

Olivers Battery Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116046
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326315
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Graham Stephens

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	226
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sara Wilson
Headteacher	Mr Dean Buckland
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Austen Avenue Olivers Battery Winchester SO22 4HP
Telephone number	01962 869 496
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils in this average-sized primary school come from a variety of backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average and has increased year on year since 2006. In this school, these pupils are largely those who find aspects of English and mathematics challenging. There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Since 2006 there have been proportionately more boys than girls on role. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is less than average.

Since June 2005 there have been five headteachers. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2006. There have been a large number of staff changes in the past two years. The school was awarded the Activemark in 2007, updated in 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory but improving school. The headteacher, well supported by his governing body, provides strong leadership. The school retains the legacy of a deficit budget and this has impacted negatively on some of the management decisions taken by the headteacher and governors. Nevertheless, the headteacher has steadfastly focused on introducing systems to accelerate progress and raise standards. There is evidence to confirm that with the enthusiastic support of staff, progress is improving. 'The school seems to be growing from strength to strength', reflects the views of many parents and the majority state that their children feel secure and happy in school. The school provides a safe environment. Although two parents expressed a concern about the safety of the main school gates, the school was already aware of the issue and has taken steps that ensure pupils' security.

Pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points. Many in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress, especially in writing and reading, two areas defined as often falling below the levels expected on entry. By the time they enter Year 1 most pupils are working comfortably within the expected levels for their age and some above them. Progress for most pupils in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. It has been hampered in the past by failing to organise the information gained from tracking pupils' progress to target work that ensures pupils are appropriately challenged. Evidence confirms that progress is now accelerating because pupils' progress is rigorously tracked, self-evaluation is encouraged and clear targets have been set. Pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are on track to meet challenging targets. The school acknowledges that standards in writing and mathematics need to improve further throughout the school.

A minority of parents expressed concern about the quality of teaching in some classes and the changes of teachers some pupils will experience during this year. These changes are due to circumstances beyond the school's control. However, the impact of these unavoidable changes is being monitored well by the school. Across the school the quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to good and is good overall. Teaching is not consistent enough to ensure that progress accelerates in all subjects, and especially in writing and mathematics, in every class. In a few lessons pupils are not sufficiently challenged and the pace is too slow for some, allowing their attention to wander.

The number of pupils in the school who find aspects of English and mathematics especially challenging is increasing because more effective tracking and monitoring procedures are identifying their learning needs. Strategies to support them have been put in place and they make at least satisfactory progress, and many make good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. The very small minority of pupils with English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress and good progress in reading because of the well-focused support they receive.

Behaviour is good both in classes and around the school. Teachers and teaching assistants manage behaviour well. Pupils know who to go to if they need either help or advice and the specially trained teaching assistants play an active role in overseeing the welfare and well-being of pupils. Good links with external agencies enable the school to draw on advice and support when it is needed. Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. Pupils are happy and secure and relate very well to all adults and visitors. They work well together and support each other in their work by offering opinions and suggestions for improvement. This pupil

self-evaluation is a valuable tool, which, together with the setting of targets and marking that helps inform pupils of what they need to do to improve, is contributing much to the acceleration of progress that is beginning to take place. The curriculum is satisfactory. Staff are beginning to use the extensive grounds well to support learning in most subjects. Visitors, visits within the local area and residential trips for older pupils all enrich provision. The school acknowledges that even more opportunities need to be provided for pupils to practise their writing skills in subjects across the curriculum and that cross-curricular links could be further developed.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The effective headteacher has led the school well through a period of change when it has been difficult to maintain consistency and progression in teaching, because options have sometimes been dictated by budget considerations rather than need. The roles and function of middle managers should be reviewed so that they can more effectively contribute to the school's self-evaluation procedures. Systems to monitor the impact of teaching on learning are being applied more rigorously. This is giving the headteacher and his deputy a clearer overview of the impact of teaching on achievement and standards and is helping to ensure that consistently challenging targets are set. Governors are proactive and have a good overview of the schools' strengths and weaknesses. Thanks to the changes already implemented, the school is now in a stronger position to accelerate progress and raise standards throughout and has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from the provision of a range of appropriate and attractive resources, a secure, extensive and well-equipped outside learning area and good teaching. Adults know the children well and make learning fun. As a result, most children make good progress from their starting points. 'We like playing, writing and learning about numbers', said one girl. When they enter Reception, their skills in most areas are in line with those typical for their ages but below in aspects of reading, writing and emotional development. Recent improvements to assessment procedures, still being embedded, ensure that a range of activities are regularly monitored. Detailed records note progress made. By the time they enter Year 1 most children are working securely within the expected levels, and a few beyond.

