

Chandler's Ford Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115872
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	363839
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jim Pretty
Headteacher	Christine Heare
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2008
School address	Kings Road Eastleigh SO53 2EY
Telephone number	02380 252655
Fax number	02380 273384
Email address	adminoffice@chandlersford-inf.hants.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and observed seven teachers. Inspectors held meetings with governors and staff and talked with pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined questionnaires from 109 parents and carers, as well as those from staff.

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

- The achievement of boys in writing and of the more-able girls in mathematics to see how well the school is tackling some recent gender differences.
- The extent to which governance has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged satisfactory.
- The accuracy of the school's judgment that it has moved from good to outstanding since the last inspection in respect of:
 - care, guidance and support
 - engagement with parents and carers
 - partnerships in promoting learning and well-being.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school. Around 90% of the pupils are of White British heritage with the remainder from other, mostly Asian, minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties. The school has Healthy Schools status.

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

Pupils come to this good school eagerly each morning and thoroughly enjoy learning. Their behaviour is exemplary; they are keen to do well and attendance levels are high. The school has an outstanding relationship with parents and carers; they see themselves as partners in their children's education. Their numerous positive comments included: 'a welcoming, warm and caring place', 'I could not have asked for more from the school' and 'My child is thriving and loves school.' Parents and carers are confident that the school keeps their children safe and this view was endorsed during the inspection when pupils said they felt extremely secure in school and explained how they could keep themselves safe.

Pupils develop a love of learning because teachers are skilled in engaging them and providing tasks which build on their individual starting points. As a result, pupils make good progress through the school and their attainment is generally above average. Pupils read very well but, despite some successful initiatives, boys' competence in writing does not reflect their skills in reading.

Outstanding care, guidance and support are evident in the extremely welcoming atmosphere for pupils and their families, the high levels of attendance and the strong support for pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. There are excellent partnerships with external agencies. Staff not only draw on outside expertise but also offer professional support for colleagues in other schools.

Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and take care to provide work which challenges all groups. In their eagerness to help pupils tackle new work, however, teachers sometimes provide a little too much support, which means pupils do not have the opportunity to try out their own ideas independently.

The school has moved forward on several fronts due to strong leadership, management and governance. Subject leaders have led several successful initiatives, although they do not routinely use assessment information to evaluate the impact new strategies have on pupils' achievement.

Self-evaluation is rigorous and provides senior managers and members of the governing body with a clear idea of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Following a systematic review of how the school promotes community cohesion, for example, this is now rightly a priority for improvement. The school's track record in building on strengths and addressing weaknesses indicates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Narrow the gap in boys' attainment between reading and writing by:

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- embedding the successful strategies that have been introduced
- ensuring that boys know the key vocabulary that will be useful in their writing tasks
- exploring further ways to motivate boys to write, including use of the stimulating outdoor areas.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop independence by:
 - giving them the freedom to pursue their own ideas
 - limiting the amount of support some pupils are given before tackling new tasks.
- Support subject managers in using assessment information to analyse the impact of curriculum initiatives on pupils' progress.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to gain a deeper understanding of cultural diversity by:
 - ensuring that this is given a stronger emphasis in the school's promotion of community cohesion
 - providing first-hand experiences for pupils to engage with children from different communities and diverse backgrounds elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and their overall achievement is good. In recent years, the progress boys make in writing has been slower than in other subjects but, albeit slowly, this is picking up. A focus on ensuring that the more-able girls fulfil their potential in mathematics has borne fruit, with more reaching the higher levels.

Pupils made at least good progress in almost all the lessons observed. For example, Year 1 pupils made rapid gains in linking sounds and letters. Pupils read well and this is often reflected in the vocabulary that they use in their written work. This is more evident in girls' writing, however. Reconstructing the story *Fantastic Mr Fox* one girl in Year 2 used sophisticated sentence construction: 'He is intelligent, smart and fine as can be. A very handsome fox he is!' Boys are less confident in using adjectives in this way or experimenting with the order of words. During a Year 2 lesson, pupils quickly learned the properties of three-dimensional shapes, counting the number of edges, faces and corners and spotting patterns. Pupils' secure grasp of number facts was evident from their mathematics books. Most Year 2 pupils add and subtract two-digit numbers using a variety of methods. One proudly said, 'My target is three-digit numbers,' and proceeded to demonstrate what he had learned. With the strong support of teaching assistants, pupils who are falling behind or who have speech, language and communication difficulties make good and often exceptional progress.

