

College Park Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116188
Local Authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	312205
Inspection dates	12–13 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Beryl Richmond

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	323
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Rosemary Craddock
Headteacher	Mrs Debra Anderson
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2004
School address	Lyndhurst Road North End Portsmouth PO2 0LB
Telephone number	02392 662823
Fax number	02392 655282

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

College Park is a large four-form entry urban school. About two-thirds of pupils live in the local area. A below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage and few pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has increased and is at about the national average. Their needs include moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social needs, speech, language and communication difficulties and autism. The school has its own indoor, heated swimming pool.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

College Park is a good and improving school. Pupils are valued and develop well personally because of a good, caring and supportive ethos, which is encapsulated well in the school motto of 'Children, Playing, Improving and Smiling'. Pupils talk keenly about how much they enjoy their education. Parents are enthusiastic about the school's work and value the staff's friendly and open approach. Typical of parental comments is, 'College Park is a fantastic school. The efforts they make towards the teaching standards and happiness of the pupils is exemplary. My daughter has been extremely well cared for and encouraged.' The school works exceptionally well with a wide range of outside partners to meet pupils' academic and pastoral needs. Strong parental links mean that parents are fully involved in their children's learning, for example, through the 'South and South East of England in Bloom' gardening project.

From average starting points, pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good. While there is some outstanding teaching there is also some inconsistency in how well pupils are challenged to do their best. By the end of Year 2 in 2007, standards in mathematics were exceptionally high and standards in reading were above average. Standards in writing were average mainly because some more able pupils did not attain the higher levels. Standards are a little lower this year, although they are above average, because there is a smaller proportion of more able pupils. The gap between writing standards and reading and mathematics standards has narrowed because of the effectiveness of the school's focus on writing. Practical teaching and learning of letters and sounds is better and pupils are provided with more activities that stimulate their thoughts before they write. However, there is more work to be done. The school recognizes that pupils have too few opportunities to develop their writing skills in meaningful contexts in subjects other than English. Teachers have good subject knowledge in mathematics and this is one of the reasons that standards are high in this subject. Because of good targeted support, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to assess their own learning against their targets so that they know what they need to learn in order to improve.

The determined and enthusiastic leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, ably supported by the staff team, has successfully improved the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum. This underpins the gains in pupils' achievement. Their impact on pupils' personal development and well-being is good. They have an excellent vision and plans, which are leading to improvement but the full impact is yet to be seen. The governors are good 'critical friends' and support the school well. Pupils learn well because the curriculum links subjects together in themes to make it stimulating and practical, with a strong focus on language and personal development. Pupils particularly enjoy opportunities like 'Pompey Pirates Day', which provides them with inspiration for their writing and teaches them about their own cultural heritage. Pupils have regular swimming lessons and this contributes well to their excellent understanding of how to stay safe. Pupils make an excellent contribution to their own and the wider community as, for example, Playground Pals.

The school is not complacent and has improved since the previous inspection because of a commitment to rigorous self-evaluation and a relentless drive for improvement in achievement and standards. This track record indicates a good capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start to school and achieve well. Although some children have lower starting points in some aspects of mathematics and literacy, overall starting points are in line with those expected for children of this age. Their knowledge of numbers for counting and labels is usually good. Effective induction procedures, which are praised by parents, help children settle happily. Good relationships are established with children and their parents and maintained through opportunities such as visits to school and workshops. The Foundation Stage is managed well. Adults work together as an effective team, provide good routines and have high expectations of behaviour and achievement. Teaching and learning are good and sometimes outstanding. Consequently children make good progress. Standards have improved and are above average. Children say that they especially enjoy opportunities to work independently in 'Plan, do and review' sessions. Their enjoyment is evident when they take part in role-play, for example, in a mathematics lesson when they measured card to make a king's crown. There is a strong emphasis on language development. The children benefit from awnings when they are outside but there is no permanent cover so that they can be outside whatever the weather.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils are consistently asked to do their best by providing them with challenging work and by giving them more frequent opportunities to write in a range of meaningful contexts.
- Improve opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning against their targets so that they understand better what they need to learn to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is good and improving because teaching and learning are good and many parents support their children's learning. Challenging targets for improvement are set and pupils' progress is tracked rigorously so that any underachievement is identified and addressed promptly. Standards are above average in mathematics and reading and they are broadly average in writing. External moderation confirms an upward trend at the higher level in writing. Appropriate resources are provided and work is planned well to meet the needs of pupils with moderate learning, speech and language difficulties and behavioural and emotional needs. They receive good support from learning support assistants and specialist teachers so that they achieve in line with other pupils and often attain average standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

