

Walton Oak Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number134557Local AuthoritySurreyInspection number360625

Inspection dates5-6 May 2011Reporting inspectorMelanie Knowles

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

Type of school Primary

School category Community

Age range of pupils 3-11

Gender of pupils Mixed

Number of pupils on the school roll 460

Appropriate authority The governing body

ChairJim GladmanHeadteacherSeb Sales

Date of previous school inspection26 January 2010School addressAmbleside Avenue

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Twenty-five lessons were observed and 18 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with senior leaders, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at relevant documentation including data on pupils' attainment, progress and attendance, evidence of the school's monitoring and lesson plans. Inspectors considered the 121 responses to the parental questionnaires issued during the inspection. They also analysed questionnaires completed by 89 pupils in Key Stage 2 as well as those completed by members of staff.

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

- The effectiveness of the school's strategies in tackling areas of weakness from the last inspection and increasing the rate of pupils' progress.
- The quality of teaching and challenge and pace in lessons across all classes.
- The effectiveness with which assessment information is used to support learning.
- How well leaders and managers at all levels have built on good improvements identified in October 2010 and whether the impact of their actions demonstrates good capacity to sustain improvement.

Information about the school

Walton Oak is a larger-than-average primary school with an 80-place Nursery. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has increased over the last three years and is now well above average. Most pupils are White British, though the proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is increasing. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has decreased in recent years, but remains above average. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties. The number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.

The headteacher has been absent from the school since May 2010 owing to ill health and the school has been led by the deputy headteacher, as acting headteacher. He has been supported by an experienced associate headteacher. Since the last inspection there have been considerable changes to the teaching staff.

The school hosts a privately run childcare provision for breakfast and after-school clubs. This provision is inspected separately.

When the school was last inspected in January 2010 it was given a notice to improve because its overall effectiveness was inadequate.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Walton Oak Primary School is a satisfactory and improving school. Since the last inspection, the acting headteacher, associate headteacher and staff have worked hard to address areas of weakness and have maintained an unrelenting focus on improving outcomes for pupils. The school has been particularly successful in raising attendance to above average levels and in improving the quality of teaching so that learning and progress in lessons are now generally good. Teachers' assessments and work in pupils' books show that, over time, almost all pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their learning and this is continuing to improve strongly. Some pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 have made good and outstanding progress since the start of the year due to carefully targeted and effective support programmes. School leaders have managed staff changes well and have rigorously monitored the quality of lessons. They have introduced regular meetings to review pupils' progress which have ensured that any underachievement is spotted and dealt with guickly. Teachers now make more accurate assessments of pupils' progress and some are providing their pupils with detailed feedback through their marking, but this is not yet consistent across the school. School leaders recognise that there is still more work to be done to ensure that all teachers make use of assessment strategies in lessons and consistently tailor their planning to the needs of individual pupils in order that progress can be accelerated still further.

Pupils are happy, behave well and say that they feel safe in school. Although there is an active school council and some older pupils act as house captains and monitors, the school does not provide opportunities for enough pupils to take on roles and responsibilities and develop more of the personal qualities that will equip them for the world of work.

Staff work as a good team and strong pastoral support, such as that provided by the nurture leader, ensures all pupils are well cared for. The curriculum is built around themes and makes meaningful links between subjects. The themes have been carefully chosen to ensure that they are engaging for pupils and provide memorable experiences that enhance learning. The impact of the curriculum is clear in pupils' enjoyment, and is contributing to the raising of standards.

The acting headteacher, together with the associate headteacher who has been working with the school, are strong driving forces for improvement. They have made good use of the well-targeted support from the local authority and have used innovative approaches, such as the 'walk down the red carpet' as a reward for regular attendance, to good effect. Senior and middle leaders are also making a good contribution through their work in their phase teams and through the support and advice they have given to colleagues to improve practice.

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

The governing body provides satisfactory support and challenge. Governors are becoming more influential in determining the strategic direction of the school and some key governors are involved in monitoring the work of the school. However, this is not yet widespread or systematic. School leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of what has been achieved and what needs to be done to continue to improve academic outcomes for pupils. This, together with the measurable improvements in all areas of weakness highlighted at the previous inspection, shows the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve pupil progress by:
 - ? ensuring that teachers make sharper use of assessment information to plan activities in lessons that meet the needs of all pupils ?
 - explaining to pupils exactly what they should achieve in each lesson so that they can judge their own success ?
 - improving the quality of marking and feedback so that pupils know what their next steps in learning are.
- Develop pupils' contribution to the school and help them to develop useful workplace skills by:
 - ? enabling more pupils to take on positions of responsibility in school ?
 - consistently involving pupils in decisions about their learning and well-being.
- Develop the role of governors in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

