



St Matthew's Church of England Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116352
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 296536
Inspection date 23 January 2007
Reporting inspector George Rayner

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Drift Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Blackmoor
Age range of pupils	4-11		Liss GU33 6BN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01420472844
Number on roll (school)	188	Fax number	01420479334
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Harry Pepper
		Headteacher	Mrs Mary Hillman
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2003		

Age group 4-11	Inspection date 23 January 2007	Inspection number 296536
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This school is a little smaller than most other primary schools. Pupils' socio-economic circumstances are broadly average but there is considerable variation. The proportion of pupils who arrive and leave other than at the normal time is higher than in most schools. Standards on entry to the Foundation Stage vary from year to year, but in most years, are at expected levels. A broadly average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities, but this also varies from year to year. The great majority of pupils have White British heritage and very few are at an early stage of speaking English. The school values its denominational status and its links with the local parish church. The school has Enhanced Healthy Schools status, Active Mark accreditation, and the Football Association Charter Standard Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, with good features. As a result of good care, most pupils feel safe and happy and their personal development and well-being are good. The school ensures that pupils who arrive after the start of term are made to feel welcome and helped to settle in quickly. One parent said that, as a result, 'I quickly noticed an improvement in my child's confidence'. The school's success in encouraging pupils to eat and drink healthily and enjoy being active has been recognised by national accreditation. Commitment to the school's Christian ethos provides a strong foundation for pupils to grow up as reflective young people. The great majority of pupils behave very well. However a small number, mainly boys, do not always behave appropriately. When this happens, some teachers have limited strategies to prevent it affecting the progress of the class.

A good curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development. Satisfactory teaching means that pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, when pupils move on to secondary school, their English and science standards are average. Most pupils enter the school with below average numeracy skills. While they make satisfactory progress, their mathematics standards are still a little below average when they leave the school. Some teachers provide good challenge for the most able pupils, but this is not consistent in all classes. As a result, while most of these pupils work hard and achieve satisfactorily, their progress slows when they are insufficiently challenged. The Foundation Stage provides well for children who, as a result, make good progress.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The good leadership of the headteacher provides a clear vision for the school. The other members of the leadership and staff teams are united in support of this. Unavoidable absence amongst key members of the leadership team has affected the speed of improvement. As a consequence improvement is satisfactory rather than good. The situation is now more stable. The school's leaders know where improvement is needed and are making good plans for this with the guidance of local authority advisers. This and the school's track record show that the capacity to improve is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise mathematics standards to at least match those in English and science.
- Ensure that all teachers have effective strategies for preventing the misbehaviour of a small number of pupils.
- See that all lessons provide good challenges for the most able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achieve satisfactorily and their standards are broadly average when they move on to secondary school. In the Foundation Stage, the current children are making good progress in all of their areas of learning, particularly in developing social, thinking,

and speaking skills. This is due to recent improvements in teaching and learning. The school's records show that, in recent years, progress has been satisfactory, so that pupils have entered Year 1 at generally expected levels, but still below expectation in numeracy. Standards remain average in English and science in Years 1 to 6. Pupils in Year 6 can write confidently and fluently in a range of styles. Many pupils' weakest area remains mathematics. While most are catching up, their standards remain a little below average in Year 6. Most pupils are competent in mathematical skills, but few are fully confident in using what they know to devise their own strategies for solving problems. The school is successful in ensuring that no groups of pupils achieve significantly less well than others. For example, the needs of those with learning difficulties and disabilities are carefully identified and they are given effective individual support, so that they achieve as well as their classmates.

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 say that they enjoy school and show this by their regular attendance and enthusiasm in joining in with all that the school has to offer. Pupils explain confidently why a good diet is important and say that they eat their school meals because they are tasty as well as healthy. Most live active lives and enjoy taking part in the good range of sports and games. Pupils know why rules are important for safety and effective learning. They help to devise rules and house captains and vice-captains are diligent in helping to make sure they are carried out. Pupils are pleased when they are rewarded for their contribution to the school, for example some proudly showed the cup that they hold for having the tidiest classroom. Pupils willingly volunteer to contribute to school life, for example through the school council and as buddies who care for younger children. They know that people in other places are not as fortunate as themselves and readily take part in charity appeals. Although they have positive views about their school, pupils are willing to suggest ways it could be improved and know that their views are valued. Some members of the school council explained how the school's 'trim trail' was their idea and how they organised a bring-and-buy sale to help to pay for it. Progress in basic skills prepares pupils satisfactorily for the next stage in their learning and other activities make a good contribution by helping them to work in teams.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In many lessons, teachers plan a variety of interesting tasks that engage pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants work as effective teams to ensure that pupils who need extra help are given it. Teachers use marking well to encourage pupils and often give guidance on how they can improve their work. There is some inconsistency between classes

