

Anstey Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115851
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326276
Inspection date	11 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Janet Sinclair

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Neil Bridger
Headteacher	Miss Carol Walters
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2005
School address	Eastbrooke Road Alton GU34 2DR
Telephone number	01420 84486
Fax number	01420 542740

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, and investigated the following issues: overall achievement, girls' achievement, the impact of leadership and management on achievement and the quality of personal development, curriculum and care, guidance and support. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form (SEF), national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, tracking documents, observation of the school at work, interviews with staff, pupils and an analysis of parents' questionnaires. 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 the SEF were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Anstey is an average-sized junior school. While the proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is below average, there is a higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These are mainly moderate learning and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The deputy headteacher has been acting headteacher since September 2008 due to the headteacher's temporary secondment to the local authority. The school has the Healthy Schools award.

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. It has some outstanding features. The headteacher and acting headteacher, with the support of all staff, provide exceptional care for pupils through a very professional and well-considered approach to identifying and providing for their needs. As a result, pupils' personal development is outstanding; they have very good attitudes to work and make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. A stimulating curriculum, coupled with excellent enrichment opportunities, ensures pupils' enjoyment and commitment. They say that lessons are fun and interesting. As a result, they enjoy school and their attendance is good. Parents are mainly supportive of the school and fully appreciate the many extra-curricular activities, residential visits and the high level of care their children receive. Many parents have paid tribute to the staff: as one rightly stated, 'I feel that the school promotes a positive ethos regarding learning and relationships. My children have all been happy and successful here', and another commented, 'The outdoor activities and residential trips are exceptional', summing up many of the positive comments made.

Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils across the school achieve well given their average starting points and capabilities. In recent national tests girls' performance has been less strong than boys, particularly in mathematics. The school quickly put effective measures in place to address this. Girls have been encouraged to speak up in class and there has been a strong emphasis on boosting their self-belief where they lack confidence. This is proving successful as noted in better results for girls in the most recent tests. It was also noticeable in the lessons observed, when girls were willing to speak up and explain their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well and sometimes very well. This is due to the very good attention given by teachers and support staff to the pupils' specific needs through well-targeted interventions and small group work. For example, 'Catch up' reading and a phonographics programme have been used very successfully to support their learning.

Pupils' good progress is due to consistently good teaching. Senior staff monitor teaching regularly and support is given where needed to ensure the quality of teaching is maintained. Good involvement of all subject leaders, coupled with peer coaching among staff, is helping the school to raise teaching quality even further. Relationships at all levels are excellent, enabling pupils to feel confident about their work and secure within their learning environment. This is very important for those who lack confidence or who find it difficult to conform. Additionally, a specialist support assistant has been engaged to support these pupils so that they learn to manage their behaviour or deal with their emotions. This has helped to improve pupils' attitudes to school and learning. Teachers plan and organise lessons well, making good use of a variety of resources and drama to enhance learning. Pupils particularly enjoy the use of drama when discussing personal issues or when performing the role of the witches in Macbeth. Most teachers question pupils effectively and sustain a good pace in lessons, ensuring pupils enjoy their work and make good progress. Occasionally, there is a lack of focus in questioning or a slow pace, which hinders pupils' progress. Teaching assistants provide good support for small groups and individuals, ensuring that the pupils keep up with their peers. Progress is tracked very carefully within year groups and teachers are held accountable for the standards pupils reach. This is helping to ensure pupils make even progress across the school. However, subject leaders do not always have a clear enough view of pupils' progress over time so that, occasionally, pupils' underachievement is sometimes undetected. Most pupils know their targets, are involved in

assessing their work and respond well to teachers' helpful marking, which improves their rates of progress. However, this is not consistent practice across the school, so not all pupils are fully involved in improving their work.

Pupils' outstanding personal development is seen in the way they collaborate on activities, enjoy group work and recognise the important contribution they make to the school. They are very proud of the pavilion that the upper school pupils helped to build and their strong connection with a Finnish school. They enjoy fund-raising, for example, for children in Kenya and for more design technology equipment for their own school. As responsible school councillors, they do excellent work such as helping to develop the school grounds. They know how to stay healthy through sensible eating and plenty of exercise. Pupils spoken to said that they feel very safe in school as there is very little bullying, and when it does occur, it is dealt with quickly. They are also very pleased with the excellent range of extra-curricular activities available and particularly mentioned Book Week, Roman Day and dance club, as well as the many sporting clubs they can attend. All of these contribute very well to the pupils' very strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The headteacher and acting headteacher provide a clear direction for the work of the school and work very well together as a team. Subject leaders are enthusiastic and committed to school improvement. Several are leading teachers within the authority. They are having a good impact on the work of the school. For example, the information and communication technology (ICT) subject leader has transformed teachers' confidence in using ICT, as well as ensuring improved progress and accessibility for all pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy computer club and the use of laptops in lessons. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The school improvement plan is a detailed, helpful document, which identifies the main areas for improvement. However, it does not have clearly measurable success criteria attached to priorities, so it makes it difficult for staff and governors to accurately assess the full success of their initiatives. Governors are fully supportive and, through their committees and involvement in the work of the school, act as a critical friend.

Good leadership and management at all levels has ensured the school has maintained, and improved, the good provision of the last inspection, thus indicating a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the school improvement plan has clear success criteria so that the school can better measure its impact.
- Make better use of tracking to ensure that subject leaders have a clearer view of pupils' progress over the longer term.

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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?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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 learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

25 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Anstey Junior School, Alton, GU34 2DR

I am writing to tell you how much I enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping me with the inspection. I really enjoyed talking to the school council and pupils in Year 4 and Year 6. I was impressed with the contribution you make to the school community and your willingness to take on responsibilities, as well as your enthusiasm for all school activities.

Your parents think that Anstey is a good school and I agree. It also has some outstanding features.

Here is a list of some other things I liked.

- You have a good headteacher, acting headteacher, teachers and school staff who are dedicated to ensuring your school is a happy, safe place where you can work hard and do your best.
- You make good progress because your teachers make lessons interesting and fun and monitor your progress very carefully.
- You thoroughly enjoy school, especially the teaching, sports clubs, visits, and special events such as Book Week.
- You are very well cared for and in turn are caring, kind and supportive of each other.

Every school has something it could do better, so this is what I have asked your school to do to help you learn even more.

- Ensure that the most important things in the school improvement plan have clearly stated targets so the school can check how effective improvements have been.
- To make more checks on your progress and work over time so that you all do as well as you can.

With every good wish for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Janet Sinclair

Lead Inspector