

Surrey Hills C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135953
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	381977
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Friend
Headteacher	Hazel Weaver
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed eight teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body and staff, and talked with pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, and assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined questionnaires from 149 parents and carers, as well as those from staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of the split site on communication, curriculum coherence and continuity.
- The accuracy of the school's judgement that the curriculum is outstanding, particularly in regard to its impact on pupils' academic progress and personal development.
- How well tracking information provides an accurate view of pupils' progress through the school.

Information about the school

This average-size school opened in September 2010, following a period when the two first schools serving the villages of Westcott and Abinger Common were joined in a federation. The new school operates on both the original sites, which are about three miles apart on the outskirts of Dorking. At the Abinger Common site, there are three classes; a Reception class, a mixed-Year 1 and 2 class, and a mixed-Year 2 and 3 class. There are three classes with the same year groups based at Westcott, plus one Year 4 and two Year 5 classes. The two previous schools were both first schools, which meant that at the time of the inspection the oldest pupils were in Year 5. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social problems. Others have speech, language and communication needs. The school has Healthy Schools status. A breakfast club is run by the school and there is a privately managed after-school club.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school where pupils enjoy learning and achieve well. Levels of attainment by Year 2 are above average and Year 5 pupils are working above the levels expected for their age. Outstanding leadership by the headteacher, senior staff and members of the governing body enables the school to operate as a cohesive unit, despite the distance between the two sites. Pupils also make an excellent contribution to the smooth running of the school. Parents and carers hold the school in high regard. Among their numerous positive comments were, 'We are absolutely thrilled with this school', 'Our child is thriving at Surrey Hills' and 'A fantastic community school'.

Relationships between staff and children are excellent. Pupils behave well and this contributes to the very purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Teaching is good and almost all lessons move at a brisk pace because teachers are skilled in engaging pupils. Teachers assess pupils' work accurately and, for the most part, set tasks that are appropriately challenging for pupils of different abilities. Occasionally, however, pupils are given work at the same level which some find too difficult and some too easy. Teachers generally provide good feedback for pupils in their marking, identifying where they have done well and how they could improve. This approach is not consistent across the school as some written comments do not provide such individual guidance.

The curriculum offers imaginative and effective opportunities for learning. Music and art, which are mostly taught by specialists, are particularly strong. Literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well across the curriculum. Pupils routinely turn to internet sources for research, although this is sometimes frustrated by unreliable connections. Staff are being trained in the use of the learning platform¹ but some lack confidence in drawing on this resource. This means that the range of educational software available for pupils is rather limited.

Underpinned by the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, there is a strong team spirit and a common determination to sustain and build on the school's many strengths. Highly effective systems for self-evaluation are already well established. Members of the governing body play a leading role in this process and have an accurate view of the school's strengths and key areas for development. They are using these insights to draw up strategic plans for the school's expansion as the

¹ The learning platform is an online resource for schools within the local authority

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number of pupils increases. The school has a good capacity for sustained improvement. Much has been achieved in the four terms since the school was first established. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and is having a strong impact on the rate of pupils' progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine the use of assessment information by
 - ensuring the tasks set in lessons are more consistently geared to the varying abilities of pupils
 - ironing out inconsistencies in the quality of feedback and guidance given to pupils through teachers' marking.
- Provide further opportunities for pupils to use modern technology to support their learning and extend their skills by
 - developing teachers' skills and confidence in planning the use of modern technology across the curriculum
 - extending the range of educational software to support the planned learning themes
 - improving the reliability of the school's internet connection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils really enjoy school and achieve well in their academic work and in their personal development. They display very good attitudes in class, where they are attentive, cooperative, interested and keen to do well. Pupils who find learning difficult generally make good progress, with many reaching the expected levels for their age. Sensitive support for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social problems enables them, for the most part, to take a full part in lessons. Specialist support, backed up by school staff, helps pupils with speech, language and communication needs to improve.

Levels of attainment are above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 2. The proportion reaching the higher levels in reading and writing was twice the national average in 2011. Pupils' very good skills in writing were evident during lessons and from their recent work. Composing an adventure story, for example, a pupil in Year 2 showed a very good grasp of the genre and used accurate punctuation, writing, "We are nearly there", said Jake, "We are here at the witches house". "Can you make a special potion so we can turn back to normal?" Pupils' secure knowledge of number facts was evident, for example, as they used their knowledge of multiplication tables to find multiples of 2, 5 and 10.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3, 4 and 5. During a Year 4 lesson, pupils made rapid progress when learning about inverse operations. They generated products randomly and soon saw the relationships between expressions such as $6 \times 7 = 42$ and $42 \div 6 = 7$. Levels of attainment are above those expected by Year 5.