All adults establish very good relationships with the children and are skilled at using praise, encouragement and searching questions to motivate them to greater efforts. They seize every opportunity to model sensible behaviour, as observed when the teacher, in a loud voice, said as she was going outside, 'it's cold outside; I will need to put my coat on', an example then followed by several children. Many displays are set at an appropriate height, such as the choosing wall designed to encourage children to plan their own time and thereby encourage their independence. A range of both guided and independent activities are planned and observed. Children work and play well together.

Induction procedures are good. Many children attend the pre-school on site and good relationships have been established with other pre-schools in the area. As well as attending meetings and visiting with their children prior to starting, most parents seize the opportunity to invite staff to visit the children in their own homes before they enter Reception. Consequently, most children quickly settle into routines and make a good start. The Early Years Foundation Stage teachers share a clear understanding of how to develop this provision further by embedding assessment procedures so that they are secure and then building successfully on what the children know, understand and can do.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate progress and raise standards in mathematics and writing throughout the school by consistently applying the strategies that have been introduced.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent throughout the school so that work is always well matched to individual needs and pupils make at least good progress in every class.
- Review the roles and responsibilities of subject coordinators so that they can more effectively contribute to school self-evaluation procedures.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have area of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make satisfactory progress from entry into Year 1 to the end of Year 6. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards in English and mathematics that are broadly average. Statutory tests in 2008 in Key Stage 1 indicated that standards, although still broadly average, had declined in mathematics. Analysis showed that girls had underperformed and that daily provision and practice of mathematical skills was not consistent. This was also the case with the teaching of letters and sounds. These deficiencies have now been addressed and evidence confirms that Key Stage 1 pupils are on track to meet their challenging targets. Progress across the school is satisfactory and accelerating as pupils respond to the regular curriculum provision. Unvalidated data indicates that standards are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. The school is beginning to improve writing skills and is raising standards in mathematics through the introduction of a revised curriculum. This represents satisfactory but accelerating achievement. Pupils are on track to meet the challenging targets agreed by the governors. The school acknowledges that improving writing and raising standards in mathematics are still priorities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development of pupils is good and they respond in a positive manner to all aspects of school life. Attendance has continued to improve and is now at the national average due to the introduction of a range of effective strategies and parental involvement. In discussions, the pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and feel that teachers care about them. The social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the pupils is good. There is a wide range of activities available to all pupils to ensure they develop well. The school has identified the need to enhance this provision further with a wider multicultural experience for pupils. Pupils behave in a very sensible manner and share good relationships with each other and the staff. They feel safe and well cared for. Bullying is very rare and if it occurs, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are aware of the need to lead a healthy lifestyle and they take part in physical activities with enthusiasm. The school's good focus on these aspects of pupils' well-being led to them achieving the national Activemark. Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities in the school and local community. The 'smile starter' role is successful and valued by the pupils, who show a real concern for their peers. The school has many links with the local community and pupils appreciate the opportunity to play an active part, especially in the range of environment initiatives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and its impact on learning varies but is good overall. Until recently the amount of time given to the teaching of phonics (linking sounds to letters) in Key Stage 1 and the regular teaching of the progression of mathematical skills throughout the school was insufficient to ensure good progress and to overcome the legacy of underachievement. This has now been addressed and, together with more effective use of information gained from monitoring and tracking pupils' progress, teachers are more rigorous in ensuring that good progress is maintained. Although most of the teaching observed during the inspection was good, the improvements seen are just beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils are not sufficiently challenged and work is not always well matched to need. In other lessons, pupils spend too long listening or working independently without appraisal and input from the teacher. Successful lessons proceed at a brisk pace and teachers are skilled at asking questions that motivate the pupils to put in greater effort. They provide many opportunities for pupils to support each other in their learning. Work is well marked and pupils know what they have to do to improve. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mostly those who find aspects of English and mathematics difficult, are identified quickly, are well supported by skilled teaching assistants and make good progress. This also reflects the progress of the few pupils with English as an additional language.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Until recently, insufficient time was given to the regular, daily teaching of numeracy skills and aspects of reading, especially in Key Stage 1. Also, changes to staffing, brought about because of budget restrictions, limited the number of small groups that were able to receive regular and focused support, particularly with their reading and writing. These issues have now been resolved and curriculum provision for all pupils is satisfactory. Teachers are beginning to link subjects and explore opportunities for pupils to apply the skills they are taught in a variety of situations and for a variety of purposes. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements.

