too difficult and we have asked the school to make sure that the work set is just right for you. While we expect you to work hard and have a go you should tell your teacher if the work is too easy (or too difficult).

We have also asked that actions that are taken by staff and governors to make the school even better really do result in you learning as much as you can.

I hope you have a good year ahead. I am sure you will all try to do your best so that you continue to be proud to be a part of Alverstoke Junior School.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Joanna Toulson

Lead Inspector