

Gatten and Lake Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118158
Local Authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	326773
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	144
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 Anne Simmons
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Bartlett
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2007
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Howard Road Shanklin PO37 6HD
Telephone number	01983 862763
Fax number	01983 868864

Age group	5–9
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2009
Inspection number	326773

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The number of pupils in this primary school is smaller than average. It is situated on the south coast of the Isle of Wight. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Pupils predominantly come from a White British heritage and there are well below the numbers expected nationally for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Their main needs relate to emotional, behavioural or moderate learning difficulties. The school has the Activemark Award.

Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is made through the school's Reception class. The school also provides a breakfast and after school club.

There is an on-site, privately owned pre-school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good education for its pupils. 'My child loves this school', wrote one parent, echoing the views of many. High levels of pastoral care and good teaching help ensure that the personal development of pupils is outstanding. An exceptionally clear direction for school development has been identified by the headteacher and senior managers. There is a shared ownership among staff of the focus on improving standards for pupils. This, together with commitment and determination, explains why the school has recovered from its dip in performance in the recent past. A trend of improving standards and achievement levels also reflects a good capacity to continue to improve the school.

Entry levels vary year on year, but are consistently below expectations in the key areas of literacy and numeracy. Standards have fluctuated in the recent past from well above average to average according to the nature of the cohort. Pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to attain average standards overall. Standards of work in the current Year 4 meet the expected levels, although a large proportion of pupils are working above these, particularly in mathematics. The achievement level of pupils from entry into Reception to the end of Year 4 is consistently good, given their below-average starting points. In work seen, and in school data, there is some evidence of higher-attainers and pupils with gifts and talents not being as consistently challenged in literacy as they might, and consequently their progress dips.

Good, regular assessment opportunities ensure that the school can track pupils' progress easily, and provide appropriate support for those pupils who appear to be finding the work too hard. Teachers use good, ongoing assessment during lessons to adapt their approach and questioning to the needs of the pupils, and this also reflects their secure subject knowledge. The quality of teaching and learning has improved and is good. Consequently, pupils achieve well. On occasions the learning objectives and success criteria for the lesson are focused on activities rather than what learning is being required of different groups of pupils.

Pupils are given very regular opportunities through a good curriculum to work in groups and teams in lessons. As a result of sharing ideas, some detailed 'spider diagrams' are developed, based around themes such as the Egyptians. The high level of personal development is clearly seen when observing the pupils sharing their views and respecting the opinions of others. In assemblies they share a positive social occasion, applauding in a natural way the success of their colleagues, and respecting their achievements. They have an exceptional understanding of how to remain healthy and safe. Large numbers participate in the 'Walk the Wight' activity, and they talk animatedly about healthy food and the various sports clubs on offer. The school provides numerous opportunities for visitors to talk to pupils about safety. One pupil showed excellent understanding when writing about the need to take a mobile phone for emergency use when at sea.

Pupils say they feel very safe, and although there are a small number of behavioural incidents, they agree that behaviour is good. Pastoral care is very good and the pupils tell of how well the adults look after them. Pupils have learning targets but there are inconsistencies between lessons in how often they are reminded of these in subjects other than literacy and numeracy. The pupils make an excellent contribution to the community, participating fully in the carnival, designing and making lanterns for the parade, and singing for the elderly. Such activities, together with the school's involvement with the local cluster of schools and a recent, very successful Family Learning course, reflect the good work of the school in promoting community