The extensive school grounds are well used as a learning resource. The implementation of a detailed three-year plan has already seen the acquisition of a £1,000 grant to develop school allotments to encourage pupils to plant, sow and eat healthy foods, supported by teams of volunteers from local businesses. Visits and visitors bring excitement and enthusiasm to learning and pupils appreciate and benefit from the range of well-attended extra-curricular activities on offer.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good care, guidance and support of all pupils are central to the school's vision. Staff demonstrate a high level of commitment and are rigorous in the way they implement policies relating to pupils' care and well-being. All statutory requirements are met. Health and safety reviews are performed on a regular basis by staff and governors. The pupils respond in a positive manner to this supportive environment, and as a result enjoy school and are now reaching the

challenging targets set. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well by an effective coordinator and an enthusiastic team of teaching assistants. The pupils' needs are well known and are used to plan suitable activities to ensure that these pupils make the expected progress. Staff use the assessment data well to track the progress of each pupil against his or her individual target. They are able to use this information to plan suitable lessons, support pupils further and to evaluate progress. This is a relatively new initiative, but it is becoming established and is enabling staff to offer additional support and guidance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Despite the difficulties presented by working with a deficit budget, the headteacher's high expectations and strong leadership have remained sharply focused on accelerating progress and raising standards. Consequently, initiatives to improve writing and mathematics further are being vigorously pursued. Systems to rigorously track and monitor progress and the regular monitoring of teaching and learning are keeping the senior management team well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Coordinators of English, mathematics and science are enthusiastic and determined, but do not have a firm enough grasp of current achievement and standards in their subjects to contribute effectively to the school's self-evaluation procedures. The part-time special educational needs coordinator offers very good advice and support and monitors the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities well. The advice and support of the local authority is sought and acted upon when needed and it is recognised that this support will need to be ongoing, especially in Key Stage 1, to ensure that progress is maintained. Governors support the school well and hold the headteacher rigorously to account for the standards attained and the progress pupils make. However, their best efforts are sometimes undermined because of the restrictions of the deficit budget. A good start has been made to develop community cohesion, which is satisfactory. The school has a good understanding of the diverse needs of the school community and these are met well. It is establishing links with all sections of the local community and is helping pupils gain an understanding of the wider community through assemblies.

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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	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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 learners' needs?	2
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

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	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

26 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Olivers Battery Primary School, Winchester, SO22 4HP

On behalf of your inspectors, thank you for being so welcoming, polite and friendly when we came to visit your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking with you and looking at all your work and the exciting things that you do.

You go to a satisfactory but improving school. We think there are many things that happen in your school that are good and here are some of them.

- Your teachers and teaching assistants care for you very well and plan many exciting and interesting things for you to do.
- You play well together and your behaviour is good.
- You are getting really good at evaluating your work and thinking about how you could make it even better.
- You have large grounds that contain many exciting things for you to explore and learn about.
- Most of you listen and follow instructions well.

Every school has things that could be improved. Here are the suggestions we have made.

- Standards in English and mathematics need to improve further. You all need to try even harder to improve your writing and to make faster progress in mathematics.
- We have asked your teachers to make sure that all your work helps you to achieve as well as you can, so that your standards continue to improve.
- Your teachers need to be more aware of the progress that you all make in different subjects and not just the progress of pupils in their own classes. This will help them advise your headteacher, so that he can plan well to ensure that you all continue to make good progress over time.

Yours faithfully

Graham Stephens

Lead Inspector