though, which makes the overall level of teaching and learning satisfactory, rather than good. Some teachers plan good challenges for the most able pupils, so that they achieve well but this is not the case in all classes. Often, work is similar for all pupils and it is left to them to decide how well they carry it out. In some classes, teachers are not as assertive as they should be in setting expectations for behaviour and effort and have limited strategies for preventing the misbehaviour of a few pupils who affect the progress of the class. To some extent, consistency has been reduced by staffing instability, as a higher proportion of teachers have arrived recently than in most schools. Many teachers are of limited experience and, while showing promise, are still developing their skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has developed an enquiry based curriculum, in which much work is based on cross-curricular themes. This is working well in motivating pupils and helping them to enjoy their learning, by making tasks 'real' and allowing teachers the flexibility to find interesting topics. Good physical education provision encourages pupils to be active and develop teamwork skills. The personal, social, health and emotional (PSHE) programme focuses effectively on helping pupils to understand that having rights also means having responsibilities. Pupils enjoy a good range of well-attended clubs that provide opportunities for a variety of sporting, cultural and creative activity. A link with a professional football club provides expert coaching for pupils and guidance for teachers. All pupils use computers regularly to improve their information and communication technology (ICT) skills and to enhance their work in other subjects. Plans are in hand to further improve resources by providing interactive whiteboards and Internet access in all classrooms. The impact of recent improvements to the curriculum has not yet been fully felt on pupils' achievement because of the inconsistencies in teaching. One area in which impact is being seen, however, is in the Foundation Stage. Here, teachers are implementing recent improvements well to give children good opportunities to learn through playing and exploring.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. All procedures for child protection and safety are conscientiously and effectively carried out. All staff have had the necessary training in childcare and also have regularly updated first aid training. As a result, the great majority of pupils are happy and feel secure. The school pays diligent attention to caring for vulnerable children and those with particular problems. It employs a teaching assistant trained in emotional welfare and offers guidance to parents to help them to contribute to their children's care at home. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and regularly reviewed. Staff make efficient use of ICT systems, to ensure that those in danger of underachieving are identified, supported and guided. In improving this further, the school plans to involve pupils more fully in their own self-assessment and target setting. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are carefully

identified and their individual learning plans are effectively based upon these, to ensure that they are given good support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Systems are well organised. This includes procedures for monitoring teaching and learning. The school is effectively developing the role of subject leaders in this monitoring. The school regularly asks for the views of pupils and parents, for example through surveys and the school council. These approaches have given the school leadership a good understanding of its quality and performance and they have used this to identify appropriate improvement targets. Governors are well organised, support the school conscientiously and are appropriately willing to challenge when necessary. The leadership team knows that it needs to focus effectively on raising the general quality of teaching so that it is consistently good enough to raise pupils' standards.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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

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	3
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	3

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
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	3
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	3
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

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you and am grateful for the help you gave by talking to me and letting me look at your work. I was able to see that yours is a satisfactory school and some things about it are good. You make satisfactory progress in your work. In English and science, your work is similar to what we find in most schools. It is a little below this in mathematics and I have asked the headteacher and staff to help you to catch up so your mathematics is as good as the other subjects.

I could see that you are growing up well. You are well cared for and some of you told me that this helps you to feel happy and safe. You also told me that you enjoy school and you show this by coming regularly and being willing to work hard and join in with things. I know that you really like the clubs. It is clear that you enjoy helping the adults to run the school and make it a pleasant place to be. You often come up with good ideas and the adults listen to them. Some of you told me that the trim trail was your idea and that you ran a bring-and-buy sale to help pay for it.

Teachers give you interesting things to do, which encourage most of you to work hard. I have asked the teachers to make sure that they always give those of you who learn easily harder challenges. This is to make sure you can achieve as well as you possibly can.

Most of you behave very well. You know why rules are needed and help to make sure they are carried out. A few of you misbehave at times, or do not try as hard as you should. This is a pity; because it stops you learning as well as you could, and sometimes affects other pupils as well. The few of you who do misbehave can help to improve this by thinking more about how this stops you and others from learning well. I have asked the school to help teachers to deal with this misbehaviour.

Well done all of you for your achievements so far and good luck in making these even better in the future.

George Rayner

Lead inspector