

Mill Rythe Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116490
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338829
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Pritiben Patel

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Croft
Headteacher	Mrs Patricia Lock
Date of previous school inspection	8 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who visited eight lessons, and held meetings with representatives from the governing body, members of staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including information about pupils' progress, pupils' work, the quality of teachers' marking and the questionnaires completed by 81 parents and carers.

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

- the effectiveness of strategies to improve the attainment of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how well teachers use assessment information to inform planning and support learning
- the quality of teaching and learning in meeting the needs of all pupils
- the impact of leaders at all levels on pupil progress.

Information about the school

Mill Rythe is a small infant school in comparison to others. Most pupils are of White British origin and a small number are from other backgrounds. Less pupils than usually found are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Two pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English.

More pupils than usual have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These include moderate difficulties and difficulties related to speech and language. None has a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils entitled to claim free school meals is below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of two Reception classes and a mixed class with both Reception children and Year 1 pupils. An external provider is responsible for out-of-school-hours childcare provision which consists of a breakfast and after-school homework club. The school has attained the Active Mark for sports provision and the Marjorie Boxall Quality Mark for the care provided to vulnerable 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Mill Rythe provides a good standard of education for pupils. Some aspects of provision are outstanding. The curriculum, for example, has been adapted very successfully to ensure that pupils learn new skills and acquire knowledge in meaningful and exciting contexts. Care and support provided for pupils are excellent. Pupils are valued and known as individuals by staff. The following comment made by a parent sums up very well the ethos of the school, 'Mill Rythe has a wonderful family feel to it.'

Good teaching and learning enable pupils to progress well. Activities are thoughtfully and creatively designed by teachers and this impacts very positively on pupils' engagement and enthusiasm. For example, in a Year 2 design and technology lesson pupils were busily using a variety of materials to join together the different parts of Percy Owl while learning about the properties of these materials at the same time. This is a character they had come across during a recent visit to a theme park. However, more able pupils are not consistently challenged in all lessons and as a result they sometimes find the work set too easy. Teachers make learning outcomes clear for the pupils during lessons; consequently, pupils know what it is they are learning about. However, not all pupils are clear about how to improve their work so that they can get to the next step in their learning.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very well together and provide good leadership. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. For example, national assessment information for 2009 shows that more able pupils attain higher than their peers nationally in writing. Self-evaluation is now more rigorous in areas such as teaching and learning and the curriculum. Senior leaders have a clear understanding about strengths and areas that require further development. Based on improvements since the last inspection and a rise in standards in all areas in 2009, capacity to move forward is good. Some leaders and managers are new to post and senior leaders have identified themselves that it will take time before they have significant impact on the areas they lead and on pupil progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that activities consistently challenge more able pupils in all lessons
 - ensuring that pupils know what it is they need to do next to improve their work.
- Embed the roles of leaders and managers so that they have greater impact on the

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areas they lead and on pupil progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From starting points below those usually found, pupils achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is good because they feel that all adults listen to them and value their thoughts and opinions. The highly engaging curriculum greatly impacts on pupils' enjoyment of school. For example, in a Year 2 numeracy lesson, pupils were excitedly working in pairs to plot the various rides on a grid, using letters and numbers based on their recent visit to a theme park. In addition, where there is a good match between activities and pupils' abilities, progress is good. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, the focus for pupils with special educational needs was to read and follow a simple set of instructions in order to make a poppy. The more able pupils while making their poppies were learning about verbs and adverbs at the same time.

National test information for 2008 showed that some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were not doing as well as they might at the end of Year 2. Various strategies were put into place to raise attainment, such as additional programmes in numeracy and literacy, study support groups led by senior leaders, specific targets on individual education plans helping pupils to focus on their learning areas, as well as training for staff. These have impacted positively and the school's progress information shows that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities now make good progress.