Pupils' excellent behaviour contributes significantly to their learning and progress. Outside lessons, they have the maturity to sort out any minor problems themselves. Pupils' good awareness of health issues is reflected in the school's Healthy School status. They know of the importance of a balanced diet but their understanding of the benefits of exercise is not as secure. Pupils take pride in their roles as members of the TED (Together Everyone Decides) council and their 'VIP' classroom responsibilities. Their clear idea of right and wrong and their extremely good social development are evident in the way pupils conduct

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themselves and the positive ethos across the school. Their good spiritual development is seen in their thoughtful reflection in assemblies, their sensitive responses to one another and their expressive artwork. Involvement in raising funds for charities, together with the study of other countries, gives pupils a reasonable awareness of global issues, although they have limited insights into cultural diversity within the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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 ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Pupils enjoy a good range of interesting activities and experiences through the curriculum and extra activities. There is a strong focus on ensuring that every pupil gains a solid foundation in literacy and numeracy. At the same time, pupils have good opportunities to practise, consolidate and extend these skills through imaginative topics which interest and engage them. They talked enthusiastically about their current Victorian topic, and their writing revealed a good understanding of the era. One wrote, 'I went in a bathing machine and then had a penny lick. It tasted fantastic. I went on the pier, looking at the shiny sea.' Pupils routinely use new technology such as the internet and digital cameras for research and presentation. Art and music enrich pupils' experiences and play a strong part in their cultural development. The school is, rightly, reviewing the curriculum with a view to designing further topics that involve writing for different purposes and appeal to pupils, especially boys.

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Good and often outstanding teaching is the main reason why pupils achieve well. Teachers have wonderful relationships with pupils, which make for a really warm ethos in classrooms and a clear focus on learning. New topics frequently start with a dynamic introduction which grabs pupils' attention. Role play was used to great effect, for example, as a teacher wearing ear muffs 'could not hear' the teaching assistant as she called her name. There followed a lively discussion about sound sources and a range of practical investigations.

Work for different ability groups is based on accurate ongoing assessment which identifies pupils capable of moving on to higher-level work and those who need consolidation or further support. Teachers' marking refers to individual targets and includes clear guidance on the next steps pupils should take to improve. Pupils regularly review their own progress and that of their classmates. Pupils, especially boys, benefit from lists of words and structured outlines for their writing. This means they can make a confident start. Conversely, teachers sometimes provide too many hints and prompts, rather than encourage pupils to try things out for themselves. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress in lessons and in catch-up groups.

All pupils are very well known as individuals and staff respond to their differing needs extremely effectively. Induction arrangements into Reception and on to junior school are exemplary. Clear systems for working with families ensure support where necessary and enable parents and carers to be fully involved. Several paid tribute to the level of care their children receive. One expressed gratitude for helping her manage her son's behaviour and another paid tribute to the help a child with hearing difficulties had received. The variety of support for a child with dyspraxia received high praise.

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
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, with strong support from the deputy headteacher, transmits high expectations clearly but sensitively to all members of the school community. Staff form a strong team and work hard to ensure that good standards are maintained and that the school continues to improve. The quality of teaching is monitored systematically through lesson observations and looking at pupils' work. Subject managers keep an eye on their subjects and drive initiatives successfully; for example, the introduction of new practical apparatus in mathematics is paying dividends. However, they do not systematically analyse assessment data to gain an overall picture of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects.

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Procedures to ensure pupils are safe in school are well established. The governing body plays an important role in this by visiting the school regularly to check on the effectiveness of the safeguarding policy, and carrying out health and safety audits. Staff promote equality of opportunity well. Any differences in the attainment or progress of different groups, such as recent anomalies in the progress of boys and girls, are identified and addressed with vigour and determination to iron them out. Racist incidents are extremely rare, but effective procedures ensure that any that do arise are tackled promptly.

Parents and carers much appreciate the guidance they receive in supporting their children at home and they are active partners in their children's learning. They are kept extremely well informed through regular newsletters, parent mail and curriculum evenings. Information from questionnaires is followed up. For example, following a recent survey, parents and carers were invited to a workshop to find out how the school teaches mathematics. They raise considerable funds through the parentteacher association to support visits and other aspects of the curriculum, not least the attractive and stimulating resources which abound in the school grounds.