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Pupils produce writing of high quality, indicating that they are building well on their previous learning. Many pupils show a particular flair. In the style of *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, one wrote,

‘They find out they have fallen into an enchanted forest; now the mystery begins... “Jared, where are you?”, Simon shouted and his echo bounced back from the forest...the flowers turned into sprites and the tree bark turned into faces and started walking around groaning.’

Pupils say they feel safe in school and are aware of the risks outside school as well as the potential pitfalls in using the internet and mobile phones. They have a secure understanding of what constitutes healthy living and participate enthusiastically in physical education lessons and extra sporting activities. This is reflected in the school’s Healthy Schools status. Pupils make a strong contribution to the smooth running of the school. They have a strong voice in decision making and willingly take on extra responsibilities, such as school councillors and house captains. They help to organise fundraising events for local and international charities. Pupils regularly participate in local festivals and frequently perform in concerts. They demonstrate an expressive and creative impulse in their sensitive singing and thoughtful art work.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ²	2
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ²	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most lessons are planned very well, taking account of pupils’ different starting points. During a numeracy lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils made rapid progress in calculating as the work was pitched exactly at the right level for each group.

² The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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Occasionally, the more-able pupils spend too long covering old ground before tackling more demanding tasks. Conversely, the less-confident pupils sometimes find the work difficult and struggle to get started. That said, these pupils are generally well supported in class and in small withdrawal groups by a team of well-qualified and experienced teaching assistants.

Pupils are increasingly aware of the next steps they need to take to improve. Many have target sheets printed in their books and conscientiously keep a record of their achievements against specific criteria. Teachers generally provide good feedback in their marking, praising good work and suggesting ways even very good work could be further improved. Some marking, however, is rather cursory with little guidance on the next steps pupils should take.

Curriculum activities engage pupils, provide memorable experiences, and promote their learning and personal development well. Visits and visitors inspire and motivate pupils. For example, following a recent visit by a children’s author and illustrator, she wrote on her blog, ‘I had an awesome time with Year 4... I was blown away by your character ideas and some very beautiful art work.’ Pupils’ independence is encouraged as they make personal choices about which aspects of a theme to pursue. Teachers make sure that their subsequent activities draw on their existing skills and include a good element of challenge. For example, when comparing life in different communities, pupils used a good range of styles, including news reports, and included tables and graphs in their presentations. Class sets of laptop computers provide good opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate their skills in information and communication technology (ICT). Year 5 pupils, for example, were creating animations about famous people in history. Computer work, however, consists mostly of word processing and multimedia presentations. Access to interactive software in order to extend the range of ICT activities, including the use of the local learning platform, is often frustrated by technical difficulties.

Pastoral support for pupils is strong. Many parents and carers commented on the school’s welcoming atmosphere. One commented, ‘My child is treated as an individual and allowed to grow and develop accordingly.’ Another wrote, ‘Every member of staff is so caring and helpful.’ New pupils are warmly welcomed and soon settle in. Those moving up from Year 3 at the Abinger site to Year 4 at Westcott are very well prepared so that their transition is as smooth as possible. Support is provided straight away for any pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. The joint special needs coordinators work closely with class teachers to help ensure that appropriate support is provided, drawing on advice from external agencies when appropriate. Parents and carers and pupils appreciate the breakfast club which provides a safe and welcoming environment.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2

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The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Members of the leadership team and governing body are unstinting in their determination to ensure the newly established school provides the best possible learning environment for pupils. Mindful of the potential difficulties of ensuring coherence and continuity between both sites, effective systems of communication have been devised. Key staff have whole-school responsibilities which necessitate frequent contact and communication between the two locations. Planning and preparation are carried out jointly by teachers of the same year groups on both sites. As a result of the unswerving commitment of all staff to get on with the job, there is a common sense of belonging and purpose. A close eye is kept on the quality of teaching and learning, through highly focused observation of lessons and regular reviews of pupils’ work and progress. This enables strengths to be shared and further training to be provided where necessary. As a result, almost all the teaching is good and much is now outstanding, and this has accelerated the rate of pupils’ progress, especially in Key Stage 2.