When children start at the school in the Nursery, their skills and knowledge are generally below the levels typical for their age. They make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage, and most have reached expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Until recently, pupils did not sustain the good progress secured in the Early Years Foundation Stage and standards in Key Stages 1 and 2 were below average. Major improvements to teaching and rigorous tracking of pupils' progress have enabled many pupils to make up lost ground. Results in the 2010 national tests were more positive, and current assessment data and pupils' work in lessons and in books show that standards across the school are now at broadly average levels. Improved transition arrangements from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 1 have meant that pupils now make a better start to their time in Key Stage 1. The school recognises that there are still some variations in rates of progress between year groups and that attainment of boys in writing is still below average in some classes.

More rigorous systems for meeting the individual needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have led to better and now satisfactory progress for these pupils. Teaching assistants work alongside individual learners or with small groups and deliver well-focused intervention programmes. Pupils whose circumstances have made

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

them vulnerable, those with barriers to learning and those who speak English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress.

Pupils say they are happy, enjoy school and take pride in their achievements. This is clear from their good behaviour in lessons and around the school and the greatly improved levels of attendance. Pupils are welcoming and positive and behave considerately towards each other, showing that they strive to live up to the five values enshrined in the 'Walton Oak Way'. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is well supported by the rich curriculum, school assemblies and a well-planned programme of cultural activities. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and are very aware of the risks posed by the internet. They also have a good understanding of how to live healthy lives, engage in plenty of exercise at playtimes and take advantage of the school's excellent on-site facilities and lunchtime sports clubs which are led by the school's specialist physical education teacher.

Pupils are developing some of the wider skills and personal qualities needed to equip them for the world of work. Their basic skills are improving, they are confident users of information and communication technology and they are now usually punctual. Pupils show that they can work purposefully on their own or in collaboration with others and they cooperate well on planning tasks and sharing resources. However, the school does not give enough pupils the opportunity to take on positions of responsibility and leadership and pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in planning and making decisions about their learning and well-being.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning			
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹			
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3		
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress			
The extent to which pupils feel safe			
Pupils' behaviour			
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles			
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community			
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3		
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹			
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development			

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching at Walton Oak is now good overall. Teachers work hard to make learning fun for their pupils. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were using logic and problem-solving skills and applying their knowledge about coordinates by playing a game of 'battleships' in pairs. Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively as a team to secure improved progress for pupils and teaching assistants are fully involved in lessons, even when the teacher is directing the learning. The school makes good use of specialist teachers in music and physical education to enhance curriculum provision. There are excellent facilities for sport and outdoor learning. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, are enthusiastic and have very positive relationships with their pupils. They make imaginative use of resources, including the interactive whiteboards. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and independent work in most lessons and interesting activities engage the pupils in their learning. In the best lessons, teachers share success criteria with the pupils so that they know what they have to achieve by the end of the lesson and can judge their own success. However, the school recognises that a sharper use of assessment information in the classroom and refinements to teachers' planning would secure further improvements in pupils' achievement. Teachers' marking of written work is generally thorough, and some informs pupils if they have met the learning intention of the lesson and gives good guidance on what they need to improve.

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

The curriculum is matched increasingly well to pupils' interests and teachers make learning enjoyable for pupils by linking subjects together. For example, in Year 1 pupils were practising letter writing skills in the context of learning about rainforests. The impact of the curriculum is clear in pupils' enjoyment and is also evident in improved levels of attainment.

The school provides good care, guidance and support to all its pupils. There is especially effective support for those pupils who have emotional, social or behavioural needs. The school has effective partnerships with external agencies which provide additional expertise. There are numerous examples of how the personalised care at Walton Oak has helped pupils to overcome barriers to learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

The acting headteacher and the associate headteacher have guided the school skilfully though a challenging period in its development. Their clear and effective leadership is ensuring that the school is moving forward quickly and securely. They are ably supported by senior and middle leaders who are fully involved in school improvement and whose contribution is helping to strengthen the school's leadership capacity. The drive to raise achievement is supported by the whole staff and morale within the school is good. Efforts to improve the quality of teaching have been concerted and effective. Lessons across the school are observed regularly and there is also a regular cycle of planning and workbook scrutiny. Senior leaders give clear oral and written feedback to teachers following lesson monitoring and teachers are given clear targets for improvement which can be followed up at the next observation. Whole-school improvement planning is comprehensive with measurable targets and clear lines of accountability.