Pupils say they feel very safe at school. At the beginning of the school year pupils in each class write a set of rules which will help them feel safe and happy. These rules are then followed for the rest of the year. Pupils follow safety rules during lessons very well. For example, in a Year 2 design and technology lesson pupils knew that they needed to protect the table from being scratched because they were using split pins, so they covered the table with protective material.

Pupils' contribution within the school and local community is outstanding. They sing as part of the choir for the local community, older pupils speak publicly to new parents about their school, and pupils from Year 2 help children from the Reception class at lunchtimes. In addition, an active school council meets regularly and helps to make decisions about the school. Their understanding about what constitutes healthy lifestyles is outstanding. Pupils readily eat fruit and vegetables at lunchtime, drink water throughout the day as well as participate in a fitness programme at the beginning of each day and afternoon with their teachers. The school has attained the Active Mark in recognition of this work.

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They are mature, polite and helpful. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, get on well with each other and behave well. They develop good spiritual awareness through their contribution to local church services.

Pupils' preparation for economic well-being is good. Attainment of above average

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standards, along with pupils' positive attitudes, helps to prepare them well for junior school. Attendance is in line with the national average.

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	2
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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to work collaboratively with their peers. This has a positive impact on pupils' speaking and listening skills. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and this helps to create a positive learning environment where pupils feel confident to explore their views. Good questioning helps to enhance pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 2 numeracy lesson a good open-ended question from the teacher, 'How will the letters and numbers help you find rides at Paultons Park?' required pupils to reflect before answering. Support staff are skilled and provide good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers' understanding of assessment information has improved since the last inspection and teachers know the different abilities of pupils within their class. However, the activities set, except in writing, do not consistently challenge more able pupils. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is up to date. However, it does not consistently inform pupils about what

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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they need to do to improve their work; as a result, not all pupils are clear about their next step.

Units of work in the curriculum are thoughtfully designed so that activities are based on visits, a specific theme or event. This makes the curriculum exciting for pupils and many parents too have recognised and commented on this. For example, a parent wrote reflecting the views of many, 'Projects are taught in such an exciting way which ensures the pupils fully understand the lessons.' Units of work are designed to promote the school's core values of confidence, honesty, responsibility and appreciation. Specific units of work help pupils to gain an outstanding understanding of healthy lifestyles. For example, in the 'Feed me Better' project, pupils designed healthy meals for parents, and in 'Run for Your Life', they produced a keep fit video for their families. A very wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as computer club, football and multi-skills along with a residential visit in Year 2, all contribute to the development of personal and social skills such as team work. Golden time is much enjoyed by all pupils and helps to ensure good behaviour throughout the week. The curriculum, which provides pupils with meaningful contexts for their writing, has contributed very well to standards in writing at the end of Year 2, which are now above average.

The outstanding care, guidance and support provided by all staff is recognised by both pupils and parents alike. The school has attained the Marjorie Boxall Quality Mark in recognition of the very valuable work the staff undertake to help vulnerable pupils so that, for example, they are able to access the curriculum and make good progress. In addition, the important work of the emotional learning support assistant supports very well those pupils with emotional, behavioural and other needs. Looked after children are very well cared for and, as a result, they make progress in line with their peers. Risk assessments of the school site and external visits are firmly in place. Pupils say they would talk to staff if they had any problems. Strong relationships with various agencies such as the educational psychologist and welfare officer help staff to meet the individual needs of pupils very well. Pupils are provided with various opportunities to explore feelings during circle time and the 'Headteacher's Lunch', where pupils are regularly invited to share ideas. Induction procedures are well established for children entering Reception class as well as pupils moving on to junior school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

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Staff throughout school are very supportive of one another and work as a team towards the same vision and goals. Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school. Senior leaders do much to ensure that parents are kept well-informed. Information is readily available on the school website and is also sent to parents at the beginning of each unit of work so that they can participate in their children's learning. Partnerships with other schools and pre-school settings are good.

The senior leadership has been recently restructured in order to further improve outcomes for pupils. In addition, some subject leaders are new to their roles and although they are making a good contribution to their areas, for example by providing training for other staff, they need time in order to make sufficient impact on pupil progress.

