

Micheldever CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133292
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	316066
Inspection date	29 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Brian Evans

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	99
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Amanda Forsey
Headteacher	Mr Brian Saunders
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2003
School address	Church Street Micheldever Winchester SO21 3DB
Telephone number	019627 74213
Fax number	019627 74213

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector gathered evidence from lesson observations, looking at pupils' work, assessment information, documents, interviews and discussions. He evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects: pupils' achievement; the impact of school's key priorities in teaching and learning; and the use of assessment by teachers to support pupils' learning. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Micheldever is a small, popular rural primary school. Pupil numbers have risen by around 20 per cent in just over two years. Most pupils are White British. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than that usually found. The proportion of pupils who have learning needs or disabilities is above average. A number of pupils move to the independent sector or out of the area at the age of 7, 8 or 10 years. The school also attracts pupils during later years and inward mobility is relatively high compared with similar schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Micheldever is a good and improving school. Standards are above average and pupils make good progress. Of the many parents who returned questionnaires all, except a very small minority, highlighted the happy family ethos and positive learning environment in the school. A parent wrote 'We consider ourselves very fortunate to be in the catchment area of such an excellent school.' The headteacher, staff and governors have worked effectively together to maintain standards during the construction of new buildings on an already cramped site.

In a small school there are fluctuations in the national test results at the end of Year 6 largely due to the very small numbers of pupils in each year group. However, the school has rigorous assessment and monitoring systems that focus effectively on the progress of individual pupils. For example, on the first of every month each pupil submits to the headteacher a written task assessed by the class teacher. Month by month analysis of profiles of achievement show that most pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy, given their starting points, and that many exceed expectations. Standards linked to National Curriculum levels are entered into pupils' exercise books and are accompanied by constructive comments that identify specific strengths and areas for development. The success of this system is exemplified in the good quality of writing and numeracy in pupils' books and in the school meeting its challenging targets at the end of Years 2 and 6. However, as the school has recognised, this analysis also shows that in some lesson provision for the higher ability pupils is not always consistent. As a result they do not always perform consistently well in English, mathematics and science.

Good learning is supported by effective teaching. Teachers benefit from the good progress that has been made in the last year on the key priorities on learning identified in the school improvement plan. Schemes of work now explicitly encourage active learning. For example, good software programs on investigative mathematics and the use of interactive whiteboards effectively enhance the learning of many pupils. The new library enables pupils to apply their literacy skills well in topics and so extend their opportunities to learn more independently. Although at an early stage, teachers are increasingly using the greater number of laptop computers and the wider range of information and communication technology (ICT) resources to make more explicit links between subjects and enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding, especially in English, mathematics and science.

Support assistants work effectively in partnership with teachers. Parents confirm that the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are met well. An extension of informal and formal training opportunities for support assistants is having a good impact on the quality of group work. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson there was real buzz in the learning across a number of adult-led groups who were busily engaged in a variety of well pitched tasks including ICT and fine motor skills.

Pupils enjoy the positive learning environment brought about by the good care and concern shown by all adults for each pupil. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Adults encourage a family atmosphere. The success of this approach was illustrated at morning break when two teams, including boys and girls of all ages from Year 1 to Year 6, were safely and happily playing a football game. The buddy system with older pupils looking after the younger pupils and new pupils is a strength of the school. A high proportion of pupils have school dinners and parents and pupils are very aware of what constitutes healthy foods as well as the importance of an active lifestyle. For example, the school cook and lunch supervisors

know all children individually and sensitively guide them towards healthy diets. School council members carry out their roles in a mature and responsible way. Participation in clubs and physical activities is good. Many older pupils are enthusiastic about writing and performing as, for example, in their drama project 'Creation in the Night' based on the rainforests of Brazil. Extra-curricular activities are good and extend many pupils' enjoyment of learning outside the classroom. A small refurbished outside play area has a well-furnished and popular adventure playground. Topics in the curriculum that encourage pupils to stay safe have a good impact on most pupils.

Behaviour is good and attendance is broadly average. Procedures to counter bullying or name-calling are followed closely. Pupils confirm that they tell a teacher or the headteacher straightaway when they occur and that such incidents are dealt with very quickly and effectively. There have been no exclusions for the past five years. These important factors increasingly support pupils' good achievement and confirm their enjoyment of school life. The school recognises that children need to develop a sense of genuine caring and concern for others. Most pupils respond well to opportunities that are offered to them in designing and budgeting community activities. A pupil in Zimbabwe is sponsored through World Vision and pupils are engaged in building a link with a school in Belarus as part of the Chernobyl Children Life Line charity.

Leadership and management are good and accurate self-assessment procedures identify key priority areas. The headteacher, with the full support of his governors, has a clear vision for the school and leads teachers and support staff well. However, there is a very small minority of parents who have expressed concerns either about changes of teaching staff or who feel that the leadership of the school is too autocratic. Overall, good progress has been made since the last inspection, morale is good and the school has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage provides a good start to children's education. One parent commented: 'My daughter has had a wonderful gentle start to school.' Since the beginning of this school year all Reception children are being taught as one group and not, as before, in a mixed Reception/Year 1 class. So far, at this early stage, and from starting points that are typical for their age, the children are making good progress across all areas of learning. Pupils' all-round development is developing well and is largely due to the good informed planning and leadership of the teacher and the very productive partnership and support that she has from the experienced learning assistant in the Reception Class. Children are effectively prepared for their transition into Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement for higher ability pupils by ensuring all lessons meet their particular needs.
- Restore confidence of a very small minority of parents in the quality of provision and leadership of the school.

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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?	2
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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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 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	2
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

13 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Micheldever CofE Primary School, Winchester, SO21 3DB

I am writing to let you know how much I enjoyed my visit to your school. It was a pleasure to talk to so many of you and I very much appreciated the help you gave me during the day. You will be pleased to hear that I think that Micheldever is a good school and that you are making good progress in your lessons. Here are a number of things I like about your school:

- you get a good start to school life in Reception class
- you make good progress in your literacy and numeracy
- you are keen to come to school, enjoy learning and look after each other very well. I especially enjoyed watching the group of boys and girls of all ages who were happily playing football together during morning break
- you are keen to follow a healthy lifestyle and make a good contribution to the life of the school. I enjoyed my meal with you at lunchtime
- you enjoy taking part in activities outside the classroom.

The challenge now is to achieve even higher standards in your work. I have asked your teachers, with your help, to raise achievement even further, especially of high attaining pupils, and to continue to work closely with your parents.

Once again, thank you for being so friendly and helpful.

Brian Evans

Lead Inspector