School leaders and the governing body ensure that arrangements to keep pupils safe are good and are well understood by staff. They have good regard to the need to promote equality and avoid discrimination and the school's tracking system provides information on the performance of different groups of pupils, including those who are frequently absent from school. The school is aware that more could be done to analyse the progress of different groups to ensure that they are provided with the best opportunities for learning. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils are involved well in the local community and the curriculum has an international perspective. The school recognises that there is more to be done to develop this area of its work.

Relationships with parents and carers are highly positive. Parents and carers are kept well informed through newsletters and have regular opportunities to work alongside their

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children in the classroom as part of the 'Inspire' programme. These sessions are well attended and feedback from parents and carers indicates that they are well received. The school works closely with other local schools in the Elmbridge Partnership and these have contributed to improvement. It works effectively with the on-site before- and after-school club to provide continuity of care.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children make good progress from their starting points. On entry to the school, children's skills are generally below the levels typically expected for children of this age. By the time children transfer into Year 1 attainment for most children is average and in line with levels expected for the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children settle quickly into both the Nursery and Reception classes because staff are skilled at adapting the curriculum to their needs and make learning fun. All staff are expert in adding to the children's learning experience through careful modelling of language and questioning. For instance in the Nursery, after a travelling farm visited the school, children were invited to create their own page of the class scrapbook using photos taken by the staff. As the children worked, the adult alongside them encouraged them to talk about their experiences and modelled language and new vocabulary. Staff make regular observations of children's achievements and make appropriate use of this information to plan exciting opportunities for children to explore and find things out for themselves. Independence is encouraged and celebrated. The outdoor area has been improved and is used well to promote most areas of learning. Staff pay very good attention to children's welfare.

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

Leadership and management are good. There is a clear understanding of what is helping to raise achievement, for example, in the teaching of letters and sounds. Staff work closely together in supporting all children and there are good relationships with parents and carers.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage		
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 very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are happy with their children's experience at Walton Oak Primary School, and believe that their children enjoy school. They strongly agree that the school keeps their children safe and that the teaching is good. Although most parents and carers believe the school deals well with unacceptable behaviour, there are a few who disagree. Inspectors saw good behaviour in almost all lessons and at break times and pupils moved around the school in a calm and orderly way.

A few parents and carers feel that the school does not help them to support their children's learning and have concerns regarding the preparation for future transitions to other phases of their education. The inspection found that these areas were either satisfactory and improving or good. Particularly positive comments from parents include how happy their children are at school, praise for the acting headteacher and the teachers and appreciation of the care their children receive.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Walton Oak 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 121 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 460 pupils registered at the school.

Statements		ngly ree	Ag	ree	Disa	gree	Stro disa	ngly gree
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	74	61	46	38	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	81	67	37	31	1	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	67	55	48	40	1	1	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	58	48	54	45	5	4	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	69	57	51	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	50	47	39	9	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	56	46	61	50	3	2	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)	58	48	46	38	8	7	3	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	48	55	45	6	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	45	47	39	6	5	6	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	49	40	59	49	6	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	71	59	39	32	5	4	4	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	71	59	43	36	6	5	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)				
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate	
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0	
Primary schools	6	47	40	7	
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11	
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3	
Special schools	28	49	19	4	
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10	
All schools	10	46	37	7	

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 31 December 2010 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 suc	ccess of a pupil in their learning,
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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: 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.

■ 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.



9 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Walton Oak Primary School, Walton-on-Thames KT12 3LN

Thank you for the help and the welcome that you gave me and the other inspectors when we visited your school recently. The inspection team found that your school is now satisfactory overall, it has improved since the last inspection and it is getting better all the time. This is because those responsible for running the school are doing this well and because teaching is good.

These are the things we found to be best about your school.

- You behave well and are polite and kind to each other.
- The staff at the school care for you well, and this helps you to feel safe.
- The curriculum provides you with many exciting experiences.
- The way the school works with your parents, carers and other people makes a good contribution to your learning and well-being.
- More of you now come to school regularly and you are proud of your good attendance. The school's five values in the 'Walton Oak Way' help to remind you to be respectful, positive, considerate, trusting and responsible.

We have asked your school to do several important things to help it to become even better.

- ? The teachers need to make sure that the work you are given is always at the right level and that you understand how you can meet the learning intention in every lesson.
- ? The school needs to give more of you the chance to take on responsibilities in school so that you can develop your leadership skills.
- ? Governors need to make checks on the work of the school more often so that they can be sure for themselves that it is continuing to improve.

It was a pleasure to visit your school. All of you can continue to help by working hard and making sure that you keep attending school every day. We wish you every success and happiness for the future.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Knowles

Her Majesty's Inspector

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