

Froxfield Church of England Infant School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Unique reference number | 116289 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 395553 |
| Inspection dates | 3–4 July 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Liz Kounnou |

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

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 25 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Francis Usmar |
| Headteacher | Sue Barry |
| Date of previous school inspection | 15 July 2009 |
| School address | High Cross Petersfield GU32 1EG |
| Telephone number | 01730 827251 |
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| Email address | adminoffice@froxford.hants.sch.uk |

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Introduction

Inspection team

Liz Kounnou

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons, taught by four teachers. The inspector listened to pupils read, and looked at samples of their work and samples of planning documentation. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and with staff, including the headteacher and senior leaders. The inspector took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection. The school's work was observed and a number of school documents were looked at, including the school development plan, safeguarding records, attendance data, tracking of pupils' progress and local authority evaluations of the school's provision. The inspector scrutinised questionnaires completed by 23 parents and carers, and 11 staff.

Information about the school

Froxfield Infant School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are two classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. Currently there are no disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs. This is well below average. All of the pupils are of White British heritage.

The school has undergone a period of turbulence since the last inspection, following the death of the previous headteacher. The current headteacher took up her post in September 2010.

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 | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 2 |
| Leadership and management | 2 |

Key findings

- This is a good school that is not outstanding because teachers do not always adapt their lessons quickly enough to ensure that pupils, especially the most able, make rapid and sustained progress in their learning. While pupils’ writing is often enthusiastic, thoughtful and well structured, their handwriting is not always well formed. This affects the presentation of their work.
- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has secured the overwhelming support of parents, carers, staff and pupils. Pupils, parents and carers comment extensively on the frequent visits and special days. These ensure pupils have excellent experiences that contribute very well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. One boy summed up their views saying, ‘We are the luckiest school because we go on the most trips ever!’
- The leadership of teaching is good. Strong management of staff performance has created a common sense of purpose. Teachers ensure that pupils know what is expected of them and how they can succeed. They assess pupils’ skills thoroughly, but on occasions do not adapt their lessons quickly enough to take account of pupils’ responses to the tasks they are set. This means that some lessons do not provide sufficient challenge for the most-able pupils.
- Imaginative experiences, including those for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, mean that pupils are happy at school and interested in their work. They try very hard most of the time, but are occasionally a bit relaxed about how much they should complete. They are given a lot of responsibility for their age and respond superbly.
- Pupils achieve well, reaching above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. They do well because behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are able to make a lot of decisions about their work in a safe and secure environment.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by increasing the effectiveness and extent to which teachers monitor learning during lessons and adapt the tasks they ask pupils to complete so that all pupils, especially the most able, make rapid and sustained progress in their learning.
- Improve the quality of pupils' writing by ensuring that their handwriting is consistently well formed and neatly presented in all year groups.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Almost all parents and carers report that their children make good progress at Froxfield. Inspection evidence supports this view. When pupils start school their attainment is typically around that expected for their age. Pupils achieve well and by the time they leave school attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because activities are challenging and they have a lot of fun. Children plan some of their activities in special books and then record their achievements with the help of the adults. Adults respond very well to children's ideas so that the children often lead activities. They had a marvellous time creating a swamp during the inspection and went on to make notes about the creatures living there. Resources in the Reception class are very well organised so that children can get on with their tasks independently. They can easily find everything they will need, for example, to design and make a model, including the materials to experiment and mix just the right colour paint.

Pupils' attainment in reading is above average at the end of Year 2. Pupils start the day promptly by sharing reading books with adults or with one another. One-to-one support ensures that pupils make good progress regardless of their abilities. Pupils enjoy reading partly because they start each afternoon listening to a story or some poems. Parents and carers play a strong part in supporting their children. Many write extensive comments in the school reading diaries. Pupils make good use of their understanding of the way sounds and letters are linked (phonics skills) to help them work out unfamiliar words.

Phonics skills play an equally good part in maintaining good achievement in writing. Pupils make plausible attempts to spell tricky words, sounding out the letters when necessary. Pupils are keen writers, and make a lot of decisions about what they will write. For example, one boy chose to create a book of poems in a range of styles about the Olympics. Nonetheless, pupils' presentation of writing, both letters and numbers, is often careless because they typically do not form these correctly or write in straight lines.

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Pupils do well in mathematics because they are expected to work things out for themselves and jot down the methods they use. This starts in the Reception class, where children are expected to decide: 'What do I need to solve this challenge?' A 'toolkit' of ideas prompts children to use real-life objects, equipment, jottings, act it out or look for patterns to work out the solution. As a result, pupils are confident in talking about mathematics and explaining what is happening to the numbers. The most-able pupils in Year 2 used a range of strategies to solve problems such as: If there are 25 people, and four people can go in each car, how many cars will we need?

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers consider teaching to be good and inspection evidence confirms this. The very small class sizes enable teachers to know each individual pupil well. Pupils flourish because teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Lessons are packed with interesting activities and provide considerable opportunities for pupils to work cooperatively. A recent development encourages pupils to assess their own work and that of their work partner by using the 'steps to success' to check how well they have done. Teachers use assessment effectively to identify how well each pupil is doing and use innovative methods to ensure that pupils in the mixed-age and mixed-ability classes are engaged in learning. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 manage their own 'work-time' while the teacher and teaching assistant guide learning with others in small groups. On occasions teachers do not make good use of assessment within lessons to make quick adaptations to tasks that are not at the right level. This means that some tasks are not sufficiently challenging for the most-able pupils, requiring little effort to succeed.