Members of the governing body are exceptionally proactive in monitoring the quality of provision and the outcomes for pupils. They gather information systematically through first-hand visits and careful analysis of the school’s detailed tracking information. This well-focused self-evaluation provides an excellent foundation for detailed development planning. The school has a strong commitment to equal opportunities and to avoiding any discrimination. As a result, all groups of pupils do equally well and are able to participate in all aspects of school life. The governing body ensures that policies for safeguarding pupils are implemented effectively. They regularly undertake risk assessments and ensure that child protection policies are implemented.

Strong partnerships with neighbouring schools enable shared training. Senior staff play significant roles in the work of the local cluster group. Work in physical education is enhanced through close links with specialist teachers at a secondary school. Music is enriched through the support of the nearby Yehudi Menuhin College and by grants from charitable trusts.

Community cohesion is promoted very effectively at local level. Staff, governors, parents and carers commented on the positive impact of the amalgamation on the sense of community across neighbouring parishes. Pupils’ knowledge and understanding of their own locality and of different countries and cultures is developed well through parish activities, curriculum topics, celebrating religious festivals, visitors and contacts with a school in Uganda. Staff are pursuing links with other schools to provide pupils with insights into diverse communities within the United Kingdom.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress within the calm, purposeful and stimulating environments for learning that are established on both sites. Children thoroughly enjoy the good range of indoor and outdoor activities. During one session outdoors, a group of children were busily engaged in building tracks and bridges with large wooden blocks. Others were hiding and searching for plastic letters in the large sand pit. Children quickly engaged inspectors in conversation and were eager to show them round and discuss what they were doing. Some were collecting information and ‘writing’ on clipboards. ‘What’s your name?’ they asked confidently, ‘I’ve written that down.’ Most spoke fluently using a good range of vocabulary and sustained their attention. Indoors, there was a high level of concentration as children worked with the teaching assistant tearing paper to make landscape pictures with silhouettes of trees. Others played cooperatively in the ‘dinosaur museum’ and took orders for the ‘dinosaur café’.

Good progress in children’s awareness of the relationship between letters and sounds was evident in their emergent writing, including viable attempts at writing ‘piza’ (pizza) and ‘cheez’ (cheese). Children’s numeracy skills are reinforced frequently as staff engage them in activities such as singing counting songs or putting numerals in order. Children enjoy a good range of resources in the outdoor areas, although some opportunities are missed for promoting creative activities such as role play.

Children are very well supported by adults who ask pertinent questions which promote children’s thinking and learning. They make notes of significant moments in children’s learning in order to build up a cumulative record of their progress. These

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include verbatim records of conversations which illustrate how well children’s use of language is developing.

The strong partnership with parents and carers is evident in the warm relationships and informal rapport shown as parents and carers accompany their children into school. The joint leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage keep the provision under review and identify areas for further improvement. All staff contribute to the regular recording of children’s progress and use this information to track their achievements. Comparisons with data from other schools in the local authority are made, but the analysis of assessment information with reference to national statistics is not fully established.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaires was well above average. All thought the school was led and managed well. They were almost unanimous in their happiness with their children’s overall experience and in their belief that the school keeps their children safe. There was no pattern to the concerns raised by a very small minority of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Surrey Hills CE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 149 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 222 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	117	79	28	19	4	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	112	75	35	23	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	77	52	66	44	4	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	84	56	60	40	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	82	55	64	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	86	58	55	37	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	93	62	53	36	2	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	78	52	53	36	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	81	54	66	44	2	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	40	78	52	3	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	67	45	74	50	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	117	79	31	21	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	108	72	39	26	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



28 November 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Surrey Hills CE Primary School, Dorking, RH4 3QF

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed watching you work and play happily together. You get on well with one another and with all the adults, and have played your part in getting your new school off to a good start. We were impressed by the work of the school council and house captains in helping you to make your views known to the adults.

The school is providing you with a good education. The quality of teaching is good and this means you make good progress. You told us that you really enjoy learning because your teachers make sure you have many interesting things to do. Inspectors agree that this is the case. The adults care for you very well and help you if you have problems. The way the school is led and managed is outstanding. Those in charge are working really hard to make your new school even better.

Even though Surrey Hills is a good school, we have asked the adults to do some things in order to improve your learning.

- The tasks you are given in most lessons are pitched at the right level for most of you, but we found that this is not always the case and have suggested that teachers could do this more often.
- We saw that teachers often provide you with really good guidance about how to improve your work and we have recommended that they could do this more consistently.
- It was good to see how well you are developing your computer skills and we have made some suggestions about how the school could provide more opportunities for you to use ICT across the curriculum.

All of you can play your part by continuing to try your best and work hard.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton
Lead inspector

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