'I love this school especially the swimming pool- we are so lucky to have it', a Year 2 girl sums up succinctly how pupils feel about their school. They thoroughly enjoy the range of opportunities provided and develop good personal qualities, which leave them well motivated as they move on in their education. Attendance rates are broadly average although family holidays in term time prevent some children achieving good levels of attendance. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good as is shown in the excellent relationships throughout the school. Pupils are very friendly, polite and confident. Most pupils behave well. Pupils' appreciate very well the dangers and risks outside of school especially in relation to

water. They show a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and talk knowledgeably about eating fruit and vegetables. They participate keenly in a wide range of physical activities. Pupils are developing an outstanding sense of being good citizens. Their involvement in running the school through a wide range of responsibilities such as school council members, and helpers is exceptional for such young children. Their care for the local environment, especially the school grounds, is outstanding. Pupils' good achievement in basic skills and well developed personal skills means that they are well prepared for life ahead.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers make lessons fun and interesting which ensures pupils really enjoy them and develop an enthusiasm for learning. This was seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson where the whole class was engrossed in a range of measuring tasks; one girl was delighted when she realised that she had doubled 1.37m correctly. Pupils learn well in such lessons because teachers set appropriate challenges that grab the pupils' interest. In some lessons where this challenge is not sufficient, learning slows. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and relationships are good. They use accurate assessment information to give good support and guidance to pupils enabling them to make good progress. There are some inconsistencies in approach so that some pupils do not know what they need to learn to achieve their targets. Learning support assistants and other adults are used well to support all groups of learners. The school grounds, especially the sensory garden, are used well to support learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides wide and balanced experiences, which are adapted to meet the needs of its pupils. The English curriculum has been improved well by the more systematic teaching and learning of letters and sounds and by reviewing the way that guided reading is taught. There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise different genres of writing when learning other subjects. The school enriches the curriculum well and this helps pupils develop socially. Visitors, including theatre groups and authors, raise pupils' awareness in many ways. Provision for swimming is excellent and consequently pupils achieve exceptionally well by the time they are in Year 2; their standards are those expected of much older pupils. Pupils enjoy the good range of well-attended sports clubs. The school provides well for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education and consequently the outcomes are good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care taken in relation to the appearance of the grounds and learning areas typifies the meticulous attention paid to the needs and welfare of the pupils. Child protection, health and safety, including risk assessments, first aid, and fire precaution arrangements are secure. The care provided for pupils with moderate learning, speech and language difficulties, behavioural and emotional needs and those in the early stages of learning English is good, allowing pupils to be fully included in all aspects of school life. There is a well-judged combination of withdrawal and in-class support provided by well-trained learning support assistants and specialist teachers. The school cooperates exceptionally well with outside agencies and with partner organisations,

including the neighbouring junior school. Good target setting and tracking procedures are in place for all groups of pupils, but pupils are not always confident at assessing their progress against their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The impact of leadership and management on achievement and pupils' personal development is good. The full impact from recent initiatives is yet to be realized. Teaching and learning are monitored rigorously and the results of this work are seen in good teaching and learning although this is not yet consistent in all lessons. Responsibility for school improvement is widely shared and the school knows itself well because monitoring is regular and rigorous at all levels. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, the school improvement plan is focused on the right areas for improvement, such as improving the standards of more able pupils in writing. Governors monitor well, for example, through the English Standards Working Party, which checks up on standards and achievement regularly. The school welcomes and values feedback from parents, which is taken into account when planning developments.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 the learners' needs?	2
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.

Annex A

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	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

26 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of College Park Infant School, Portsmouth, PO2 0LB

Thank you very much for helping us during the inspection, particularly by talking to us about your school and all the opportunities that it offers you. We were particularly impressed by your friendliness and politeness.

Here are the other things that we liked best about your school.

- You enjoy school. You particularly appreciate your swimming pool, which gives you the chance to learn to swim at an early age. Well done for swimming so well!
- You behave well and have good attitudes to your work.
- Your school offers you a wide range of exciting opportunities to learn in school and at other times because it has excellent links with many other organisations.
- You are learning well. Your classrooms are pleasant places to learn in and you have good relationships with adults in school.
- Teachers take good care of you and ensure that if you need help, it is provided. You know whom to talk to if you are worried about anything.
- You are developing well personally and understand very well about staying healthy and keeping safe. You contribute well to your school community by taking on responsibility for jobs and also to the wider community, for example, by fund raising.
- All the adults at your school are working together well as a team to do their best to provide you with a good education.

We have asked your school to improve your target setting system so that you understand better how to improve your work. We have asked teachers to help you to do your very best, by ensuring that work is always hard enough and by giving you more opportunities to write in other subjects.

So that you can learn as well as possible, we ask your families to always bring you to school regularly.

I would like to send you my best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely,

Beryl Richmond

Lead Inspector