Close links with other local schools and universities lead to mutual benefits. Staff contribute to the 'leading partners in literacy' scheme run in conjunction with Winchester University and value the training in mentoring they receive. They contribute to the design of courses for initial teacher training and host students on teaching practice. Very good value for money is achieved through involvement in schemes such as Sport for All and Positive Parenting Partnerships. Excellent liaison with specialist services supports the school's work with vulnerable pupils and their families.

The governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement; an improvement since the last inspection. Members analyse assessment information and now gain first-hand insights through regular focused visits during the school day. The school has a central role in the life of the neighbourhood and promotes local community cohesion well. In supporting charities and contributing to disaster funds, pupils gain some insights into other cultures. Staff are seeking ways in which pupils can gain a broader global awareness and learn more about cultural diversity 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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Reception classes. They develop good levels of independence, for example, in choosing their own activities during the daily 'free flow' sessions. Children behave very well and develop positive attitudes to learning. They are inquisitive and ask questions freely of their teachers and visitors. They remain focused for long periods and there is a hive of activity both indoors and outside. Children learn how to use classroom tools, such as scissors, safely and gain insights into road safety as they ride toy vehicles outside, obeying the traffic signs set out on the road track.

Through a wide range of activities which involve cooperation with their classmates, children gain confidence in speaking. One asked, 'Do you know what this area is?' and went on, 'It's the office where we use the telephone. Oh yes, and scissors live here.' The systematic teaching of sounds and letters, plus plenty of opportunities to develop their early writing skills, means that children make good progress in reading and writing. Children's very secure numeracy skills are evident as they 'help' adults count objects and as they recall the names of shapes when creating symmetrical patterns.

The provision is well managed and organised effectively. There is a vibrant and purposeful environment in all areas. Daily learning is planned well, with all staff involved in ensuring both challenge and support for all. There are good opportunities for children to be independent, creative and collaborative in their learning. For example, children were keen to show the small creatures they had found in the 'wildlife area' and worked well together to tally their findings on a chart. Adults mostly engage children by their skilful use of questioning which probes their understanding. Sometimes, however, their questions require no more than one-word answers, so children's thinking is not extended. The recently developed outdoor area is spacious and very well designed, providing resources to promote most areas of learning. Staff are aware that the lack of climbing apparatus

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limits opportunities for physical development and that the outdoor area is not as rich in prompts for language development as the classrooms.

A significant strength is the productive partnership with parents and carers. This is evident as they drop their children off, often staying for a few minutes to play alongside them and look at their latest work. All parents and carers take up the opportunity to contribute to the home/school booklets. As well as recording the exploits of 'Conker Dog' as he accompanies their children at home, they include encouraging comments. One wrote, 'I talked to your teacher and looked at your books. You are doing so well and your drawings are wonderful. I love you.'

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 questionnaires was well above average. All were happy overall with their children's experience. They were rightly unanimous in their positive views of many aspects of the school. Inspectors explored the individual concerns raised by a very few of the parents and carers, but they followed no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chandler's Ford Infant 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 109 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 173 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	79	72	30	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	83	76	25	23	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	50	46	55	50	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	56	42	39	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	65	60	42	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	67	61	41	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	59	42	39	0	0	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)	62	57	37	34	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	64	59	42	39	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	41	51	47	6	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	39	53	49	5	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	68	62	39	36	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	73	67	35	32	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	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 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.



17 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chandler's Ford Infant School, Eastleigh SO53 2EY

Thank you so much for welcoming us recently and telling us what you thought about your school. Your opinions, along with everything else that we saw, helped us to form a clear view about how well your school works. You go to a good school and these are some of the important things we found out about it.

- All the adults take really good care of you and help you if you have any problems or if you need to catch up with your work.
- You progress well and reach good levels in literacy and numeracy because the teachers make learning fun and make sure you build on what you already know.
- Your behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school.
- You work very hard in lessons and always try to do your best.
- Your parents and carers help you learn at home and the school gives them plenty of ideas to help them do this.
- Your teachers work with those in other schools to find the best ways of helping you learn.

Although things are working well, we have asked your teachers to help boys improve their writing and to give you more chance to work on your own. Teachers keep a close eye on how you are getting on. We have suggested that they could gather all this information together to spot any patterns in the way everyone learns and makes progress. We have also asked the adults to find ways for you to get to know more about what it is like to live in areas of the country where there are people from lots of different backgrounds.

You can all play your part in helping your school to become even better by making sure you continue to work hard, behave well and attend school every day.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton
Lead inspector

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