

Denmead Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115882
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326283
Inspection date	27 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Graham Stephens

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	217
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Gary Mundy
Headteacher	Mrs Jacqui Bradshaw
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hambledon Road Waterlooville PO7 6PN
Telephone number	02392 262717
Fax number	02392 262717

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- The extent to which leadership and management over the past three years has improved the quality of teaching; the progress pupils make in writing, especially those of higher ability; and mathematics standards.
- The impact of the academic support and guidance pupils receive to ensure that they know what they need to do to improve.
- To confirm the school's view that there are strengths in pupils' personal development, care and well-being and the curriculum.

Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, work in books, discussion with pupils, staff and governors, the school's documentation and assessment information and the inspection questionnaires returned from parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors 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

This school is similar in size to other primary schools. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has recently increased and is now just above average. In this school, these pupils are largely those who find aspects of English and mathematics challenging. There are very few pupils for whom English is an additional language. There is provision for children aged four and five in the Early Years Foundation Stage in three Reception classes. There is an after school club that is managed by a private provider and was not part of this inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school where pupils make excellent progress in their academic studies and in their personal development. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, very well supported by all staff and governors, there is a relentless drive to accelerate progress even further. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. 'I have only good things to say - it is a brilliant school that has exceeded all my expectations of how an infant school should be; not only has my daughter been taught effectively but she has become a confident and happy child within a great environment.' This is typical of the comments received. Pupils enjoy their time at school and this is reflected in their excellent behaviour and good attendance. They are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility within the school community. Consequently, trained ambassadors welcome visitors and are proud to show them round. The well-supported and active school council was observed leading an assembly, making suggestions that would make lunchtimes an even more pleasurable experience.

Children enter the school with skills and understanding that vary but are usually broadly in line with those expected for their age, with writing being comparatively weaker in some years. Careful assessments and very effective organisation enable children to make excellent progress from their starting points. This continues to the end of Year 2. Standards have improved year on year since the last inspection and are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Displays reflect excellent use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning in all aspects of the curriculum.

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. An excellent programme of personal, social and health education ensures that pupils know much about how to stay healthy and remain safe. They understand that working hard at school is important and they are confident and reflective learners. Pupils really enjoy all that the school has to offer and expressed their feelings in their design for the school logo with the words 'we love to learn.'

Teaching overall is outstanding. Teachers are very skilful in asking questions that encourage the pupils to reflect, explain and justify their thinking. Teaching pupils in similar-ability groups for mathematics and English has ensured that progress for all pupils, including those who find aspects of reading, writing and mathematics challenging, has continued to accelerate. Teachers regularly assess and check pupils' progress and, if necessary, move them to groups where their learning needs are best met. Teaching assistants, many supporting individual pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are an integral part of the team. This support, together with very careful planning, excellent support from external agencies and outstanding teaching, ensures that these pupils achieve very well.

Teachers are very well supported by a stimulating and highly effective curriculum that has been thoughtfully constructed to ensure that learning builds well on what pupils know, understand and can do. It provides exciting and enjoyable opportunities for pupils to apply and consolidate the skills they have acquired. The exciting school grounds, which include areas of woodland, orchard, allotments and a fitness trail, offer an excellent environment that supports study in many subjects. The curriculum is very well supported by ICT and pupils naturally turn to computers and use them as tools to support them in their learning.

The care, support and guidance given to pupils are outstanding. Systems to ensure pupils' safety are well understood and applied by all. An ethos that encourages high aspirations, cooperation and understanding promotes an atmosphere that is conducive to learning.

Assessment procedures are secure and ICT is used well to track the progress of individuals. Teachers use this information well to match work to pupils' needs and make sure that they are challenged appropriately. Pupils know what they need to do to improve because of the ongoing help and support they receive and their developing ability to review and improve their work. Pupils are prepared exceptionally well for the next stage of their education because of the well-above-average standards they attain and the opportunities they have to show initiative and plan and work together.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The exceptional headteacher gives an exemplary lead and relates effectively with pupils, parents and the local community. She is supported by a leadership and management team of the highest quality and together they ensure that all staff have the opportunity to play a role in strategic planning. The administrative team and site manager are considerable assets to the school and are much appreciated by all concerned. Governance is excellent. Strong leadership, effective organisation and a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses ensure that governors consistently hold the headteacher to account for the standards attained and the progress pupils make. Community cohesion is successfully promoted both within the school and its local community. The school has made a good start in engaging with communities further afield by, for example, establishing links with an inner city school and exploring links with communities in other countries such as China. These links are at a very early stage of development and it is too early to judge their impact.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Reception classes is outstanding. Excellent leadership and highly effective teamwork provide a vibrant and interesting learning environment in which children are taught very well. The partnership with parents, pre-school providers and other agencies is a real strength. Parents commented on the 'really good' induction procedures and 'the welcoming, encouraging and nurturing environment'. One talked enthusiastically about the recent mathematics evenings that were presented to the whole school. This very good parental support contributes well to the very high quality of learning.

Children progress and achieve exceptionally well because staff fully understand how young children learn and develop. They provide a wide range of activities that encourage them to explore the world around them. These include the very good use of the extensive and varied school grounds and visits. Teachers and assistants ensure that routines are well established and consequently children feel secure and very well cared for. Classrooms provide a very good range of exciting activities, although one is smaller than the others and this creates some constraints, particularly on whole-class activities. The outdoor play area is well planned and equipped for the development of all learning areas.

Children choose activities independently during carefully monitored free-play sessions known as 'Sparkle'. More formal sessions are of a very high standard, for example, in promoting an understanding of letter sounds, songs and when acting out stories. Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning. Most show a high level of ability to work with others and sustain their interest in specific activities. They work hard because they know that they are appreciated and that their ideas are used, for example, where they transformed their role play area into a cave for a bear. Children have good opportunities to use computers and individuals were observed using the interactive whiteboard confidently.

Assessment is thorough, as is the focus on review and evaluation and the use of data to monitor children's learning. The school sees the Early Years Foundation Stage as crucial in promoting excellent progress for all children and seeks to involve all school staff in its development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' understanding of community cohesion further through the links being established beyond the local community and fully implement the procedures to judge the impact of these initiatives.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
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?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

08 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Denmead Infant School,Waterlooville,PO7 6PN

It was a delight and a privilege to visit your school. The inspectors really enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say.

We think you go to an outstanding school and this is why.

- You do very well in your work. You are proud of the things that you do and explained yourselves very clearly.
- You showed us in everything you said and did how much you enjoy school and all the exciting things your teachers plan for you to do.
- You are very polite and caring of each other. Your behaviour is excellent.
- Your teachers are very good at planning and teach you really well.
- All the adults in your school make sure that you are encouraged, challenged and really well looked after.
- Your headteachers and the other people who help run your school are doing an excellent job.

Every school, even one as good as yours, has things that could be improved.

We have asked that your teachers continue to build links with pupils who go to different schools in this country and abroad to help you all understand more about how people live in the wider world.

Yours faithfully

Graham Stephens

Lead Inspector