

Meonstoke Church of England Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116301
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326360
Inspection date	12 January 2009
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	72
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 Jane Edsell
Headteacher	Mrs Louise Pearce
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Chapel Road Meonstoke SO32 3NJ
Telephone number	01489 877568
Fax number	01489 877196

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors investigated the pupils' achievement, the quality of the school's provision for mathematics, aspects of the school's curriculum, and strategic planning for the future. In addition, evidence was gathered from observations and school documentation to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included in this report.

Description of the school

Meonstoke is a smaller-than-average infant school. Learners come from rural villages in the Meon Valley, and are almost wholly of White British heritage. Four pupils out of the 72 are from other backgrounds; none of these pupils has English as an additional language.

The school's National Healthy School Award was revalidated this year. It has received the Activemark award for sport and physical education provision. The current headteacher is leaving in April 2009 and the governors appointed an assistant head from January 2009. There is a privately run pre-school on the site that was not included in this inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Meonstoke Infant is an outstanding school. One parent summed up the views of almost all by saying, 'Couldn't be happier with Meonstoke Church of England School. Our daughter loves going and is making continual and strong progress - academically and socially.' The highly effective staff team, led by the outstanding headteacher, is responsible for the school's consistent success in providing high-quality education. Each year the national test results show the pupils to be achieving outstandingly well. Behind these impressive results are excellent teaching and the outstanding care and guidance that enable pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to make substantial gains in their learning.

When children start school, their skills and understanding are generally just above those expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1, they have made excellent progress and achieved very well, and standards are consistently above those expected for children of their age. National assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2008 showed that standards were exceptionally high in reading, writing and science, and well above average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading and writing was also exceptionally high. All pupils, whatever their ability, achieve outstandingly well. The school's exceptionally well-organised emphasis on mathematics as a result of the 2008 results is evident in the high standards being achieved. As one parent wrote, 'I am extremely pleased with how well my child is getting on at school. She has been recognised for her more able ability and being catered for really well.' The school's provision for those pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is exceptional, and as a result they make excellent progress.

Teaching and learning throughout the school are outstanding. Observations and assessments by teachers of what the pupils know and can do are excellent. The information gained is used exceptionally well to guide and challenge pupils, and to move them on rapidly to the next stage in their learning. The rich curriculum covers all subjects very well. The staff provide countless opportunities for individual pupils to shine by linking areas of learning, and providing additional extra-curricular activities. These ensure that pupils' learning is as exciting and relevant as they can make it. It is no accident that some of the most obvious resources in evidence on entering the school are the pupils' wellington boots. The extensive use of the large and beautiful grounds and areas around the village make learning come alive for them all. The pupils themselves said that they particularly enjoy the 'Peg Sessions' in the afternoons, where they choose from the 'Must Do' options and determine for themselves the order and depth in which they complete the tasks. 'It means we are in charge of what we do,' said one boy proudly. It is an aim of the school to extend these opportunities for independence.

The school has very thorough procedures in place for safeguarding pupils. Pupils say that they feel very safe and happy, and they also have a very good awareness of how to eat and live healthily. They are eager participants in all of the school's physical activities. These are led by an exceptional teacher and have led to this small school achieving the national Activemark. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The 'Rainbow' system of rewards is appreciated by all concerned. The pupils learn that simply saying 'sorry' is not always enough. Their relationships with each other and with staff are excellent. The way they revelled in the success of others in plenary sessions was a joy to see. By the time they leave the school, pupils mature into well-rounded individuals because of their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their contribution to their own community, through taking part in the school council and being playground partners, is excellent. The school is an integral part of the village community, both

providing support and care and receiving it from all involved. The president of the outstanding Friends of the School Association is from the local community. Parents, who enjoy this very close relationship with the school, are very pleased about this commitment to the community. One wrote: 'An excellent relationship with the village and local community gives the school additional kudos and respect, and the head, teachers and, importantly, governors should be commended for their extraordinary efforts to go beyond national guidelines and deliver first-class all-round grounding in education.'

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. The assistant head and all staff very ably support her, and teamwork is excellent. There are detailed plans in place to ensure that the school continues to provide a high level of provision when the headteacher moves at the end of this term. Changes being made are based on a very detailed and careful analysis of the effectiveness of all arrangements. The excellent governing body has been fully involved in this process. They play a very successful part in supporting and challenging the school, and are firm in their resolve to continue to provide the very best for every child in their care.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children make an excellent start to their education in the Reception class. It is a testament to the huge level of commitment and care shown by the Foundation Stage staff, and the excellent leadership and management, that, despite coming from many different backgrounds, all children settle into the school exceptionally well, and their needs are met from day one. A parent wrote: 'I have been very impressed with all aspects of the school since my daughter started in September '08. They have been very flexible in their approach...I have also been pleased with their work on diversity and inclusion of the children from different backgrounds in what could easily be a very 'middle-class, white' school.' Inspection evidence fully endorses this praise.

Children make rapid progress and achieve exceptionally well, especially in writing and in linking sounds and letters. Adults have high expectations, provide very clear routines and enable children to build strong, positive relationships. The enthusiasm and enjoyment of the children as they chose their own best work, and then discussed it animatedly, and said 'well done' to each other, was a good indication of how successful the organisation is. The rooms available are stimulating and resources are used well as children move from one to another. The well-resourced outside areas provide the same exciting level of challenge and stimulation, especially for the more-capable children. They make a careful note of all responses and feedback. The information collected about children is used particularly well to ensure that the children who find learning difficult or who are most vulnerable settle well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide further opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning.
- Ensure that the pupils' high achievements are sustained in this time of change.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

23 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Meonstoke Church of England Infant School, Meonstoke, SO32 3NJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to your school, and for talking to us about your feelings, ambitions and thoughts. It was a delight to meet you and we really enjoyed looking at your work and joining in your lessons. We are glad to be able to tell you that your school is outstanding and provides you with a really good start to your education.

We were particularly pleased with these things:

- your headteacher and staff do a super job in organising the school and looking after you
- you all really enjoy being in school
- you are all making excellent progress with your work
- you behave very well, work hard and listen carefully to your teachers - all of this helps you to succeed
- all the adults in the school look after you very carefully; they always make sure that you get help if you need it.

Your teachers, support staff and governors work very hard to help you to do as well as you can. We have asked them to give you even more opportunities than you all already enjoy, to make decisions for yourselves about what you need to learn next. There are going to be some changes in school very soon, and we have asked them to make sure that they continue to provide the excellent opportunities you have at the moment. You must continue to listen carefully and take note of what they say. Then you will all continue to make excellent progress in your learning.

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

Yours faithfully

David Marshall

Lead Inspector