cohesion. One parent wrote, 'I have just taken part in a 20-week family learning course which has proved invaluable.' However, the school acknowledges that to meet its next challenge, this level of community involvement requires development further afield, both nationally and internationally. Governors visit the school regularly and conduct good learning walks that add to their knowledge of the work of the school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start Reception with levels of skills and knowledge that vary year on year, but are below expectations in aspects such as communication, language and literacy and calculation. Good teaching helps ensure that the children achieve well and most meet and some exceed the early learning goals expected of their age. Nevertheless, many do not attain the expected levels in areas such as writing. Good leadership has recognised this and many more opportunities are now provided for children, particularly boys, to practise their writing skills. For example, two children worked with obvious enjoyment when writing out a hotel booking form in the role play 'travel agent' area. School leadership has set up a 'strategy group' to develop even closer links with the pre-school. This is leading to higher levels of coordination with regard to curriculum matters and also with transfer arrangements. Consequently, the children settle quickly into Reception, have very positive relationships with the adults and are motivated to take part and engage with their learning. Regular reviews of policies and procedures, risk assessments and first-aid arrangements also reflect the excellent provision made for the welfare of the children. All of these factors came together in a lesson based around the forthcoming school fete. Groups of children excitedly counted out money and paid for a chance to play games. These were the result of a previous activity where children identified possible fete activities. Meanwhile children were absorbed in identifying fruits, cutting them up (adhering to safety guidelines), and then showing their trust in the adults when asked to taste them. Regular assessment of children's progress takes place and helps teachers to plan the next step in the children's learning. However, at times the learning outcomes are not at the forefront of planned activities. This makes it difficult to assess how well children have achieved against the learning objectives. Trips out, for example, to Bembridge airport, enhance the personal development of the children well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that, in planning, teachers identify the learning expected of different groups of pupils, but particularly higher-attainers and those with gifts and talents in literacy.
- Develop more links with national and international organisations.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In two of the last four years standards have been above average, reflecting the different entry levels of pupils. Consistently good teaching helps ensure pupils achieve well and, currently, pupils in Year 4 are working at the expected levels. Overall, standards at the end of Year 2 were average in the 2008 national tests. This reflected a cohort who, given their starting points, made good progress. It is a similar picture in the current Year 2. Pupils are on track to attain above-average standards in mathematics, average standards in reading and below-average standards in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, together with those pupils entitled to free school meals, make progress in line with their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils say that they really enjoy school and that, 'teachers make lessons fun'. Playground buddies take their responsibilities extremely seriously, approaching pupils sitting on their own and ensuring that they are alright. School councillors spoke of their decisions making a difference, whether in the playground or regarding the forthcoming library development. Overall pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Displays around the school show good artwork based on Monet and Matisse as well as 3D models. Occasionally opportunities are missed to promote the multicultural aspects of life. The curriculum contributes very well to the growing independence of pupils as learners. Teamwork is promoted consistently, and pupils remain on task in their groups. In a Year 2 lesson their enjoyment of working together to think of 'wow' words was obvious to all. Such activities, as well as the experience pupils get from making and selling goods at the trade fairs, all help to prepare them well for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils engage with their learning because teachers consistently promote enjoyment in lessons. The use of interactive whiteboards and some very informative learning displays help motivate pupils, while imaginative starters to lessons capture their interest. A supposed letter in a bottle found on a beach fired pupils' imagination and was the starting point of a lesson in literacy. Older pupils discussed the arguments surrounding a proposed skateboard park development in a local wooded area. The planning and organisation for such lessons is thorough and resources are used well. Pupils are prepared to offer their views because relationships are positive. On occasions progress dips because learning objectives and success criteria are focused on activities rather than on what learning is expected of different groups of pupils. Marking is good with some clear guidance given on the next steps in pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school is currently developing a two-year cycle of themes which promote creativity and cross-subject links. The existing themes are already energising pupils to do well. Pirates (smiling) walked the corridors while photographic evidence showed pupils adorned in Egyptian dress, and a Tutankhamun face mask - the latter reflecting the commitment of parents to aiding their children's learning. There is a consistent emphasis on maximising opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes and styles in all subjects. However, the full impact of this recent planning has yet to be seen. Special themes in the curriculum such as Health Week involve visitors well. During such periods pupils are well encouraged to research, use information and communication technology and write about their findings such as the benefits of activities such as ballet. Enhancement, in the form of a residential trip, visits and visitors is very good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils thrive in a caring environment. Pupils feel the adults look after them well, although one Year 4 pupil said, 'Not Year 4s, we've grown up!' A clear behaviour policy exists, with prompts

around the school, and is understood by all. Child protection procedures, including risk assessments and checks on adults' suitability for employment, are in place. A minority of parents expressed a view that the school does not sufficiently seek or act on their views, and that communication could be better. Parent evenings, reports, newsletters, regular 'newsflashes' and parental surveys provide good opportunities for communication, and some of these are provided in response to parent's views. Attendance is well monitored but is only average, a consequence of some parents taking holidays during term time. Pupils benefit from good guidance on how to improve their work. However, not all know their learning targets, and the extent to which they are reinforced in subjects other than literacy and numeracy is inconsistent. Proactive learning assistants help ensure that pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and achieve well. Excellent external partnerships help contribute to the welfare and learning of pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

There have been successful efforts by senior leaders to devolve more responsibility to other managers. Managers now fully participate in the well-established cycle of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Their managerial skills and knowledge are well developed through professional training and appropriate actions are identified with a clear focus on improving standards for pupils. For example, highly appropriate attention is being paid to ensuring good achievement in all other subjects, as well as literacy and numeracy, through the development of a curriculum that emphasises the delivery of skills. Some subject action plans insufficiently address how they contribute to the overall priorities laid down in the school development plan. Consequently, opportunities are being missed for other subjects to support priorities such as the development of target-setting. The school has improved and come a long way in recent times and this is also reflected in the impact of the recent Family Learning course. Parents and their children have produced a very good range of imaginative activities to help develop learning in literacy and numeracy. While there is some good curriculum coverage of global issues, including work on Mexico for example, the school acknowledges the need to develop quality links with organisations beyond the island. The breakfast and after school clubs are well managed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
--	-----------------------

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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	2
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	3
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 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

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	1
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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

17 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gatten and Lake Primary School, Shanklin, PO37 6HD

Thank you very much for talking to me when I visited your school. I listened carefully to what you had to say, and I am writing to let you know what I found out about your school. Like you, I believe you go to a good school.

I particularly liked the way you are encouraged to develop as responsible and respectful young people. You listen to each other, and it was a pleasure to watch you sharing your ideas and thinking hard about what aspects of a theme you are interested in learning about. Your experience as Egyptians looked to be fun! You also have a very good understanding about how to stay healthy and safe. Well done to those of you who 'Walked the Wight! Also, continue to become playground buddies and school councillors - you told me how the school listens to you and that you make valuable decisions about school life.

You make good progress with your work because of your positive attitudes and the good teaching you receive. In Reception you get a good start to your education. I believe that some of you who find the work easy in literacy would benefit from more challenging work. I have asked your teachers to make sure that in their planning they consider how to do this.

You spoke to me about how safe you feel in the school. Yes, there are incidents, you said, but you feel, and I agree that behaviour is good. You also said that school is a friendly place, you really enjoy school, and that lessons are fun. I was impressed by the games produced by some of you and your parents in the Family Learning course. Your headteacher and her staff realise the need to make more links, especially with other schools on the mainland and abroad.

I enjoyed my visit to your school and would like to send my best wishes for your future success in whatever you choose to do.

Yours faithfully

Michael Pye

Lead Inspector