



# Elson Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 116162  
**Local Authority** Hampshire  
**Inspection number** 290440  
**Inspection dates** 28–29 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Peter Thrussell

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>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Exmouth Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Gosport
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		PO12 4EX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02392583754
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	307	<b>Fax number</b>	02392511291
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Alan Booth
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Celia Rich
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 May 2002		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Elson is a larger-than-average junior school. There is little apparent deprivation, with a much lower than average proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The majority of pupils have White British heritage, with a very small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is just above average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Elson Junior School provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. It has several strengths. Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour make them keen to learn. They particularly enjoy art, music and information and communication technology, along with the range of enrichment opportunities within a good curriculum. Residential trips help them to gain in confidence and develop good social skills. They are keen to have their say about the school through the school council. Consequently, pupils contribute well to school life and to the wider community. Good opportunities for sport and physical activity help to promote healthy lifestyles. The school provides a satisfactory level of care for pupils that ensures their safety and well-being. This draws on the good links established with outside agencies and the encouragement given to parents, particularly through learning workshops, to be involved in their children's learning and well-being.

In Year 6, standards in reading are above average, and in writing and mathematics below average. Given their starting points this shows good progress in reading, and satisfactory progress in writing and mathematics. Achievement overall is satisfactory. The school has developed good assessment procedures in English and mathematics. These provide a clear picture of how well pupils are doing. Subject leaders are taking well-planned action to raise their standards and levels of achievement. Literacy lessons are observed frequently and professional guidance given, which is raising the quality of teaching and learning and starting to raise standards in writing. A mathematics consultant has worked alongside teachers in classrooms, and this has led to an improvement in pupils' learning. Pupils requested that apparatus should be available to support their work in mathematics, and this is now placed ready on tables. Good use is made of assessment information to organise literacy sets across Years 3 and 4 and to identify ability groups within classes. However, teachers do not always make sufficient use of this information to plan more precisely what pupils need to learn next to further their progress, particularly in writing and mathematics. Although pupils are starting to be made aware of how well they are doing, for example through success criteria in writing, they do not yet have more sharply focused learning targets against which to measure their progress and guide them in their learning.

Governors hold the school to account effectively. They share with the headteacher and leadership team the importance of raising standards and maintaining a high level of personal development and well-being. Given the school's accurate self-evaluation and its satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, it has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in writing and mathematics for all pupils, through the fuller and more consistent use of assessment information to plan the next steps in their learning.
- Involve pupils in their learning, so that each one of them knows how well they are doing and how they could make their work better

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards are below average. From overall below average starting points in writing and mathematics pupils make satisfactory progress. From their average starting points in reading they make good progress. By Year 6, although standards in reading are above average, standards in writing and mathematics are below. The introduction of focused reading sessions, a 'Super Reader' award scheme, and a well managed and used library, is enabling pupils to make good progress in their reading. Work on developing better sentences is starting to improve pupils' writing. An analysis of test results has identified areas on which the school is now focusing in order to raise standards in mathematics. There are no underachieving groups. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make the same progress as their classmates.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and this is shown by their positive attitudes and good attendance. At playtimes and in lessons pupils cooperate with one another, showing the impact of the schools emphasis on, 'rights, respect and responsibility', referred to as the '3Rs'. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show a strong knowledge of what is right and wrong and a good understanding of a range of faiths and cultures. A Year 6 pupil said, 'Treat others the way others treat us', when talking about why he thought behaviour was good. A small minority of pupils do misbehave. These are dealt with effectively using a 'zero tolerance' approach which results in a few short term exclusions. Older pupils, trained as peer mediators, take their roles very seriously and help to develop good relationships on the playgrounds. This helps pupils to feel safe in school, and they also know that adults sort out any problems quickly and fairly. Pupils understand that eating sensibly is important, although the content of their lunch boxes is not all always as healthy as it should be. These good personal skills, along with their satisfactory skills in literacy and numeracy, prepare them adequately for their future life and learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Behaviour is managed well in lessons, generally drawing on the good relationships that teachers have established with pupils. Consequently, pupils settle well to activities so that little time is wasted, particularly where activities are well planned to meet the needs of different learners. Sometimes, however, introductions are too long and do not challenge pupils sufficiently, so that the pace of learning then slows. Teachers' good subject knowledge generally enables

them to question pupils well in order to develop their understanding. This questioning is not always used well enough, however, at the end of lessons, to involve pupils themselves in an evaluation of their learning. For example, opportunities are missed to discuss how well they have done and what they have found difficult. Teaching assistants provide adequate support for the groups they are working with, but they are not always deployed well by the teacher throughout lessons.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and meets all national requirements. Its strengths include visits, visitors and special weeks which enrich pupils learning and personal development well. Pupils speak knowledgably about the benefits of the annual anti-bullying week, which they say 'helps improve behaviour each year so soon there will be no bad behaviour at all.' Links between subjects are good and draw particularly well on information and communication technology, for example, using computer skills to present learning about Islam in Religious Education. Pupils particularly enjoy large scale performances at Christmas and in the summer. They use their artistic and musical skills well in these and successfully develop confidence and teamwork. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, and there are plans to extend the currently limited number of after-school clubs

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school carefully considers the risks associated with all activities to ensure pupils' health and safety. Safety checks are regularly carried out and procedures for child protection are adhered to fully. Through circle time and achievement assemblies, pupils' successes are valued and their esteem and confidence built up. The school carefully monitors the progress that pupils make in their learning. This helps it to focus support and to identify and plan more effectively for the range of ability, including pupils with learning difficulties, within different years. Pupils have some success criteria to help them see how to improve their work, but these are not yet sufficiently developed as personalised targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, supported by her deputy and other senior leaders, has been successful in leading change. Subject leaders, and those responsible for other aspects of school life, are helping to bring about improvements in achievements and standards. The school improvement plan is a helpful, realistic document and a clear route forward is identified. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and recognises that the school's actions have yet to fully impact on achievement and standards. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection; reading has improved and there are signs that standards are

beginning to rise in writing; effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching, followed by training and support, is starting to raise the quality of teaching. Good links with the infant school are enabling staff to become involved with the end-of-Year 2 assessments, so helping pupils' transition to Year 3. There are also good links with parents who are very supportive of the school. As one parent said of her daughter's enthusiasm for learning, 'I'm sure the school is doing a fantastic job all round'. Governors know the school well, provide strong support, and hold staff to account for its work and achievements.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3
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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing to let you know what we found when we visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We spoke to some of you during our visit and you were interesting to talk to and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things you take part in. We decided that Elson is a satisfactory school, which has a number of strengths.

We liked these things the most:

- you do well in your reading
- you enjoy school and talk enthusiastically about it
- the school is caring and looks after you well
- you understand the importance of taking plenty of exercise, but you might want to think a little more about the things you eat
- the school provides many interesting and exciting things for you to do; you were obviously enjoying preparing for your Christmas production
- the school listens to you when you suggest how things could be better and you value being given responsibilities such as peer mediators.

We have asked the school to work on these things:

- carefully plan what each of you needs to learn next in writing and mathematics, so that the work is challenging but just right for you
- discuss with you how well you are doing and give each of you targets to aim for in your work.

Thank you again

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell

Lead Inspector