

Lydlynch Infant School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 115954 |
| Local Authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 338689 |
| Inspection dates | 14–15 October 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Gehane Gordelier HMI |

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

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| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 168 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Sarah Evans |
| Headteacher | Mrs K P Atkinson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 8 September 2006 |
| School address | Lydlynch Road Totton Southampton SO40 3DW |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with staff, the chair of governors and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's policies, action and improvement plans, assessment information and evaluation reports as well as samples of pupils' workbooks, 63 parental and nine staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress made by different groups of pupils from Reception to the end of Year 2
- the extent to which teaching takes account of pupils' different abilities and needs
- the impact of leaders and managers at all levels in helping to raise standards.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. The vast majority of pupils speak English as their first language and are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs; however, the percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. Pupils' needs are mainly in relation to moderate learning difficulties, emotional, behavioural and social difficulties and speech language and communication.

The school received an enhanced Healthy School Award in 2006 and is also in receipt of the Activemark for its contribution to sporting activities in conjunction with other schools. The school also has the designation of being a children's centre. The pre-school and a lunchtime club are managed by external providers, and are inspected separately.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Lydlynch Infants is a satisfactory school that provides a good level of care, guidance and support for pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and one parent wrote, 'My child is very happy at school, in fact she loves it.' The school is led and managed well and this enables staff, parents and pupils alike to feel valued and to work effectively as a team. Among the school's particular strengths are:

- the extent to which the school keeps its pupils safe, and how much pupils know about how to keep themselves and others safe
- how much pupils understand about how to be healthy, and why this is important
- how well pupils contribute to making their school a happy place to work and play
- pupils' social, moral and cultural development
- how well the school works with parents and carers.

Since the last inspection the school has faced some significant challenges. For example, it has struggled to recruit and retain governors and this has reduced their effectiveness. More significantly, while staff are meeting the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural needs well, dealing with the increase in the severity of pupils' needs has detracted the school's leaders from some of the work aimed at raising standards. Nevertheless, as a result of improvements to the teaching of guided reading and linking letters and sounds, pupils make good progress in reading. Progress in writing is not as good and although acceptable, pupils make the least amount of progress in mathematics. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with pockets of good practice throughout the school. Teachers work hard to provide activities that are fun and exciting, and teaching and support staff are particularly adept at planning for the needs of the most vulnerable. However, planning does not always specify what pupils of different abilities are expected to learn. Furthermore, the next steps in learning are not sufficiently explicit in teachers' planning or understood by pupils. At times teachers underestimate what pupils are capable of achieving because they do not check pupils' progress regularly enough during the course of a lesson and they make limited use of assessment information and strategies. As a result, some pupils, particularly the more able, do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

Although a few middle managers are developing their roles well, this is not the case for all and the progress made by different groups of pupils is not being tracked rigorously enough. The quality of whole-school improvement planning is adequate, but improvement planning for the curriculum lacks the focus and rigour necessary to enable the school to effect rapid improvement. This is because plans do not identify the intended outcomes for targeted groups of pupils; they do not include enough success criteria that can be measured, and too many plans do not focus sharply enough on

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raising standards. Nevertheless, the school generally has an accurate view of its strengths and areas that could be better. Staff work well together and are motivated to do their best for pupils. Given the improvements that have been made, these factors together show that the capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics by ensuring that more pupils attain higher levels.
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good by:
 - ensuring that planning for lessons specifies what different groups of pupils are expected to learn
 - providing greater challenge for more able pupils
 - maximising opportunities for pupils to apply basic skills across the curriculum
 - embedding the use of assessment strategies during lessons so that teachers check pupils' understanding and progress at regular intervals and pupils know what to do to improve their work.
- Develop the role of all middle managers so that they track the progress made by different groups of pupils across the curriculum and produce improvement plans that are sharply focused on raising standards.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

The lessons observed during the inspection confirmed that pupils are making satisfactory progress towards broadly average standards in writing, mathematics and science. The school has correctly identified that some of the more able pupils could make better progress if provided with a greater level of challenge and a more stimulating curriculum, and the lessons seen also confirmed this. Pupils are all helped to develop an appropriate range of basic academic skills, including how to use computers and interactive whiteboards. They also learn about adults who do different types of work. This helps prepare them for the next phase of their education. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress at the same rate as their peers in academic terms. However, they make particularly good progress in their personal and social development, often from very low starting points.

