

Devonshire Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116187
Local Authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	338754
Inspection dates	23–24 September 2009
Reporting inspector	John Seal HMI

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Barbara Christopher
Headteacher	Miss Jacqueline Collins
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and had discussions with pupils, staff and governors. They observed the school's work and a range of documents including teachers' planning, the school improvement plan, the schools' self-evaluation, test results and pupils' work. The 39 questionnaires returned from parents were also analysed.

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

- how well different ability groups make progress in their learning, especially in reading, writing and mathematics
- how well teaching helps pupils to make progress
- the impact of leadership and management on school improvement
- how well the school provides resources and activities that are tailored to meet the needs of all pupils.

Information about the school

Devonshire is average in size for an infant school. It shares the site with the neighbouring junior school. Some pupils attend breakfast- and after-school clubs which are not run by the governing body. There is a separately managed independent pre-school which is based in the school but not part of this inspection. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Pupils' needs mostly relate to moderate learning needs or speech, language and communication difficulties. Some have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A 12-place resource unit, called the Development Assessment Unit, currently caters for pupils aged four to seven who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and they come from a wide area across the city. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. The school has recently been awarded the Activemark for sports provision.

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

Devonshire Infant has a warm and friendly family atmosphere. Pupils are well cared for and, in the majority of classes, they make good progress. By the time they leave at the age of seven, most pupils have achieved standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that are at least in line with those expected nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because the monitoring of their progress is not as rigorous as it is for other groups. There has been a steady increase in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading and mathematics. The school is highly regarded by parents and carers and has established effective working relationships with a wide range of support professionals and agencies. There is a significant proportion of good teaching across the school which can be seen in most classes. The majority of lessons feature a range of well-planned practical activities, which support the pupils' good progress and meet the needs of most pupils well. However, while the general care and welfare for pupils in the assessment unit are adequate, there are significant shortcomings. These include a curriculum and learning environment which lack the stimulus and variety required to meet most of the pupils' individual needs. As a result, pupils progress is hindered and their social and emotional needs are not always met as well as they could be.

Pupils get on well together and care for each other, and there are virtually no bullying or racially motivated incidents. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, assemblies, visits and visitors ensure that there are many opportunities for pupils to reflect on their experiences and the world around them. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds and religious beliefs are warmly welcomed and their experiences and knowledge are woven into everyday lessons and discussions.

The senior management team and headteacher have a generally good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further. As a result, over the last few years, standards of attainment have risen for the majority of pupils, teaching has improved and the quality of the curriculum has been broadened and enriched. The board of governors generally know the school well and are an interested and active group who are keen to make sure the majority of pupils are provided with good educational experiences. The school is beginning to make better use of information and data but this is not yet sufficiently embedded in some areas to gauge clearly the school's key priorities, such as whether some groups of pupils are progressing well enough or what their level of attendance is. Also, senior management and the governing body have, until recently, monitored and evaluated the provision of the assessment unit in less detail than the rest of the school.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision for the pupils in the assessment unit so that it meets their needs more effectively by ensuring that the quality of the teaching, planning, use of assessment information and environment matches the best found elsewhere in the school.
- Improve the rate of progress for other pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities by:
 - further developing effective and efficient systems for tracking these pupils' progress
 - ensuring teachers use assessment information more effectively in planning and during lessons
 - ensuring progress information is monitored and evaluated by senior management on a regular basis and acted upon.
- Improve the analysis of data to identify key priorities by developing the school's information systems to provide senior management and governors with a clear picture of what the school needs to do to improve further.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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	2
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

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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The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

2

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching has been the main contributory factor in the good progress most pupils make through the school. Teachers generally make good use of information about most pupils when they plan lessons, although planning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is not always clear. The majority of activities in lessons meet the needs of most pupils. Teaching assistants are well deployed and work well with groups or individual pupils of all abilities and needs. Good use is made of support for pupils whose language is other than English through effective deployment of bilingual support teachers and assistants. Teachers often demonstrate good subject knowledge and use this to good effect in their questioning of pupils and modelling how to write sentences and improve mathematical calculations. In the most effective lessons seen pupils were encouraged to discuss their learning with each other in groups and pairs. In the few lessons which were satisfactory, teachers often held the whole class together for too long. As a result, some pupils lost interest and their progress slowed. In the unit pupils' activities are pedestrian and often too formal, with limited opportunities for pupils to interact with each other or to engage in activities which meet the specific needs of younger children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The curriculum for the majority of pupils in both key stages is broad, balanced and relevant. It is well organised and effective, with a particularly impressive range of enrichment through visits, visitors and after-school clubs for pupils in Key Stage 1. The development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills has been a major focus over the last few years and has paid off with good progress and better standards. Art, music and sport are well organised and rightly seen as an important part of the pupils' school life. Information and communication technology is well provided for, with good use of laptops in classrooms, permanent machines in the library and pupils using digital cameras imaginatively. However, the curriculum in the unit does not adequately meet the needs of most pupils. The pupils in the unit are generally taught separately from the rest of the school. However, because of the age of the majority of pupils, the planning currently in place does not make sufficient use of national expectations for the Early Years Foundation Stage, nor do the plans refer to the pupils' individual education plans in enough detail. Because of these shortcomings in the provision, compared to the good provision elsewhere in the school, the overall curriculum for the school is satisfactory.