All staff work hard to ensure that all pupils whatever their individual needs have equal opportunities. Safeguarding procedures are good.

Governors provide good support and challenge. They contribute to the school's evaluation and the improvement plan as well as helping pupils to improve their reading skills. The 'Adopt a Governor' initiative provides much enjoyment for pupils when they showcase their work at the end of a unit of work.

Community cohesion is good. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about their immediate local community. They paint murals in the locality and visit nursing homes and local churches. Pupils learn about the similarities and differences in localities that are culturally different. They are developing a global awareness through building links with schools from other countries.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

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Early Years Foundation Stage

From below average starting points children make good progress, particularly in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and personal, social and emotional development. They attain in line with expectations by the time they start Year 1. This is because the quality of provision is good. The curriculum is well planned so that activities cover different areas of learning. For example, children became very excited when they found Santa's sack outdoors and from this interesting stimulus teachers planned a range of activities. Some children wrote letters, others made Santas out of play-dough while others painted Santa or played on his sleigh outdoors. There is a good balance between activities led by the teacher and those chosen by the children, impacting well on children's enjoyment.

Children are encouraged well to take responsibility. They rise to the challenge and are developing mature and sensible attitudes. For example, some children are responsible for snacks and all children help with tidying up after activities. Procedures to promote children's welfare are good. Staff are sensitive to the individual needs of children and they know children well. Relationships between staff and children are warm and this helps to develop good self-esteem. Children have a good understanding about safety, for example they know that they should not climb on the outdoor activity frame when it is wet.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers use careful questioning to guide children's understanding. Staff use assessment information well in order to plan activities for children that meet their individual needs. All staff work together as a team and this greatly benefits the children.

Partnerships between parents and staff are good. Staff meet all pre-school settings and make home visits before children start Reception class. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is currently not in work. However, there is good interim management by the headteacher and other staff. They have identified that children's attainment in writing requires improvement. As a result, changes to provision have been made and children are given more opportunities to write.

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

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The large majority of parents and carers are highly satisfied with the school and most are very positive. In a number of areas almost all responses were positive. A very small minority of parents felt that the school did not support them to help their children or take account of parents' and carers' suggestions. Inspectors did not find that this was the case.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mill Rythe 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 214 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	61	75	20	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	70	24	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	49	61	31	38	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	57	30	37	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	54	67	23	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	57	30	37	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	61	30	37	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)	43	53	28	35	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	54	30	37	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	46	39	48	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	50	33	41	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	51	63	27	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	59	73	20	25	2	2	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 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mill Rythe Infant School, Hayling Island, PO11 0PA

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you all so much for helping us when we came to find out how well you are getting on. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to you. You all spoke very highly about your school and we agree with both you and your parents that Mill Rythe is a good school.

Here is a list of some of the things that we found out about your school.

- You make good progress as you move through the school and attain above average standards by the time you leave in Year 2.
- You all spoke very highly of all staff in the school and this is because of the outstanding level of care they show towards you. As a result, you are polite and behave well.
- The curriculum is outstanding! You complete very interesting work such as the unit called 'Run for your life', where you made keep-fit videos for your families. You enjoy very much the wide range of activities that your school offer such as football, multi-skills and computer club.
- Your teachers teach you well. They plan lessons very carefully so that you really enjoy your learning. For example, some of you make poppies and others find interesting ways to join parts of Percy Owl together. Your teachers also give you many opportunities so that you can talk to your friends about your learning.
- Children in the Reception classes make a good start.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors work hard for you.

Even in a good school like yours there are certain things that can be improved. We have asked your teachers to make sure that the activities for some of you are harder! We have also asked your teachers to make clear to you what you need to do next to improve your work. Finally, leaders and managers who are new to their jobs need a bit more time and support so that they can improve things for you.

I wish you all the very best and I hope you continue to work hard and enjoy school!

Yours sincerely

Pritiben Patel

Lead Inspector

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