The vast majority of pupils enjoy being at school. They particularly enjoy using computers, doing PE and the work they do in geography, music and art. Pupils know that if they have a problem staff will listen to them and care for them well. Most pupils are polite and behave appropriately in lessons and around the school. The few incidences of poor behaviour are very well managed by staff. However, pupils' behaviour does not yet make a strong contribution to their learning. This is generally because they do not always understand the purpose or the value of what they are doing. Those who complete tasks quickly and easily are at times unclear about what to do next.

Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to cross the road safely, how to be

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safe when they are near water, what to do if they hear the fire alarm at school and the importance of not talking to strangers. They can describe what it means to have healthy eating habits and appreciate access to apples and water when they feel the need for a snack or a drink while in school. Pupils appreciate the importance of physical activity as a way of keeping fit. One pupil stated, 'Exercise keeps our hearts healthy and it beats fast in PE.'

Attendance levels are broadly in line with national averages. The school has had to work hard with targeted families to improve rates of attendance for some pupils.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 3 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

There are good links between the school and outside specialists to ensure good levels of care, guidance and support, especially for the most vulnerable pupils. The school is in the process of modifying and improving its curriculum and recognises that the use of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum is not yet sufficiently well embedded. Although pupils learn how to use information and communication technology (ICT), it is not always used to best effect as a learning tool to engage learners and to support and

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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extend their work. The school is currently utilising curricular plans which have been modified from published schemes. However, not all plans detail clearly enough the next steps in learning as a way of supporting the needs of non-specialist teachers in a given subject area. The school provides a good range of after-school clubs including art, French, ICT, gardening and a range of sporting activities. These, as well as visits to places of interest and visitors to the school, make a good contribution to enriching the curriculum.

The consistency with which staff manage pupils' behaviour is a common strength within lessons. Furthermore, additional adults are generally well deployed and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Relationships in lessons between adults and pupils are good. When pupils receive sufficient guidance they work well on their own and in groups. Most teachers demonstrate that they have adequate knowledge of subjects and have a good understanding of how to help pupils to develop as confident readers. The link between reading and writing is at times overlooked, and there are still too many missed opportunities for pupils to write and apply basic skills across the curriculum. Where teaching is good, such as in a phonics lesson in Year 1, the teacher checked pupils' understanding and progress at regular intervals, provided a good model of how to read words and gave pupils enough time to practise reading words and sounds at speed. Pupils then practised writing new words and putting them into a sentence. The good use of assessment strategies enabled learning to progress at a rapid pace. In another lesson, pupils were provided with an exciting practical activity which involved putting their hands into a tub of porridge and playing with play dough as a way of helping them to think of words describing how the two substances felt. This helped to stimulate pupils' language and communication skills.

Although all the teaching observed was at least satisfactory, there were some common weaknesses. Too many teachers still talk at length while pupils sit passively for too long. Some teachers are very controlling of pupils, which makes pupils rely too much on teachers to tell them what to do next. The quality of planning lacks detail about exactly what teachers expect pupils of different abilities to learn. Extension activities do not always extend the skills and understanding in the subject being taught. Leaders and managers have worked with staff to highlight the importance of using assessment strategies, but these are still not being used consistently well by all staff. As a result, while there are pockets of good practice, the quality of marking is too variable and at times is merely cursory, stating 'good' with no explanation of what is good or the extent to which objectives have been met.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| <p>The quality of teaching</p> | <p>3</p> |
| <p>Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning</p> | <p>3</p> |
| <p>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</p> | <p>3</p> |

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| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |
|--|----------|

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff and governors are united in their commitment to helping the school to improve. However, their success in effecting improvement has been variable. Strategies such as improvement planning and subject evaluations are still not focused sharply enough on the progress made by different groups of learners and on raising standards. This is reducing the rate at which the school is able to embed ambition and drive further improvements.

The senior leadership team monitors the progress of pupils as well as the effectiveness of teaching. This, along with the improved use of data, is enabling the team to challenge staff more effectively, for example by ensuring that targets set for pupils are now sufficiently high. Although senior leaders and managers ensure that staff and pupils are all treated fairly and work together well, not all middle managers are contributing fully to helping the school to improve. Some middle managers however, have helped to improve the quality of teaching in targeted areas such as aspects of mathematics and reading. The school has a comprehensive range of policies in place that are reviewed at regular intervals. The satisfactory outcomes resulting from the monitoring of some policies, including those relating to equality of opportunity, are not always communicated well enough to parents and carers. Governors have made a strong contribution through their improved links with parents in helping the school to work effectively with its local community. The school has a plan aimed at further developing the contribution that it makes to promoting community cohesion and has accurately identified the need to extend its plans to include a greater national and global dimension.