The school cares well for most of its pupils. There are effective examples of the school's work with external agencies, such as social care and health services, to support the majority of vulnerable pupils and their families. There are also some good examples of other pupils receiving additional support, particularly those who speak English as an additional language. The school has fostered effective working relationships with the local authority's ethnic minority services to provide bilingual teaching support assistants and advice and support for groups of pupils with different cultural backgrounds. In the unit, although there are appropriate links with other support agencies, the outcomes of

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the advice and support are not always sufficiently followed up. For example there are weaknesses in how pupils' individual education plans are integrated into lesson plans.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have formed an effective team to raise standards of attainment and improve the quality of teaching and learning in the majority of the classes. The school improvement plan suitably identifies its priorities and, as a result, more pupils at the end of Year 2 now meet or exceed most of their attainment targets and the areas for improvement from the last inspection have been addressed well. The school's safeguarding procedures are very secure, and there are effective policies and procedures in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils. The leadership team has worked hard to ensure equality and diversity in the school and many vulnerable groups, for instance pupils who speak English as an additional language, are monitored and supported well. However, the school acknowledges that there is a disparity in the curricular entitlement, learning environment and progress for those pupils who are in the unit. The school has suitable strategies to rectify this in its improvement plan.

The governing body is developing sound strategies for holding the school to account. Although governors know the school well, there has been limited monitoring and evaluation of the provision and outcomes for pupils in the unit compared to the rest of the school. This has been acknowledged by both the governors and the senior management team. There are now suitable plans in place to address these weaknesses. The school has a suitable programme of activity to promote community cohesion and has appropriate analysis of the community groups from different faiths and cultures.

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	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3

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The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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

Children settle into Reception well because of the good transition arrangements in place with pre-school providers and strong liaison with parents and carers. The welcoming and stimulating learning environment is resourced and organised well to provide a mixture of interesting indoor and outdoor activities. The majority of pupils start Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding below those expected nationally. The effective analysis of children's progress information informs planning to meet children's learning and developmental needs effectively. During their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress towards their early learning goals. The progress made in their personal development and mathematical skills is a particular strength. Behaviour and relationships are very well managed. As a result of the good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is good teamwork and cohesive planning, which ensure that children achieve well.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A significant majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the school. The school's work in academically, socially and emotionally supporting pupils' progress was acknowledged. Many parents were pleased with the way in which staff supported the learning needs of their children. A small number of parents commented that the school could give better information about teaching topics.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Devonshire 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 39 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 181 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	72	11	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	74	10	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	69	9	23	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	69	10	26	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	72	10	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	69	11	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	72	10	26	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)	27	69	11	28	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	67	11	28	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	59	13	33	0	0	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	59	14	36	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	77	8	21	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	77	8	21	1	3	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.



25 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Devonshire Infant School, Southsea, PO4 0AG

We enjoyed our visit to your school recently. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming. We really enjoyed talking to you and seeing you learn.

We found out a lot about the school. It is providing you with a satisfactory education, which means it is doing some good things but also needs to do some things better. Here are some of the things we liked best.

- You are learning more about reading, writing and mathematics.
- You have a good understanding about what it is to be healthy and how to stay safe.
- You are well behaved, polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
- You are keen to learn and enjoy school.
- Most of your lessons are interesting and help you learn more.

Your headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to make things even better for you. Here are some of the things they will be working on:

- making some of the places you learn in even more interesting
- helping the teachers to look more carefully at the work you do, especially those of you who find learning difficult, to make sure it helps you enough
- looking at everything the school knows about you so that the grown-ups in charge can use that information to do things even better.

We hope you all carry on working hard and getting on well with each other.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

John Seal

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools

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