



Portway Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 115857
 LEA Hampshire LEA
 Inspection number 290349
 Inspection dates 10 November 2006
 Reporting inspector Mr George Rayner

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 address | Ashfield Road,Andover |
| School category | community | | SP10 3PE |
| Age range of pupils | 4-7 | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01264323716 |
| Number on roll | 247 | Fax number | 01264351730 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of Governors | Miss Joan Beal |
| | | Headteacher | Mrs Barbara Rolison |
| Date of previous school inspection | 25 February 2002 | | |

| Age group | Inspection Date(s) | Inspection No. |
|-----------|--------------------|----------------|
| 4-7 | 10 November 2006 | 290349 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This school is located on the outskirts of Andover. There is some variation in the socio-economic circumstances of pupils, although these are generally advantaged. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. The great majority of pupils are of White British ethnicity and few are at an early stage of speaking English. On entry to the school children have skills and understanding which are broadly typical. The school has Healthy Schools Status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Parents agree and they recognise that the staff are very committed to pupils' care and well-being. As one said, 'All the staff are interested in each child's overall welfare.' As a result, the school is a very caring community in which pupils are happy and secure. Pupils say emphatically that they enjoy school. They show this by their good attendance and behaviour and their willingness to join in. They readily take roles that contribute to school life and enjoy taking part in community activities. Pupils live active lives, know how to keep safe and understand why a healthy diet is important.

Teaching and learning are good and the curriculum provides a good range of stimulating activities. Consequently, pupils achieve well. Standards are improving and are now above average by the time they leave the school. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good and teaching is geared effectively to the way in which very young children learn, so that they make good progress. In Years 1 and 2, achievement is best in reading and writing. This is because teachers are good at encouraging pupils to enjoy these subjects, so that they work hard and do well. Progress in mathematics is less marked than in the other two areas because teachers are less successful at providing the best challenges, particularly for the most able pupils. The school's procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are systematic. It does not use the information gathered, however, as well as it could to help teachers to improve their teaching by sharing the best practice that exists in the school.

Leadership and management are good. Following the last inspection standards dipped. During the last two years however, the school has worked successfully to secure improvement. This has reversed the decline in standards and the school is focused well on building further on this. In addition, it has significantly improved its use of assessment information to guide and support pupils and dealt well with the only key issue from the last inspection, which was inconsistency in its Foundation Stage provision. Consequently, it is showing a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and achievement in mathematics by increasing the challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- Make better use of the information gathered from monitoring teaching and learning to help teachers to share the best practice that exists in the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average overall and achievement is good. In 2005 standards were average in reading, writing and mathematics. Since then significant improvements are raising standards again in all three subjects, but particularly in

reading and writing.

In the Foundation Stage, teachers work effectively as a team to ensure that progress is consistent in the three Reception classes. Children make good progress because activities provide many opportunities to learn by exploring. Most are working securely at expected levels by end of the year. In Years 1 and 2 pupils build well upon their skills. This happens particularly well when they carry out challenging writing tasks that help them to practise and consolidate all of the skills that they have recently learned. The improvement in standards and achievement has been less strong in mathematics. This is because teachers are not yet as good as they are in the other subjects at providing the best challenge for all pupils, especially for the most able.

Most groups of pupils achieve as well as each other. Lower attaining boys are not making as good progress as other pupils in reading and writing. This is beginning to improve though, because the school is giving them more motivating books and writing tasks.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils know why good behaviour is important. A group said that a small number can be silly at times, but that almost all respond well when adults remind them how they should be behaving. During this discussion, pupils showed that they develop confidence well, with the very youngest children very willing to join in. Pupils like being active and those in Year 2 say they really enjoy their tag rugby club. They know why healthy food is important. Year 2 pupils showed this when writing guides on healthy diet as part of a writing task. Pupils contribute well to school life. Older ones willingly volunteer to clear up after events and those on the school council take their responsibilities seriously. They are pleased that the school listens to their good ideas for charity activities, for example a sponsored spelling tournament. The school helps pupils to prepare well for their future lives and economic prosperity. This starts very early. In a Reception class, children showed considerable commitment and enjoyment in playing roles such as a receptionist in a surgery.