With the support of the governing body, the school's leaders ensure that all arrangements and policies relating to keeping children safe are in place. This contributes well to the safe, happy and caring atmosphere which is evident throughout the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 3 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 3 |

| Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms | |
|---|----------|
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 3 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

The good links with parents and pre-schools, as well as the good level of attention given to children's welfare, help children to settle quickly and happily when they begin Reception. They make sound overall progress, although it is good in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world, in their social development and in learning about numbers as labels for counting. The improvements made to the way in which letters and sounds are taught led to good progress in this area last year. Additional adults provide good support to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and this ensures that all children participate fully in activities. Assessment data have not always been sufficiently accurate or reliable to enable the school to accurately measure the progress made by all children. The information recorded about children is now more helpful, although there is still insufficient tracking of pupils in different ability groups. As a result, expectations of what some of the more able children can achieve are not always high enough. Children are learning to use ICT from this early age, but there are missed opportunities for using new technology as a tool to support and extend children's knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of learning. The school has made good progress in the use of the outdoor area as a part of the whole learning environment. Children love being outside and activities such as riding bicycles round a circuit and throwing quoits into hula hoops contribute well to their physical as well as their social development. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has ensured that there are more opportunities for children to make choices, and that daily activities include an appropriate balance of adult- and child-initiated activities. The school is aware of the need to improve the transition arrangements between Reception and Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

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Almost all parents are happy with their child's experience at Lydlynch Infants, and say the school keeps their child safe and that their child enjoys school. Very few responses indicated that parents would welcome more feedback from the school about how well their child is progressing and the vast majority expressed the view that the school keeps them well informed about their child's progress. The inspection found that links with parents were strong, but that information for parents about progress, especially how different groups of pupils were progressing, could be better. Most parents believe their child is making enough progress at the school and very few believe their child is not always challenged sufficiently. The inspection found that the more able pupils would benefit from a greater degree of challenge and that at times teachers underestimated what pupils were capable of achieving.

A very large majority of parents believe the school helps them to support their child with their learning and express the view that the school is good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lydlynch Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 168 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 42 | 67 | 20 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 43 | 68 | 20 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 33 | 52 | 28 | 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 32 | 51 | 28 | 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 33 | 52 | 28 | 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 35 | 56 | 25 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 33 | 52 | 28 | 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 25 | 40 | 30 | 48 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 29 | 46 | 31 | 49 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 20 | 32 | 39 | 62 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 27 | 43 | 31 | 49 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 32 | 51 | 27 | 43 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 41 | 65 | 22 | 35 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 39 | 58 | 3 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 13 | 50 | 33 | 4 |
| Secondary schools | 17 | 40 | 34 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 18 | 43 | 37 | 2 |
| Special schools | 26 | 54 | 18 | 2 |
| Pupil referral units | 7 | 55 | 30 | 7 |
| All schools | 15 | 49 | 32 | 5 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lydlynch Infant School, Totton S040 3DW

Thank you for the warm welcome when I came to your school with two other inspectors. As you know, we spent time in lessons, looked at your work and the work of the school. We also spent time talking to some of you and some of the staff. We were interested to hear what you and your parents told us about your school and thank you for your help with the inspection. We can see why you love your school so much because the staff work so hard to look after you and make you feel well cared for. We agree that some of the learning is a lot of fun, but that some of it could be better. Although there are lots of things about your school that are good, we have judged the school to be satisfactory.

These are some of the things we think your school does well.

- The school helps to make sure you are well looked after and that you know how to keep yourselves safe and healthy.
- You help to make the school a happy place to work and play.
- You have a good understanding of right and wrong and you are learning about other people and places.
- The school makes sure that those who need the most support and help get it.
- The school is good at working with parents and carers.

These are the main things we have asked your school to do so it can become even better.

- Help you to do even better with your writing and mathematics.
- Make sure that more of the teaching in the school is good.
- Help those adults who are leaders of different subjects to know how well you are doing, and help you to do even better.

You can help your school by making sure you attend regularly and by continuing to work hard. It was a pleasure to come to your school and I wish you every happiness and success for the future.

Yours faithfully

Gehane Gordelier

Her Majesty's Inspector

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