The quality of teaching is variable, but improving over time due to more consistent use of assessment. Teachers' marking includes a clear system of symbols that pupils understand and sometimes use themselves. Regular comments include praise for pupils' success and one thing that could improve next time. Typically these are linked to the pupils' next steps in learning. However, teacher comments in reading diaries are not consistently related to the key reading strategies that pupils have mastered or need to develop to reach the next level. Nonetheless, reading is taught well. The individual support that pupils receive during the 'reading routine' time at the start of each day adds considerably to pupils' success. Well-planned teaching of phonics skills in small groups, with helpful support materials for the pupils, for example grids and sound buttons, which pupils place under each letter, ensures a wide range of reading strategies are taught effectively.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are kept safe and that they behave well. Parents, carers and pupils consider both behaviour and safety to be good and it is clear that pupils are very happy at school. One parent reported that her son is disappointed on Saturday when school is closed. Another wrote, 'It is hard to believe

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a school like this exists.' Pupils are delighted with their responsibilities to look after the bantams and collect eggs. They know how to keep themselves safe, and can explain exactly how they must use the splendid adventure playground equipment safely. They are shown a great deal of trust and are regularly asked for their opinions. As a result they show a huge sense of pride in their school and maturity beyond their years.

Pupils typically behave well, rarely encounter any bullying and are confident that adults will intervene promptly at school to stop any intimidation or harassment. They are aware of some dangers when they use the internet at home, and know that it is wrong to call people names because they are different, for example if girls choose to be more active, or boys prefer more gentle games. They are less sure about how to keep themselves safe from bullying or intimidation outside of school.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good but pupils do not always strive to do their best because on occasions their work requires little effort. Nonetheless, pupils thoroughly enjoy the themed curriculum activities known as 'learning clusters' and are very keen on special activities such as 'sculpture park open day'. Special visitors were invited to ask pupils questions about their outdoor sculptures. Activities such as this allow pupils with differing interests to shine: 'I was good at using the glue gun', wrote one in his evaluation.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has created a very strong sense of community, helping to restore the school after the long illness and subsequent death of the previous headteacher, and set the school on a clear path of improvement. Parents, carers and staff are eloquent in their praise for her drive and vision. The headteacher is developing leadership effectively across the school by empowering staff and governors to take a more productive role in school improvement.

Rigorous tracking of pupils' progress means that staff and governors know how well all pupils are doing and ensures equality of opportunity in this small school. Staff review pupils' progress termly with the headteacher and devise well-tailored interventions to ensure pupils who fall behind quickly get back on track. The capacity to improve is strong because it is based on a shared and thorough knowledge of the school's strengths and development priorities. Effective management of staff performance underpins improvements in teaching. Expertise from external sources and visits to other schools provide opportunities for professional development for staff.

Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated; the school's very positive ethos plays a strong part in this. The checks made to ensure that pupils are safe at school meet government requirements and are underpinned by a culture of diligence. Pupils are involved in carrying out premises checks with the headteacher and make suggestions for any areas they are worried about.

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Aspects of the school curriculum are inspirational and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. The aim is to hook pupils into learning at the start of each new 'learning cluster' by taking pupils out of school to learn something new. Parents and carers are kept fully informed about each cluster through a well-designed information sheet which is also published on the school website. Each sheet includes some suggestions for how parents and carers can help to promote learning at home. Almost all the parents and carers completed a questionnaire and more than 50% wrote in fulsome praise of the school staff. One comment is reflective of their views: 'This school is a real gem! The staff are excellent and the culture set by the headteacher is the best you could aim for.'

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 | 54 | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 14 | 49 | 32 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 20 | 39 | 34 | 7 |
| Special schools | 33 | 45 | 20 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 9 | 55 | 28 | 8 |
| All schools | 16 | 47 | 31 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance: | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour: | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Floor standards: | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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. |
| 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. |
| Safety: | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

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.



5 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Froxfield Church of England Infant School, Petersfield GU32 1EG

Thank you for making me so very welcome when I inspected your school. I really enjoyed visiting your lessons, talking to you and the staff, and looking at the work that you have been doing. Your parents and carers agree with my judgement that yours is a good school.

These are the things that your school does well.

- You are all extremely sensible when you do your special jobs, for example, collecting eggs from the bantams and looking after the flowerbeds.
- You have the chance to go on a fantastic range of visits and do a lot of exciting things while you are learning. The headteacher makes sure that your parents and carers know all about the trips and what you will learn so that they can help you.
- You make a lot of decisions about your work in lessons and the games you play on the playground. You take this responsibility very seriously and usually try really hard to do your best when you are trusted to work and play with your friends or on your own.
- Children in the Reception class try really hard to plan their work in their special books.

Although the school is doing well, there are still things that it can improve. I have asked the headteacher and the governors to focus on these things.

- Make sure that teachers change the work you are asked to do in lessons if they see that you are finding it a bit too easy or not trying your best.
- Make sure that you all write your letters in the correct way whenever you are writing.

You could all help by always trying to do your best in lessons and by trying hard to write neatly all the time with all your letters written correctly.

Yours sincerely

Liz Kounnou
Lead inspector

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