Pupils make good progress in developing spirituality by learning to reflect and see things from others' points of view. Good opportunities to learn about how people in other places live, both in lessons and special activities, help pupils to develop good cultural awareness. They particularly enjoyed a recent topic about Mexico.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Activities effectively promote progress and encourage pupils to work willingly and maintain their concentration. Pupils appreciate this. One girl said, 'Teachers do lots of things to make lessons fun.'

Teachers use group work well to provide tasks that meet pupils' needs and present good challenges, particularly in writing. Challenge is less strong in mathematics than other subjects, however. Teachers are improving the way in which mathematics tasks help pupils to make difficult calculations, but not all are as good as the best in ensuring that these fully challenge all pupils, particularly the most able. Good teamwork between teachers and support assistants usually makes sure that pupils are monitored well and given any extra help that they need to succeed. Teachers mark work regularly and often boost pupils' motivation and confidence with encouraging comments. However, they do not often give clear enough guidance on how pupils can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that helps pupils to achieve well in most subjects, although it recognises the need for more challenge in mathematics for the higher attainers. The introduction of writing workshops has been very effective in helping pupils to pull together and strengthen what they have learned. This has been a key factor in the significantly improved writing standards. Pupils have good opportunities to use computers. In addition to enhancing their work in different subjects, this results in them making good progress in their information and communication technology skills. Good enrichment includes enjoyable and informative trips, for example to a Victorian farm and an arboretum. Pupils enjoy the visits of groups such as puppeteers and members of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. They also show that they enjoy the clubs through their good attendance. The school has improved its provision in the Foundation Stage well since the last inspection by addressing the inconsistency that existed between the three classes. Teachers now work together effectively to ensure that opportunities to make progress are equally good in each class.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Procedures for child protection are carried out properly. Pupils know to whom they can turn if they are upset and they say they are confident that all the adults will take the trouble to make sure they are helped well. This contributes strongly to their well-developed confidence and security. Since the last inspection, the school has significantly improved its use of assessment records to guide and support pupils. Effective tracking of each pupil's progress, to ensure extra help for any who need it, has contributed to the recent rise in standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides good leadership, with a clear expectation that all staff share responsibility. Subject leaders are involved well in monitoring how effectively their subjects are taught. Joint observations with senior leaders ensure that they are well informed for planning improvements and that their leadership skills develop. The school's effective monitoring has given it a clear picture of the strengths that exist in its teaching and the areas that it needs to improve. This is not being used to best effect however, for encouraging staff to share their expertise so that teaching is as good in all classes as it is in the best. Governors support the school well. They are well informed and ensure that they attend

training to help them to be confident in challenging the school to strive for improvement.

Leadership and management are effectively focused upon improvement. Self-evaluation has been based upon good analysis of pupils' standards and has taken account of the views of parents and pupils. It has given the school an accurate view of its strengths and the areas that it has needed to improve. Although there was a period where this did not impact sufficiently upon standards, well thought out plans are now leading to good improvement.

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Annex A to the inspection report

Inspection Judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

| | |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

Annex A to the inspection report

Personal development and well-being

| | |
|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 |

Annex A to the inspection report

Leadership and management

| | |
|--|-----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Annex B to the inspection report

Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

20 November 2006



Dear Pupils

Portway Infant School
Ashfield Road
Andover
SP10 3PE

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I really enjoyed my visit. I could see that yours is a good school. Your teachers are good. Some of you told me that you really like the way they work hard to make lessons fun. You show this by behaving well and working hard. This helps your teachers a lot. Your parents and the other grown ups at home also help the school by making sure that you come to school regularly.

You told me that you feel very well cared for. Your parents also told me this and I was able to see for myself that it is true. This makes you all feel very safe and happy. When I met a group of you, it was good to see that even the Reception children were very confident and willing to talk.

Because of all this you do well in most of your learning. You do best in reading and writing. This is because the school gives you books that you enjoy and lots of chances to practise writing. You do not do quite so well in mathematics, although you are improving in this. The teachers need to become better still at making sure that you all are given difficult enough work in mathematics. They also need to be given more chances to share the things that they do well, so that teaching can be as good in all classes as it is in the best.

Very well done to you all and best wishes.

George Rayner
Lead inspector