

# Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116368
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338805
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Grainger

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	207
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Christopher Riley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Everard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	Church Lane Romsey Hampshire SO51 8EP
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<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, observed the teaching of small groups for literacy and scrutinised pupils' recorded work. They held meetings with governors, staff with key responsibilities and a group of pupils. They also spoke informally with other pupils and with parents. In addition to observing the school's work and evaluating documentation, such as policies and records of pupils' progress, they received 113 completed questionnaires from parents. Many parents also provided written comments.

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

- how well pupils make progress in each year to determine the quality of teaching and the curriculum
- the extent to which pupils develop independence, initiative and an understanding of modern multi-ethnic society
- how effectively the school promotes good attendance
- the rigour with which leaders and managers at all levels review the quality of provision and take action to accelerate pupils' progress.

## Information about the school

Most pupils are of White British heritage. A small number are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is close to the national average. The school also has a significant number of more-able pupils.

Nursery provision is offered on the school's site independently of the school. It was not evaluated as part of this inspection. The school provides a breakfast club for its pupils.

**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?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**4**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate because leadership and management are poor. The quality of provision is insufficiently checked and developed. As a result, weaknesses, including those in teaching and the curriculum, are not dealt with and persist. Within the school community, there is justifiable concern about the failings in leadership and management. Many parents do not feel that their views are sought, considered or valued. Morale within the school is low because staff are not provided with a clear educational direction. Some say that they do not understand the allocation of responsibilities or what their role entails, furthermore, they are not given the time or opportunities necessary to lead the areas for which they are responsible. Some other members of the teaching staff are confused about key aspects of the work in which they are involved.

On entry to the Reception Year, most children's starting points are at least at the level expected. Broadly average attainment at the end of Year 6 suggests that pupils may make reasonable progress during their time in the school. However, there is too much variation in the rate at which pupils progress in each year as they move up through the school. As quite a number of parents point out, there are times when provision in one year has to 'patch up' the shortcomings in progress made in a previous year. Currently, pupils are making inadequate progress in two year groups. As the main aspect of provision influencing pupils' progress, teaching is too variable and is unsatisfactory overall. It is not closely enough matched to pupils' differing learning needs.

In addition to inconsistencies and shortcomings in teaching, weaknesses in the curriculum inhibit pupils' progress. Pupils have too few opportunities to use and develop their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum. Across the school, pupils are failing to make acceptable progress in information and communication technology (ICT). There are gaps in the coverage of ICT which is not used to routinely support learning in different subjects. Opportunities for practical and investigative mathematics and science are also too limited.

Although many features of pupils' personal development, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, are satisfactory, provision also limits this aspect of pupils' growth. Pupils do not develop independence, initiative and problem-solving skills to the

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levels of which they are capable. Adults control some lessons and aspects of the curriculum too tightly, providing opportunities only for pupils to follow instructions. Teaching does not help pupils to take responsibility for their learning because feedback on how well they are doing and how they can improve their performance is too patchy. This weakness in teaching also restricts progress and achievement. While pupils learn about world faiths in religious education and the school is racially harmonious, the curriculum is narrow in its contribution to pupils' understanding of the rich diversity of a modern multi-ethnic society.

The school has made inadequate progress since the last inspection. The areas identified for improvement at that time remain major aspects for development now. Furthermore, other aspects of the school have declined. Hence, the school is not demonstrating the necessary capacity to improve.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Rectify weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise their achievement by:
  - ensuring that teaching in all year groups is closely matched to all pupils' learning needs
  - providing all pupils with clear feedback on what they are doing well and how they can take responsibility for improving their performance
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to use and develop their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to engage in practical and investigative mathematics and science
  - covering the ICT curriculum fully and developing pupils' use of ICT in different subjects.
- Enhance pupils' personal development and their preparation for their future lives by:
  - increasing opportunities for them to gain independence and initiative and to solve problems collaboratively in lessons and more generally
  - deepening their understanding of a modern, multi-ethnic society.
- Ensure that leaders and managers gain the confidence of the school community, embed ambition and drive improvement by:
  - rigorously monitoring and evaluating the impact of the provision, particularly teaching and the curriculum, on pupils' progress and taking swift action for improvement
  - ensuring that staff understand, and are involved in, the distribution of responsibilities and that they are empowered to lead and develop the areas for which they are responsible
  - actively seeking, considering and responding to the views of parents.

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## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**4**

In terms of their progress, pupils have an uneven journey through the school with significant underachievement evident in two year groups. By the end of Year 4, for example, many pupils have fallen behind in relation to their results at the end of Year 2. The uneven journey through the school is experienced by pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In some other year groups, as well as the two causing the most concern, more-able pupils work below their capabilities. Because pupils are not supported to learn at a steady rate and, for example, to develop ICT and problem-solving skills, they are insufficiently prepared for their future lives. Added to this, pupils' preparation for life in a culturally diverse society is one of the weaker elements of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Nevertheless, pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community, for example, by raising funds for charities and participating in local events. The vast majority of pupils enjoy school because, as one explained, 'The thing that makes me come to school in the morning is knowing that my friends will be there.' However, pupils' enjoyment of learning is restricted by the weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum and a few find it hard to make friends. Although some parents are concerned about pupils' behaviour, most pupils behave well. Positive attitudes and behaviour in lessons are supportive of learning in almost all classes, even masking inadequacies in some teaching. The school is a calm and safe environment and this is the view of almost all pupils and parents. Pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and their adoption of them through, for example, diet and participation in sport, are satisfactory.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

In the lessons observed, teaching ranged from outstanding to inadequate. Where it was outstanding, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, it was sharply focused on the full range of pupils' needs, engaged all pupils fully and moved learning on at a rapid pace.

However, much teaching takes insufficient account of pupils' differing learning needs and not enough teaching is good. Whole-class sessions, for example, are too often pitched at the same level for all the pupils and last too long. Marking is not sufficiently focused on telling pupils what they have done well and how they can improve their work. Although pupils have personal targets for English and mathematics, these are not used well enough to help pupils to take responsibility for improving their performance.

The teaching of the basics of literacy for younger pupils in small groups is effective, with teaching assistants appropriately deployed to support this. However, in one year group, pupils are not given adequate opportunities for writing so that they can apply and develop these basic literacy skills. The result is that the pupils in this year group make inadequate progress in writing. Across the school, the development of writing is too patchy. Pupils' competence in key areas, such as mathematics and ICT, as well as writing, is given too little attention across the curriculum. National Curriculum requirements for ICT are not met. Subjects such as English and the arts are not utilised well enough to develop understanding of the diversity of modern society. Pupils enjoy the varied range of activities provided outside the day-by-day curriculum, such as visits, visitors and clubs. They and their parents praise the opportunities for music, including participation in concerts and music festivals.

Satisfactory pastoral care supports the vast majority of pupils in feeling confident and secure at school. Pupils attending the breakfast club are properly cared for and get off to a positive start to the day. However, the school does little to raise the attendance rate, which is slightly below the national average and insufficiently improved since the last inspection.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>4</b>

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**The effectiveness of care, guidance and support**

**3**

## How effective are leadership and management?

The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are inadequate. The school knows that the quality of teaching is variable and that its impact on pupils' progress is inadequate in two year groups. However, insufficient action has been taken to deal with this. The result is that much needed improvement does not take place. It is two years since leaders and managers scrutinised pupils' work to evaluate the impact of the provision on progress. The observation of lessons is infrequent and not sharply enough focused on how teaching and the curriculum contribute to pupils' progress. Subject leaders' roles remain underdeveloped. This is not because the subject leaders for English and mathematics lack capability, but because the school does not have systems to support them in making improvements. Weak ICT provision is not being improved. As a result, leadership and management are ineffective in embedding ambition, driving improvement, and promoting equality of opportunity for pupils.

A few key governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses very well. Governors give a high priority to the safeguarding of pupils and ensure that the site is secure. However, the governing body as a whole is not well enough involved in the life of the school. Governors have not ensured that statutory requirements are met for ICT and the promotion of community cohesion. With low morale, loss of confidence in the most senior level of leadership and many dissatisfied parents, the school community is not cohesive. The school's planning for the promotion of community cohesion is at a very early stage. It does not do enough to reach out to other communities, nationally and globally in particular.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>4</b>



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**The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money**

**4**

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly in the welcoming and supportive environment of the Reception class. Good induction arrangements and links between the reception staff and parents support children's entry to school well. Children start with strong personal and social skills and maintain these as they sit together well, showing that they are eager to learn. Children make satisfactory progress across the areas of learning because teaching and the curriculum are adequately matched to their needs. Although the use of assessment is satisfactory, there are times, particularly in whole-class phonics and mathematics sessions, when the more capable children are not challenged fully. There is sound planning for all the areas of learning, but the effectiveness of this is hampered in practice by limited resources, such as for role-play and creative development.

Satisfactory leadership and management are evident in the teamwork of the reception staff. However, the evaluation of how the provision contributes to children's progress is only just adequate. Development is restricted by a lack of opportunities for the reception teacher to find out about good practice outside the school.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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

Many parents have significant concerns about the school and made this known in their extensive written comments to inspectors. In particular, they lack confidence in the school's most senior level of leadership to deal with the issues they raise. Many parents have said that it is difficult to communicate their concerns and that they feel that they are not listened to. A number of parents have removed their children from the school as a result. A significant proportion of parents, but by no means all, remain pleased by the quality of pastoral care and the approachability of individual teachers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary 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 113 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school. A few questionnaires were received after the deadline for inclusion in the data below although all were read by inspectors.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	59	39	37	3	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	57	54	47	44	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	40	57	54	6	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	38	49	46	11	10	4	4
The teaching is good at this school	44	42	48	45	9	8	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	42	46	43	8	8	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	45	52	49	4	4	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)	45	42	44	42	3	3	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	42	45	42	12	11	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	34	37	35	17	16	7	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	30	44	42	20	19	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	33	31	30	28	27	25	13	12
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	45	47	44	6	6	2	2

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



6 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School, Romsey SO51 8EP

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and looking at your work. We saw that almost all of you behave sensibly and want to learn. You told us that you particularly like the special events, such as the residential visit in Year 6 and the theatre group that came in during the inspection. We found that your school does a lot to make sure that you are safe during the school day.

As well as watching your lessons and looking at your books, we looked at the information that the school has on your progress. We found out that your progress varies as you move up through the school. In some years you move on steadily, but this does not happen in all years. This is because the teaching is successful in meeting your learning needs in some years, but does not help you to learn quickly enough in other years. We also found out that there are some large gaps in the range of opportunities you have for learning, particularly in ICT.

The school is not doing enough to put right the things that need improving. As a result, we have said that it needs 'special measures'. This means that it will be given extra help and other inspectors will visit to see how it is getting on. We have asked the school to:

- make sure that teaching covers all that it should and the work set is at the right level for each of you
- give you more opportunities for initiative and responsibility and to find out about the wide range of backgrounds of people living in Britain today; we think that you would enjoy this and find it interesting
- ensure that everyone is working closely together to improve the school.

You can all help by doing your best and telling the teacher if your work is too easy or too difficult. Best wishes for the future and thanks again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Alison Grainger

Lead inspector

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